

MyHeritage offers autosomal DNA testing with a simple cheek swab (no need to spit!). This guide covers what you'll see when you log in, a detailed explanation of MyHeritage DNA matching tools, and pointers on how to use your ethnicity results.

Getting Started with MyHeritage

There are two ways to access autosomal DNA test results from MyHeritage DNA:

1. Order a DNA test from <https://www.yourdnaguide.com/myheritage-buy>.
2. Transfer your DNA test results from another testing company to MyHeritage. [Here's how](#).

Link DNA to Family Tree

It is free to create an online tree (pedigree chart) at MyHeritage for up to 250 people, or you can upload a tree you have already created. Linking your DNA to your family tree will activate valuable tools at MyHeritage. [Here's how](#).

Your DNA test results have four sections and each will be discussed in detail in this guide on the pages indicated. *Overview* (below), *Ethnicity Estimate* (page 4), *DNA Matches* (below), and *DNA Tools* (page 3).

Overview Page (DNA dropdown menu > Overview)

This page provides a snapshot of your DNA test results and is a good place to start your review. It is also a great way to introduce family and friends to DNA testing, with just enough information to be interesting but not overwhelming. There are three additional sections to review:

Ethnicity Estimate Provides a simple overview of your regions and percentages.

DNA Matches A list of your DNA matches beginning with your closest ones. See the DNA Matches Page section below for more information.

DNA Tools This portal takes you to the cM Explainer™, Chromosome Browser, AutoClusters, and Ethnicities Map tools.

DNA Matches (DNA dropdown menu > DNA matches)

This is where you will spend a majority of your DNA research time. It lists and summarizes key information about your matches. Take a minute to familiarize yourself with the options for filtering and sorting your matches found at the top of the match page. Filter by different kinds of commonalities on your family trees; close, extended or distant relatives or locations. Sort by shared DNA/segments; longest segment; full names and most recent matches.

Accessing Features

You do not need to be a paying subscriber to the MyHeritage website in order to have your DNA tested, but access to all of the site's DNA tools and genealogy records may require an additional fee. [See the MyHeritage website](#) to determine the level of access you need. *Note: In order to have access to the very powerful Shared Matches tool you have to either transfer and pay the \$29 fee, or purchase the MyHeritage DNA test and then buy a subscription.*

Free Transfer	Transfer, Pay \$29 Fee	Purchase MyHeritage DNA test	MyHeritage Complete Subscription
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 250 person family tree • DNA match list • Download raw data • Shared Surnames • Contact Matches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared Matches • Ethnicity estimate & Genetic Groups • Trees of matches & Theory of Family Relativity™ • Shared ancestral places • Chromosome browser & AutoClusters™ 	<p>All features in the free transfer PLUS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnicity estimate • Chromosome browser 	<p>All DNA tools listed here PLUS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to records • Smart Matches™ to common relatives on DNA matches' trees • And more! Get a free trial.*

*Thank you for using our affiliate links. If you purchase, we will receive a small payment at no additional cost to you.

Use the letters in the image to the right and the text below to learn about the various aspects of the DNA Match page.

A. Personal Information

Use the personal information provided here to help you make connections with your match. Pay special attention to the age of your match. When provided it can help you better determine if your relationship should be in the once or twice removed category. For example, if you are 70 and your match is 40, you are likely once removed.

What is a removed cousin?

A removed relationship is one that is not in your generation. For example, when your first cousin has a child (therefore a generation younger than you), that child is your first cousin once removed. [Learn More.](#)

B. Estimated Relationships

MyHeritage lists one or more possible genealogical relationships that are consistent with how much total DNA you share with your matches. (Yes, there are usually several possibilities!) Click on the *relationship* to see a list of genealogical relationships that best fit this particular match.

C. DNA Match Quality

Three different numbers help you better understand your relationship to each match.

Shared DNA: This represents the total amount of tested DNA you share with your match. (We all share 99.9% of our DNA, so this reflects just tested areas showing variation between us.) The number is listed as a total shared percentage and as the number of centimorgans (cM, a unit of measure for DNA).

Shared Segments: This is the total number of pieces of DNA you share with your match.

