Ancestry DNA Matches

Most important thing to getting the most out of your results is to link the DNA accurately in your tree. This will show at the top of this page- "Linked to _____." If you need to link use the "settings" option in the upper right hand corner to link to your tree. Additionally Thrulines only works if you have your tree as "public."

DNA Story

Ethnicity Estimates

Your sample is run 40 times and the average is shown in the results. It is compared to a reference panel of about 15,000 persons and will update periodically as more testers are compared and more persons added to the reference panel. Ancestry indicates that ethnicity estimates are considered "ancient history" based on persons more than 20 generations ago.

Clicking on one of the Regions will show more information about the region. And will show the range of your DNA test results. This also shows a larger region with overlaps of other areas.

Click "Back to Ethnicity results" at the top to go back.

Additional Communities

Ancestry indicates these come from ancestors 8-20 generations ago.

Clicking on one of these will show more information about that community. It shows how many other DNA matches fit into that community including featured matches for you.

There is a timeline of happenings in the community and that includes listing of persons in your tree who fit into that time frame.

The map is interactive and will change to show where your ancestors immigrated from that are referenced in that particular time frame.

You can click on the sub communities to learn more about that particular community.

DNA Matches

Ancestry indicates these matches are "recent history" i.e. matches up to 8 generations from you. The higher the cMs shared the closer the relationship.   Using the shared cM, ancestry placed

the matches into specific match levels.   (Note: these are not also completely accurate- DNA inheritance is random.   So cousins might be a generation or two off, especially the further away the connection.   And some persons might be related through multiple lines and so show as closer cousins.)

A lot of filter options to help narrow down the list.
Unviewed- those matches you have not clicked on before.
Common Ancestors- those matches who Ancestry can identify a common ancestor in both of your trees (or the trees of others using the ThruLines information). Note: these are based on the trees as show in Ancestry and are only as accurate as the trees used in the analysis.
Messaged- those matches who you have messaged through Ancestry's messaging system
Notes- those matches to whom you have added notes
Trees- those matches who have trees associated with their accounts. (Can list all trees, private linked trees, public linked trees, or unlinked trees.)
Shared DNA- can filter to all matches, Close matches- 4th cousin level, Distant matches (more distant than 4th cousins) or a custom range of cM
Groups- these are custom defined groups created by you- one of the options is the starred feature which creates an additional option on the opening match page.
Search is the option to search by matches name or surname with their tree.
Sort - sorts the list by closeness of connection or by date of match appearance on Ancestry

Reset filters takes you back to the full list of DNA matches.

The map option will show the location of DNA shared, if they have selected a location to make visible to other matches.

Main Match Page- has all matches on it.
Name- Lists their name (or username) as it appears on their ancestry account- along with an indication if their results are managed by another ancestry user.
Relationship- Anticipated relationship based on the amount of shared cM. Clicking on the "I" icon will show the potential relationship or relationships.
Trees- indicates if they have a tree associated with their account and the number of persons in their tree.
Last column- If you have tested your mother or father, the last column will indicate which side the match appears on. Any customized groups you have created will appear here, as well as any notes you have created for this person. Notes show here, but must be added from the individual match page.

Individual Match Details Page- details of one specific match

To access their page, click on the person's name.

Several options available on this match page.

Clicking on their name from here will take you to their Ancestry Profile page. The username (or real name if they choose) will appear with their location (if they make it public), how long they have been a member on Ancestry, and when they last logged in. One tip shared by a researcher indicated to add a photo to your account to make yourself a little more "approachable" or "real." You can message them from this page. And you can see if they share matches with others from whom you manage DNA kits. This is also where you can send messages. "Send Message" is an option to contact them through Ancestry's messaging system.   The messages will appear in your general message area. And if you have set up your account to receive emails, you will receive notification on your personal email account of a new message received in ancestry.

The same information from the center column of the all matches page will appear in the upper section of this page.

