

Federal Prison Inmate Locator: How to Find Someone in Prison For Free

How can I find out if someone is in jail or in federal prison?

When I went looking for someone recently who I thought was in federal prison I was sure that I would have a near impossible task on my hands but I was wrong. It might have been difficult a few years ago but not anymore. Let me show you how to find someone in prison and get loads of background information about them at the same time.

Step 1: Use the BOP Federal Inmate Lookup and USA.gov State Corrections Departments lookup

The Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) provides a web site at www.bop.gov. On the site you will find the BOP federal inmate locator which is a searchable database of all federal inmates since 1982.

Type in the details of the person that you're looking for and click the button to see a list of names together with the prisons where they're being held. If they are still in prison the list gives you a link to the facilities web site. When I did this recently the site gave me a long list of inmates because of the common name that I was searching for so I had to find out which one, if any, of the inmates was the person that I was looking for. This can be more difficult than it sounds.

If you don't find the person that you are looking for it could be that they are being held in a State Correction facility and not a federal one. If this is the case then you can look them up on the usa.gov web site. Unfortunately you either have to know which facility they might be held in or you have to do the same search on about 37 different web sites. You can do this but it might take you a little time. Also you must remember that not all correctional facilities put their records online.

Step 2: Getting more background information on someone to narrow down the search

You may find like I did, that when you've fine tuned your search by race, age and sex you're still left with several names on the list and you can't be sure that any one of them is the person that you're looking for. You need to get more information on this person.

The BOP site is ok and so are the state search web sites, they are free and they might just tell you everything you need to know. If they don't then you should subscribe to a web site that will give you all the information you could ever wish for on prison inmates or anyone else you might want to dig up some records for. These websites take information from thousands of sources all over the Internet and offline too. They're easy to search and when you find the person that you're looking for you can do a full criminal records and background check on them. When you've done this, and it can take you less than 10 minutes, you'll be far more confident that you've found the person that you're looking for.

About the Author

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