A Michael P S
Age: 50's
DNA managed by Alicia K

B Probable relationship
2nd cousin's son

C DNA Match quality
Shared DNA: 1.6% (113.2 cM)
Shared segments: 6
Largest segment: 39.5 cM

E Contact Alicia

G Review DNA Match
View tree

D Appears in a family tree with 3,257 people, managed by Alicia K from USA

- Michael P S is the 2nd cousin's son of James R H according to the Theory of Family Relativity™. [View theory](#)
- Ancestral surnames common to James R H and Michael P S include [Claunch](#).
- James R H's family tree has 27 Smart Matches™ with this tree. [View Smart Matches](#)
- Ancestral places common to James R H and Michael P S include [Kentucky, USA; Washington, USA and 5 more](#).

Largest Segment: The size of your biggest piece of shared DNA can help you distinguish between matches who may share the same total amount of DNA with you—but who have very different relationships to you. In general, your largest segment of DNA should be at least 15 cMs long in order to confidently share a single common ancestor within the last 5 generations.

Example: Let's say you share 30 cM with both Bob and Patti, but have a longest piece of 15 cM with Bob and only 7 cM with Patti. Focus more of your attention on Bob: he is more likely to share a more recent common ancestor with you. With lots of little tiny bits of matching DNA, it's more likely you and Patti share multiple, distant ancestors; perhaps you both have origins in a small place or endogamous group (one that intermarried a lot).

D. Family Tree Details

Explore here whether your match has a tree, how many people are in it, and who manages it. Click **View Tree** to access their family tree. Some trees may be limited or unviewable due to a match's privacy settings. See below for more on Smart Matches™.

- MyHeritage has identified surnames or ancestral places common to your family tree and your match's tree. See next page for details.
- See later section on Theory of Family Relativity™.
- There are Smart Matches™ between your trees. (See below for more on Smart Matches™)

E. Notes

Click here to make notes about your research progress with this match. Consider recording correspondence or theories you have about your genetic relationship.

F. Contact Match

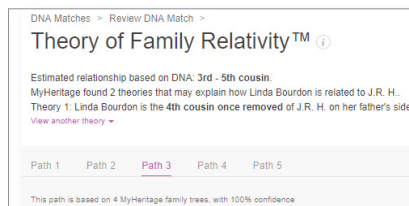
Sometimes your only step forward can be to contact this match or their test's manager for further information about their family tree, or just to say Hello! When you reach out be sure to give them an easy next step. Ask your match to reply even if they don't know much about their family. [Get more tips](#) for contacting matches.

G. Review DNA Match

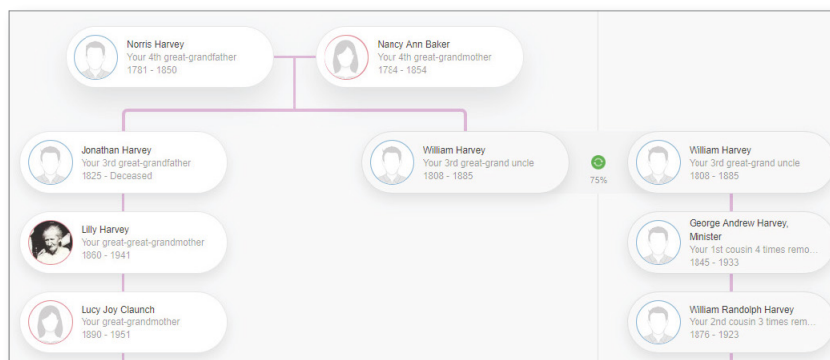
Clicking reveals a detailed profile page of your match. You may see a combination of the following genetic and genealogical tools depending on your match's privacy settings and your MyHeritage membership level (see page 1).

The first three (*Shared Surnames*, *Smart Matches™*, and *Shared Ancestral Places*), as well as the *Theory of Family Relativity™*, rely on your own genealogy and that of your match, while the *Shared Matches* and *Chromosome Browser* are genetic tools. You may also see Possible Relationships with your match, including a preview of their tree.

Smart Matches™ These hints from MyHeritage show names on your tree who are also on your match's tree. A Smart Match™ does NOT verify that this is your common ancestor. It's a hint for you to verify with good genealogical research.