Groups- This is also where you can star the match or add them to a user defined group (more about this later)

Notes- This is where you can add in a note - click on the note icon and a window opens.   Type in the note and click "save."   Add note allows you to type in 500 characters about that match.   I use this to identify who the person's MRCA- Most Recent Common Ancestor is.   This is helpful when analyzing those truly no tree or private tree matches.   Also helpful to make notes to yourself about other things you discover on their tree, or things you want "to do" in the future. Sometimes listing a simple pedigree if I know it and it doesn't show on their tree.

The individual match page defaults to the "Trees" option. Other options are "Ethnicity" and "Shared Matches."

Under "Trees"
If Ancestry has identified a common ancestor, this will be shown on the person's match page.

 The person's tree will also show with common surnames showing in "green." If the tree is larger than can be shown in this window, you can click "expand tree" to go to the full tree view.

Scrolling down will reveal a list of common surnames and ancestor birth locations.

The Tree will indicate if it's a linked tree- indicating the DNA match is the home person in the tree showing.

If it is an unlinked tree, you may be able to determine who it is with a little deciphering.   Be sure to match pink icons to pink icons- and blue icons with blue icons… especially for those tests being administered by someone else.

Under "Ethnicity"
Shows your Ethnicity and the matches Ethnicity, as well as shared communities between both DNA matches.

Under "Shared Matches"
This list shows persons who share DNA with you and share DNA with the person you are viewing.
Similar to the All Matches page with filtering options at the top.
This is a great place to figure out the connections with persons who don't have trees associated with their accounts.   If the shared match shares DNA with you and with the person, it is presumed that DNA came from the same ancestor. (Note- they might be related in more than one way, so research is necessary to clarify the DNA match in some cases.)

Can click on any of the matches to get to their individual match pages from this shared match page.

ThruLines

ThruLines are generated automatically by ancestry.com.   They look at persons with whom you share DNA and look for common ancestors in both of your trees. (Or use the public trees of others to aid in making common connections.).   They are not based on the amount of DNA you share, the DNA cousin level common or anything specific to DNA.   Simply a person on your DNA match list who also shares a common ancestor in a tree.   Thrulines are only as accurate as the trees used in making the comparison.

More information about ThruLines can be easily accessed by clicking on the "?" In the upper right hand corner of the website.

ThruLines can be filtered to new ancestors with new DNA matches, Potential Ancestors, Ancestors in your linked tree, maternal or paternal ancestors.

By hovering on the person's profile, the number of matches will appear.
Clicking on the profile will take you to the listing of the matches.
Clicking "Back to Thrulines" will take you back to the full listing.

ThruLines are listed by generations. (Can use the ctrl+F to find a specific name)

Sometimes persons will be included at a closer generation but not amore distant one because of differences in spelling of names or dates associated with the ancestor.

Persons with profile pictures or blue male/ pink female icons are already in your tree. Those with green profile icons and dotted lines are potential ancestors who are not currently in your linked tree.

When viewing the ThruLines descendants with names and white boxes with solid line borders are already in your tree.   Those with names within dotted line borders are not in your tree.

ThruLines can be shown in Relationships or Lists view

With Relationships- Click and drag (pan) to go back and forth along the same page. (Need to click below the common ancestor)
When down, multiple generations can use the sibling option to move from one person to the next. The descendant line from the common ancestor will be shown in the middle.

When multiple children and generations are showing, it might be necessary to click to open the complete lineage using the down arrow under the matches' name or between the matches name and descendant.

With the List Option
Each child is shown with all descendants in that group.
Click the down arrow (toggle off to deflate) to view the names with the option to view relationships individually.

The more children who have descendants who share DNA with you, the more confidence of the connection through that common ancestor.   More confident if the shared cMs are also consistent with shared cM charts showing those same relationships.

Clicking on any of the names in the boxes of the descendants will show trees showing the same person. Including those trees linked to DNA matches.   You can go to any of those trees to see the sources and records associated with that tree.

Use ThruLines as clues for research. Beware that persons might be related to you in more than one way- and ThruLines are only showing the one connection.

If you suspect an ancestor, you can put them into your tree as a possible ancestor and see if ThruLines can find any descendants who would match through that line.

