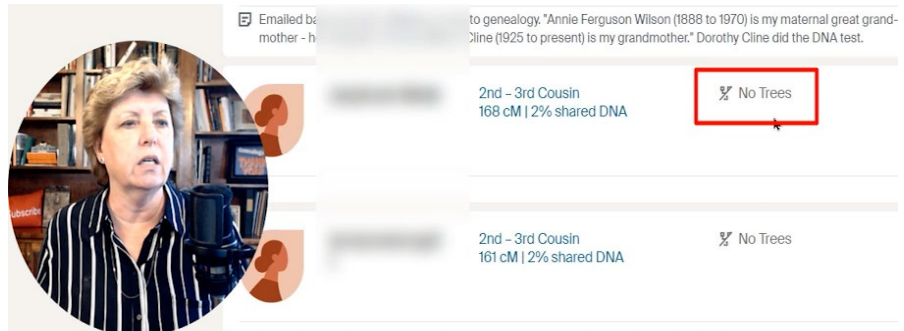


How to Use DNA Cousins Without Trees on Ancestry

Video Link

Did you know that you can use DNA cousins who don't have trees to help you with your genealogical research? Yes, you can. Here's how.



If you have not seen the DNA Grouping Videos, I suggest you watch that one first. This will make more sense when you do. [Here is a playlist of four videos](#) that will really help understand how to group your DNA cousins on Ancestry.

Here are tips to figuring out how a DNA Cousin who does not have a tree on Ancestry... how to figure out how they are related to you.

Process for Estimating a DNA Cousins Relationship

1. Take note of the shared cM.
2. Calculate the possible relationships using [DNA Painter's Shared cM Tool](#). (Bookmark this website.)
3. Start with the highest probabilities and through a process of elimination, you'll eventually figure this out.
4. Take note of their name. The surname might be a clue as to which side of the family they are on.
5. Click the **Shared Matches Tool**. Do you recognize the DNA cousin in the list? This is a filtered list that you share "in common with" the unknown DNA cousin who has no tree.
6. Skip over immediate family list dropping down to "Close Family" or the next highest "Extended Family" list. Do you have any 1st, 2nd or 3rd cousins that you recognize?
7. Who is the "best-known" match in that list? This is the DNA cousin you know belongs to either your father's side or your mother's side... or better yet, you know how they connect to the family to a Common Ancestor that's in your tree.

Filter
Enter the total number of cM for your match here:

168 reset

or enter %

Then any relationships that fit will stand out below
Click here for a shareable link to the cM amount above

Most distant common ancestors
Assuming no pedigree collapse or endogamy, and that you're related in just one way, the furthest back you might need to go to find common ancestors for a match of 168cM is 4th-Great-Grandparent level or generation 7 on your pedigree chart.
The connection may be closer.

Relationship probabilities (based on stats from [The DNA Geek](#))
New: View these relationships in a tree

52%	Half 2C 2C1R Half 1C2R 1C3R
31%	Half GG-Aunt / Uncle 2C Half 1C1R 1C2R Half GG-Niece / Nephew
13%	Half 1C3R † 3C Half 2C1R 2C2R
3%	2C3R † Half 2C2R † Half 3C 3C1R
2%	Great-Great-Aunt / Uncle † Great-Great-Niece / Nephew † Half Great-Aunt / Uncle † Half Great-Niece / Nephew † Half 1C 1C1R

† this relationship has a positive probability for 168cM in theDNAgeek's table of probabilities, but falls outside the bounds of the recorded cM range (99th percentile)



8. Group them into the same family branch group as your “Best-Known” match.
9. This will determine which side of the family he/she is on, eliminating the other side or other branches
10. Using the probabilities from Ancestry or [DNA painter](#) (my favorite), start with the highest probabilities and write them down. Then cross off relationships that don’t fit as you research.
11. Use the G-Rule to determine possible common ancestors. Starting with the DNA Cousin, to determine who the Common Ancestors might be... if it’s a 2nd Cousin, then you would share a set of Great Grandparents.
 - a. G-Rule is to count the G’s i.e. Great = 1 G, and Grand = another G. So, if you are trying to determine who the common ancestral couple is from a DNA cousin who is estimated as a 3rd cousin, this means that you likely share (count the G’s) Great Great Grandparents. The trick is figuring out which of the 16 pairs of your 3X Great Grandparents that you and your DNA cousin descends from (a.k.a the Common Ancestors). You do this through a process of elimination.
 - b. Keep in mind that you might have half relationships or generational differences which will make the G-Rule not perfect... but close.



Narrow Down the Branches of Your Tree

The trick to figuring out how a DNA cousin relates to you is to use the **Shared Matches tool** on that DNA cousin.

Then use the trees of those shared matches (looking for common) to understand what branch of your tree the “mystery DNA Cousin” (without a tree) came from. You can compare the trees of the other shared matches noting the common surnames.

Even if you don’t have a tree at all or don’t know who your biological parents are, you can use this to find the common ancestors among the DNA matches.

Lining up those common families from the different trees, will begin to paint a picture of what your family tree looks like.

Once you have compared a few trees (from the Shared Matches with the mystery match) you’ll begin to see similar surnames and possibly the same ancestors in those shared match trees. This is likely the branch that your mystery match comes from.

From there, use traditional genealogy research to build out the tree connecting the various shared matches, and possibly connecting the mystery match you started with.

More Tricks

1. Search for other surnames of from the Shared match list that appears in your tree along branches you suspect the mystery match comes from.
2. Research and outline the descendants from the common ancestor identified through the shared matches. You can do this easily in an Excel spreadsheet. Don't forget to make note the name of the DNA cousin and his/her tree name so you know where you got the information.

Conclusion

Ultimately, you'll see enough common ancestors that you can research how they connect, thus possibly helping you or your mystery match with the family tree.

OTHER VIDEOS



[AncestryDNA Shared Matches to Solve Genealogy Research Questions](#)

[Grouping DNA Cousin Matches on Ancestry](#)

[AncestryDNA Grouping Cousin Matches: Clarified](#)