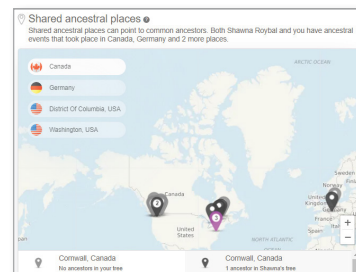


Theory of Family Relativity™ This tree reconstruction tool uses tree data from MyHeritage, FamilySearch and Geni.com AND historical records to propose theories about your genealogical relationship to your match. Sometimes you will see multiple paths; 5 theories or paths are proposed in the example above and to the right. Verify theories by clicking to review the data they're using to create each tree. Follow up with additional research, as needed.

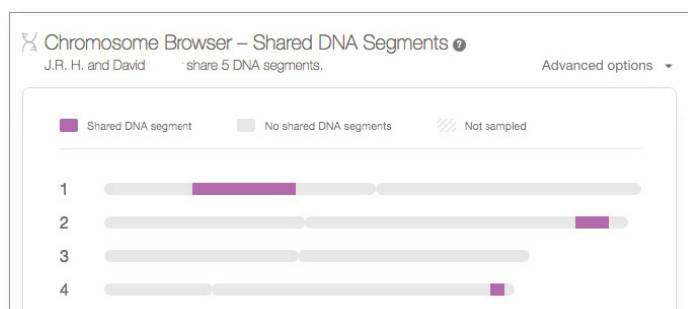
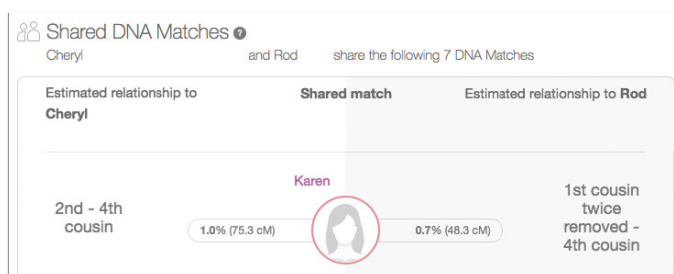


Shared Surnames If you and your match have family trees with shared surnames, MyHeritage will provide a list of ancestors on both trees with the shared surname. There is also an option to view all ancestral surnames for matches with shared surnames where you can look for additional names you recognize.

Shared Ancestral Places MyHeritage maps locations common to both your family tree and your match's tree. The screen under the map is split, with your ancestors from the shared locations on the left, and your match's ancestors on the right. These are especially helpful if you don't know the surname of your missing ancestor, but it is likely your ancestor's relatives were nearby.



Shared Matches This is your most powerful genetic genealogy tool! *Shared Matches* shows you matches who are related to you and your selected match. In the example below, the Shared Matches tool tells us that Cheryl and Rod both share DNA with Karen. This means that Cheryl and Rod and Karen are likely all related to each other through a similar ancestral line. This tool is especially useful at MyHeritage as it tells you not only how much DNA Cheryl shares with Karen (75.3 cM), but also how much Rod is sharing with Karen (48.3 cM). Knowing this can help you figure out how you are related. For example, if Karen and Rod were second cousins, and you could identify their shared ancestral couple as Mitch and Mabel, you would know you are likely related to them through that line.

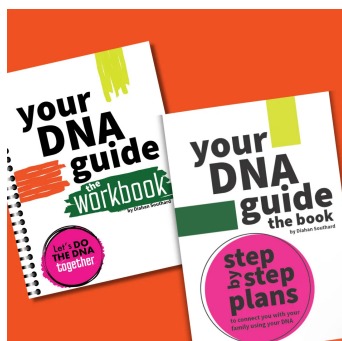
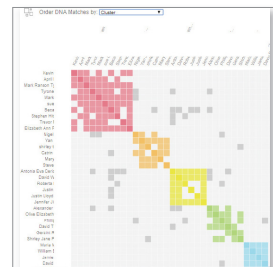


