

What is Oral History?

Oral History is
MEMORY!

We all share memories about events, people, and customs in time. When we talk about these things with each other, we learn and remember them by heart. Once we have said these memories to someone else, we have created an **ORAL HISTORY.**

History

The practice of remembering history orally is the oldest form of history recording on earth. Cultures all over the world developed languages before creating a way to write, and needed a way to remember the past. For example, the Native Hawaiian culture used methods like dancing, chanting, and storytelling to remember their histories over hundreds of years, before the language was converted into writing during the 19th century.

Why Do Oral History?

We might wonder why it is important to collect oral histories, especially our own, or those of our families and friends. We are very used to, instead, seeing and hearing about the lives of celebrities or other notable people on television or social media. While their stories add to the historical record, they do not present a clear picture of life for the everyday person.



Example?

Have you ever gotten caught in a conversation where everyone talks about the past? Has anyone ever told you about the 'good old days?' These are all examples of everyday oral histories; these are moments of storytelling with one another.