What do I do now?

Start identifying all of the known ancestors and listing their connections in the note section of each match. Check to make sure the cM are consistent with the relationships shown.

Create groups for great grandparents or 2GG to help identify unknown connections.
    For Great Grandparents you would have four colors.
    For 2nd Great Grandparents you would have eight colors.

If someone matches at a closer level than these- they would receive more than one colored dot.

Reach out to known (and unknown) cousins and see if they are interested in sharing photos, stories, documents or research information with you.

Use Icons as profile pictures to show DNA connections to direct line ancestors and to branches with DNA connections as desired.

Add DNA matches into your tree listing their shared cM in the suffix box of the "living" person and add in their lineage as it connects to your family.

Systematically go through your known family line and see if DNA matches can be found for each of the children at each level. Thus adding more validity to your paper trail genealogy.

Use DNA to help locate missing great grandparents- if within the last 6-8 generations. Matches beyond that level become so small it's difficult to valid.   If wishing to verify connections, each of the matches' trees must be built out to make sure the connections are correct and that only this is the only connection to this common ancestor among all of their ancestors.

Use the What are the Odds Tool to evaluate when looking for unknown connections (or in cases of adoptees). Found at DNApainter.com

Other Tips

Ancestry only shows shared matches to the 4th cousin level or those sharing more than 20 cM. The smaller the amount of cM there is a likelihood of sharing DNA for reasons beside genetic connections. Blaine Bettinger suggests avoiding using small segments (say, smaller than 7-10 cM), especially if you have tested your parents and they do not match the same DNA match. If small segments can be shown to be a part of the parents' larger segment more credibility can be given to the small match.   (This would require looking at the matches using a chromosome browser, which is not available on ancestry.com)

Testing multiple family members is helpful because each inherits different DNA from parents. If you test your mother or father, your matches will show which side they match.

Work with the known connections first- then move to the unknown. (I start with shared matches and identify all through the High 4th cousin level in the note field.)

Use a predicted amount of DNA chart to help figure out at which level you should match one another. Note: however if you are much younger or older than the other person, you might be a "removed" cousin. Additional DNA is randomly passed down, so actual numbers of DNA shared will fit within a range, not necessarily exact percentages.

Check back frequently- thousands of tests are in the process and as the results are processed more matches will be generated for your account as well.

Figure out how to keep track of your DNA matches. This would include those who you know the relationship, those you can't find a relationship connection with, or the line which you wish to explore more.   This can be done on a spreadsheet, using the star options within ancestry or other options.   Can use the notes in ancestry.com   It all depends on what you want to get from the results.

Also how to keep track of your DNA communications. You might hear from multiple cousins- need a system to keep them straight. Spreadsheets, Evernote lists, whatever works for you.

When looking at your matches have these things available to quick reference.
　　　1- A fan chart (or pedigree chart) of your own ancestors
　　　2- A list of surnames at the different generation levels
　　　3- A tab open to "shared centimorgan project" to quickly help figure out possible connections. https://dnapainter.com/tools/sharedcmv4

Want to learn more:

The Family History Guide has a project based on DNA
https://www.thefhguide.com/project-8-dna.html

Family Search has added a section about using DNA in their help center.
https://www.familysearch.org/dna-testing

The Genetic Genealogist   http://thegeneticgenealogist.com/

ancestry.com
Link to their Knowledge Database for DNA. https://support.ancestry.com/s/ancestrydna

Link to their You Tube Channel- DNA based video section
https://www.youtube.com/user/AncestryCom/search?query=dna

Other chart options:
http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-3FvPMSvFXao/VNfn8sOwBHI/AAAAAAAAAII/dsmDLH8hFHs/s1600/ACColors.jpg

http://blog.kittycooper.com/2014/01/organizing-your-autosomal-dna-information-with-a-spreadsheet/

http://m.wikihow.com/Make-a-Family-Tree-on-Excel?amp=1

https://blogs.ancestry.com/ancestry/2014/04/16/dna-hints-providing-more-clarity-to-my-dna-results/