Chromosome Browser Under DNA > DNA Tools. This tool reveals the actual shared pieces of DNA for you and your match. If you do share a recent common ancestor or ancestral couple, this shared DNA comes from him, her or them. Some genetic genealogists use this data to help them analyze their matches. You can also view multiple matches at the same time by choosing DNA Tools > Chromosome Browser from the DNA dropdown menu. Click Advanced Options to download your shared segment data to upload to other websites such as DNA Painter. [Learn more.](#)

cM Explainer™ Under DNA > DNA Tools. This free-to-anyone™ tool helps estimate how you might be related to a DNA match. Simply enter the amount of shared cM between you and a match, along with your ages (optional, but preferred, if you have them). This tool is also linked to each DNA Match page in the 'Possible Relationships' section. Click 'Show more relationships plus diagram' to view a diagram of the different relationships you might share with a specific match.

AutoClusters

Under DNA > DNA Tools. This is a somewhat advanced way to sort and group your DNA matches. The tool looks at how you and your matches are all sharing DNA with each other and then sorts you into groups that are displayed on a matrix. Theoretically, each cluster should represent a different common ancestral line shared by all of the matches in the cluster. If you don't have neat clusters of matches, you may have multiple relationships or endogamy on your tree. [Learn more.](#)



Next Steps

Once you have thoroughly explored all the menus and buttons on the MyHeritage DNA website, it's time to put those newfound skills to good use! You can get started identifying an unknown match with a simple two-step process. Choose the first match on your list for whom you do not know your relationship. Click Review Match, and scroll down to Shared Matches. Watch for anyone on the list that you recognize, because you're likely related on the same line. To truly learn how to analyze and identify your DNA matches, and how to leverage them to learn about unknown ancestors, get [Your DNA Guide—the Book](#) and the [companion Workbook](#).

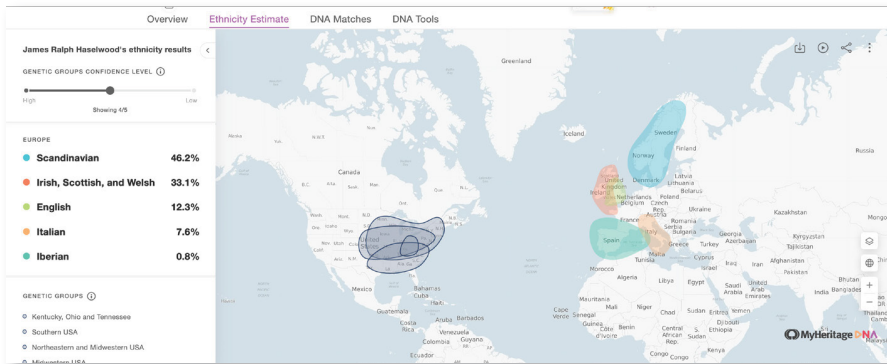
Ethnicity Estimates and Genetic Groups

To create a robust reference population database, MyHeritage initiated a Founders Population Project. This project sampled 5,000 people from around the world who had ancestors from certain regions, from whom MyHeritage created 42 DNA-based global ethnicity categories. Among ethnicities are some regions uniquely identified by MyHeritage, including Inuit and five different Jewish populations.

Access your ethnicity report via DNA > Ethnicity Estimate. Play the Intro to see MyHeritage's creative approach to reporting your ethnic origins. It is also worth perusing all supported ethnicities, as it can be just as helpful to see where you are not from. Remember: ancestral ethnicity estimates are just "best guesses" based on current understanding. Your estimate may evolve over time—so check back occasionally!

Tip: there's an often-overlooked feature buried under the Layers button (bottom right) > click *Family tree events* check box: If you have linked a family tree to your DNA, MyHeritage will overlay your ancestral locations on this map so you can see how your current genealogical knowledge compares to your genetic map. Cool, right?

You may also be assigned to one or more Genetic Groups. These are more specific and accurate regions and groups associated with your DNA. Genetic Groups have been created by clustering testers with similar DNA together and reviewing their trees for common origins. Your Genetic Groups appear below (as shown here) or nested within your ethnicity designations. Clicking on the name of a group will open a details page with interesting information including common surnames, number of kits in the group, and a timeline animation of the group's spread across the world.



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