

Genetic Genealogy Tests

TEST TYPE	Autosomal DNA Test	Y Chromosome (Y-DNA) Test	Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) Test
WHAT IS CHECKED	700,000 or more genetic markers inherited from both parents	A man's Y Chromosome inherited from father	Mitochondrial DNA inherited from mother
PRINCIPAL USES	<p>Find relatives that share a common ancestor in any branch of your family tree within five generations or sometimes more</p> <p>Confirm close relationships out to second cousin and often beyond</p> <p>Measure percentages of ethnic ancestry from different regions of the world</p>	<p>Find male relatives that share a common ancestor in your paternal line</p> <p>Confirm that a given man is in your paternal line</p> <p>Determine paternal line haplogroup for ancient ancestry</p>	<p>Find relatives that share a common ancestor in your maternal line</p> <p>Confirm that a given person is in your maternal line</p> <p>Determine maternal line haplogroup for ancient ancestry</p>
STRENGTHS	<p>Huge databases growing fast with more than a million tests completed already.</p> <p>More conclusive than old technology "sibling" or "kinship" tests for confirming close relationships</p>	<p>Your close matches definitely share a common paternal line ancestor with you</p> <p>Matches can often reveal birth father's surname</p>	<p>Your close matches definitely share a common maternal line ancestor with you</p>
LIMITATIONS	<p>Some relatives at third cousin level and beyond may not share enough DNA to show up as matches</p> <p>Those born outside the U.S. and children of recent immigrants may find few matches</p> <p>If ancestors married cousins or were part of close-knit ethnic groups, your matches may appear to be more closely related than they really are</p>	<p>Only males can be tested</p> <p>Only checks the paternal line</p> <p>Common ancestors may have lived hundreds of years ago</p> <p>The time to your most recent common ancestor can only be estimated</p>	<p>Only checks the maternal line</p> <p>Surname changes increase the difficulty of finding common ancestors</p> <p>Common ancestors may have lived thousands of years ago</p> <p>The time to your most recent common ancestor can only be estimated</p>
RECOMMENDED TESTS	23andMe , Family Finder at Family Tree DNA, AncestryDNA at Ancestry.com	Y-DNA 37 OR Y-DNA 67 at Family Tree DNA	mtFullSequence at Family Tree DNA

Table by Richard Hill, author of "[Finding Family: My Search for Roots and the Secrets in My DNA](#)" and [Guide to DNA Testing](#).