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I've Done the DNA Test – Now What Do I Do?

Company	Database Size	Download from	Upload to	Direct Email to Matches?	Use by Police	Chromosome Browser	Best for
Ancestry	18 million	Yes	No	No	No	No	USA, unknown parents
23andme	12.5 million	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Jewish ancestry
FamilyTreeDNA	4 million	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Y-DNA
MyHeritage	2.5 million	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	European Ancestry
GedMatch	1.5 million	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Seeing matches in other companies

Note on Centimorgans (cM): the centimorgan is a basic unit of measurement used to determine how much DNA you share with a match. The more centimorgans, the closer the relationship. Many DNA companies define matches by “cousin”: 1st cousin, 3rd cousin, 4th-6th cousin, etc. However, there are many other relationships such as aunt, uncle, great-nephew, half-sibling, and half first cousin once removed, that these definitions leave out. I always use DNAPainter’s Shared cM Project to find other possible relationships.

Testing Tools:

Ancestry

Ethnicity reports: view your genetic heritage and your ancestors’ movement in time

Custom grouping: use colored dots (24 colors, use single or multiple) to group matches

Notes: on individual match pages, make notes

ThruLines: see how your matches relate to your common ancestor; must have public tree

(note: “potential ancestors” must be used with caution)

MyTreeTags: make notes on individual profiles with the options provided, or make up your own

23andme:

Ethnicity report: view your genetic heritage

DNA Relatives: on an individual match's page, view shared matches (with you and with each other)

Chromosome browser: see which segments of each chromosome you share with your matches

FamilyTreeDNA

Ethnicity estimate

List of matches: individual match page, view shared matches (with you and with each other)

Chromosome browser: see which segments of each chromosome you share with your matches; Choose up to 7 matches at a time

MyHeritage:

Ethnicity estimate

List of matches; indicates which matches have trees

Locations: see where around the world your matches live; very useful for European ancestry

Theory of family relativity: analyzes each match for possible relationship, common surnames and common locations

Chromosome browser: see which segments of each chromosome you share with your matches; Choose up to 7 matches at a time

Using shared matches to create “genetic networks”

Ancestry will indicate if you and your match share a common ancestor, even if the match's tree is private

All testing companies will show shared matches

Creating a Leeds Chart from your Ancestry matches

<https://www.yourdnaguide.com/leeds-method>

Third-Party Tools

DNA Painter Shared cM Project: <https://dnainter.com/tools/sharedcmv4>

Plug in the number of cM (centimorgans) you share with someone, and see the range of possible relationships

GedMatch: <http://www.gedmatch.com> Compares DNA kits from several companies

Transfer Your Raw DNA Data

Get your DNA information into other databases to see matches that tested elsewhere

To download raw data from Ancestry:

Go to your DNA Home Page and click on Settings at top right

Select “Download Raw DNA Data”

Respond to email from Ancestry (they want to make sure it’s you!)

Download zip file to computer; save it where you’ll be able to find it again

Upload raw files to: FamilyTreeDNA, GedMatch, MyHeritage

DNA and Law Enforcement

In 2018, Law Enforcement officials began working with Parabon Laboratories, uploading sequenced DNA evidence from violent crime scenes (rape or murder) to publicly available databases such as GedMatch and FamilyTreeDNA. At this point, LE does not have access to Ancestry or 23andme; they can get access to MyHeritage with written permission from the company.

For more information:

CeCe Moore blog; Your Genetic Genealogist:

<http://www.yourgeneticgenealogist.com/p/about-me.html>

Parabon Nanolabs: <https://parabon-nanolabs.com/>

Blaine Bettinger, RootsTech 2020 Presentation: “DNA, Genealogy and Law Enforcement: All the Facts”:

<https://www.rootstech.org/video/dna-genealogy-and-law-enforcement-all-the-facts>

Continuing Education

Continuing education is **vital** in this area, which is rapidly changing and improving!

Webinars and classes:

Legacy Family Tree: <http://www.familytreewebinars.com> View live webinars for free;

\$49 membership to view archived webinars (currently 168 webinars on DNA)

Members of the NGS can also take a DNA course from Debbie Parker Wayne here:

<https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/cgs/genetic-genealogy-autosomal-dna/>

(NGS members \$75; non-members \$100)

Another NGS course from Angie Bush:

<https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/cgs/understanding-and-using-dna-test-results/>

Become a member of DNA-Central: <https://dna-central.com/> for educational classes

For Further Reading:

Blogs and Newsletters:

International Society for Genetic Genealogy: http://www.isogg.org/wiki/Wiki_Welcome_Page

DNA Explained: <http://www.dna-explained.com>

The Legal Genealogist: <http://www.thelegalgenealogist.com/blog>

Kitty Cooper's Blog: <http://blog.kittycooper.com/>

Your Genetic Genealogist: <http://www.yourgeneticgenealogist.com/>

Watershed DNA: <https://www.watersheddna.com/> (for help dealing with unexpected results)

National Genealogical Society: <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org>. Recent issues of the NGS

Quarterly feature case studies that discover and prove ancestry using DNA.

Join the Facebook Group: Genetic Genealogy Tips & Techniques:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/geneticgenealogytipsandtechniques/>

My blog post on the 40-year brick wall:

<https://www.ccbreland.com/blog/his-name-was-lewis-prosser>

Books:

Your DNA Guide: the book, by Diahna Southard

The FamilyTree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy, by Blaine Bettinger

Genetic Genealogy in Practice, by Blaine Bettinger and Debbie Parker Wayne

Advanced Genetic Genealogy, by Debbie Parker Wayne

The Lost Family: How DNA Testing is Upending Who We Are, by Libby Copeland

Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity and Love, by Dani Shapiro

The Stranger in My Genes: A Memoir, by Bill Griffeth

Finding Family: My Search for Roots and the Secrets in my DNA, by Richard Hill

[Read my past newsletters and sign up to receive them by email!](#)

There has never been a better time to be a genealogist!

