

GETTING STARTED WITH GENEALOGY

DNA TESTING

Many people have different reasons for testing their DNA. Some people, including adoptees, want to find relatives or expand their family tree. Some people are interested in discovering their ethnicity. Some want to look at their DNA-related health information.

Finding family can happen with DNA test results, however, it is not a guarantee. DNA tests do not provide an instant family tree, although they can point the genealogist in new and unexpected directions.

Common Concerns

Some common issues about DNA testing are

- Cost of the test:
 - Generally \$69 - \$99 plus shipping.
 - There are often sales around holidays.
- Privacy and security:
 - You own your DNA and your test results.
 - Read the Terms & Conditions of the testing company for information on how they might use your data.
 - No one knows how your DNA might be used in the future.
- Surprises:
 - Finding a different ethnicity than previously believed.
 - Finding a Non Paternal Event (NPE).
 - Before testing, it is wise to consider how will you feel if a surprise comes up in your DNA results.

DNA Tests

There are three Types of DNA Tests

- *Y-DNA* tests paternal lineage. Y-DNA tests the father's father's father's line, etc. It is important for surname studies.
- *mtDNA* studies the maternal line.
- *Autosomal DNA* is used for finding family and ethnicity on both the father's and mother's sides.

This document will address only the Autosomal DNA test.

There are five reputable DNA testing companies: [23andMe](#), [AncestryDNA](#), [FamilyTreeDNA](#), [LivingDNA](#) and [MyHeritage](#). Of these companies, only FamilyTreeDNA offers the Y-DNA and the mtDNA tests as well as the Autosomal (Family Finder) test. LivingDNA specializes in the British and Irish areas.

Testing Procedure

First you must decide which company you will test with. Find the company's website and fill out the form requesting the test and pay. The company will send you the testing kit and provide instructions on returning the DNA sample. DNA testing requires a saliva sample. Once the company gets your sample, it usually takes 4-6 weeks to get the results.

NOTE: Some genealogists test with more than one company because the companies do not share data. For example, if an unknown family member tested with Ancestry and you tested with FamilyTreeDNA you wouldn't find out about each other.

Additional Information

- [*Best DNA Kits 2020: How to Choose the DNA Testing Kit That's Best for You*](#) by Marc Mcdermott. Last Updated 17 April 2020 Smarterhobby.com.
- [DNA eXplained](https://dna-explained.com/which-dna-test-is-best/) https://dna-explained.com/which-dna-test-is-best/
- [The International Society of Genetic Genealogy](http://ISOGG.org) ISOGG.org