

Suggestions for Testing

Most people who do a DNA test want their ethnicity “pie-chart”. Although it can point you in the correct direction, unfortunately for genealogists, this test is not specific enough to pinpoint what we need to further our pedigree chart. Maybe sometime in the future, it will be more helpful, but for now we have to work with our matches and hope that we will find information to confirm our previous work, some new knowledge that will further our pedigree chart, or some pictures/family memorabilia that we would like to have.

Therefore, it is essential to test where there is a large database to get lots of matches and to get family trees (even if they have mistakes, are not sourced, and not available without a subscription¹) that will give us a hint to our relationship to the match. Ideally we should test at all five companies that offer a test so that we can find all of our matches; however, that is too expensive for most of us to even consider. Luckily for us, several of the companies currently do allow free uploads, but a few do not. “Ancestry” and “23 and Me” do NOT allow uploads. If you want health information and are willing to pay the extra \$125 for it, then you probably should test at “23 and Me”. However, if you are not interested in health information, than testing at “Ancestry” with the largest database and the most family trees is probably your best choice. Be sure to look for sales (see list of sales below).

Once you get your results from your first company, you can start working with the matches and learn how to change your matches into your relations. Then you can move your raw data from your first company to other companies, such as Family Tree DNA “Family Finder”, My Heritage, and Living DNA which allow you to upload free at the time of this writing. However, Family Finder does charge you \$19, one-time fee to use their tools. My Heritage may do the same before very long (a date of Dec. 16, 2018 has been announced for the end of the free tools on My Heritage).

For a list of tools that are available on each of the DNA companies, see the sheet on Comparison of DNA Match Tools, which can be found here at the Montrose Genealogy Society Website at <http://montrosecogenealogy.org/>.

For more information on testing companies, look at https://isogg.org/wiki/Autosomal_DNA_testing_comparison_chart.

1. Some options for those who do not have an Ancestry subscription are:

- Ask your match for an invite to their tree or ask them for the surnames of their grandparents.
- Put a good friend or relation who has a subscription onto your DNA & Family Tree as a collaborator, then they can see your match’s family trees.
- Make a list of what you want and pay for a month subscription (\$20 at this writing) and check your list. Also obtain the names of the trees and the usernames of the managers so that you can **try** to “google” these when you don’t have a subscription.
- Try social media for the owner/manager of the tree and contact them through social media.
- Ask for other media than trees such as copies of pictures, family bible pages, or a family story or offer them some of these things. They might share these things before a tree.