

## The First 5 Things to Do with Your New Test Results

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DNA testing has become an essential component of thorough genealogical research. Genetic evidence provides connections with genetic relatives, points toward undiscovered family relationships, and uncovers otherwise undetectable errors in documented family relationships.

Although DNA evidence is just another piece of evidence you can add to your genealogical research, the results of DNA testing can be confusing. How do you use these results? Where do you start? Although these are big questions to cover, I will provide you with some basic steps to get you started.

In this talk we'll cover some actions that don't require additional DNA testing, downloading raw data, or using a third-party tool. These are steps you can take today, right now, to begin to understand your DNA testing results and extract as much information as possible via your testing dollars.

### 1. STEP 1 - Check Your Privacy Settings

For this step, you needn't wait to receive your test results. In fact, it's best to review your privacy settings before your test results come in!

Each of the testing companies provides their test takers with privacy settings and options. The test taker can control who, if anyone, sees their results. For your reference, here are links to some privacy setting instructions and/or FAQ for the five major testing companies:

1. 23andMe – <https://www.23andme.com/privacy/> and <https://customercare.23andme.com/hc/en-us/articles/212170838-Privacy-and-display-settings-in-DNA-Relatives>

2. AncestryDNA – <https://www.ancestry.com/cs/legal/PrivacyForAncestryDNATesting> and <https://support.ancestry.com/s/article/Changing-your-AncestryDNA-Account-Settings-1460090082989>
3. Family Tree DNA – <https://www.familytreedna.com/learn/ftdna/family-tree-privacy-settings/>
4. Living DNA – <https://www.livingdna.com/help-centre/104/how-my-raw-data-protected-living-dna> (I expect that there will be more information about privacy settings will be available once Living DNA launches genetic cousin matching in 2018 or 2019)
5. MyHeritage – <http://helpcenter.myheritage.com/Account-Settings/Privacy-settings/>

It is best to periodically review your privacy settings to ensure that you are up to date and sharing only what you are comfortable sharing. If you are administrating DNA test results for another person, be sure to review the privacy settings with them initially, and if any updates are necessary.

## 2. STEP 2 - Upload/Add a “Skeleton Tree”

If you are interested in maximizing the outcome of your DNA testing, it is nearly essentially to provide a tree for your matches to review. Providing a family tree which is associated with your test results also helps ensure that your matches will do some of the work for you! Any time you can get a match to do the work, you win! By having a tree available, your matches can review the tree without having to contact you first (or Google you to find or build your tree!).

At some of the testing companies, you’ll also be able to *link* your tree to your results, which provides additional benefits. For your reference, here are links for instructions to add a family tree to your DNA test results:

1. 23andMe and MyHeritage – we will cover this during the presentation.
2. AncestryDNA – <https://support.ancestry.com/s/article/Attaching-AncestryDNA-Test-Results-to-an-Ancestry-Member-Tree-1460090082987>

3. Family Tree DNA – <https://www.familytreedna.com/learn/ftdna/how-to-family-tree/>
4. Living DNA – I expect that there will be more information about providing trees once Living DNA launches genetic cousin matching in 2018 or 2019

### 3. STEP 3 - [Quickly] Review Your Ethnicity Results

Ethnicity estimates, or more properly “biogeographical estimates,” provide an estimate of the geographical origins of your DNA. This science is relatively new and has many limitations, and thus our ethnicity estimates should only be viewed as high-level estimates. Indeed, I recommend sticking to the **continental level** when reviewing your results (Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe, etc.).

We will examine some of these limitations, and your take-home messages, during the presentation.

For more information, see: Judy Russell, “Admixture: Not Soup Yet,” *The Legal Genealogist*, 18 May 2014 (<https://www.legalgenealogist.com/2014/05/18/admixture-not-soup-yet/>).

### 4. STEP 4 - Review Your CLOSEST Matches

You are going to have the most success with your **closest** matches at each of the testing companies. Luckily, every testing company arranges your genetic matches from the closest to the most distant (based on how much DNA you share). Some test-takers will have very close matches (second cousin or closer), while others may have only more distant matches (fourth cousin or more distant).

For more information, see: Blaine Bettinger, “Are You Doing Everything to Identify Your Matches?,” *The Genetic Genealogist*, 11 March 2017 (<https://thegeneticgenealogist.com/2017/03/11/are-you-doing-everything-to-identify-your-matches/>).

## 5. STEP 5 - Use Your Magic Wand: Shared Matches

Shared Matching (also called In Common With or ICW) is the single most powerful tool the testing companies give us to explore our connection with our matches. We will examine this tool and how to use it at each of the major testing companies.

1. 23andMe - <https://customercare.23andme.com/hc/en-us/articles/221689668-Relatives-In-Common-Tool>
2. AncestryDNA - <https://support.ancestry.com/s/article/AncestryDNA-Shared-Matches>
3. Family Tree DNA - <https://www.familytreedna.com/learn/user-guide/family-finder-myftdna/matches-page/>
4. Living DNA – I expect that there will be more information about shared matching once Living DNA launches genetic cousin matching in 2018 or 2019
5. MyHeritage - <https://blog.myheritage.com/2017/08/new-review-match-page-discover-how-you-are-related-to-your-dna-matches/>

### **For Much More:**

If you enjoyed this lecture, I have many more DNA lectures available to members at Legacy Family Tree Webinars!

<https://familytreewebinars.com/blaineбетtinger>