

A DAY OUT WITH YOUR DNA

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Your testing company has evaluated around 800,000 locations on your DNA to help them determine your origins and your genetic cousins. While these reports detailing your percentage of this and that and your humongous list of newfound family is what you paid for, don't neglect your raw data. Your raw data is this list of 800,000 locations that were tested. These numbers are actually half of what you paid for. The other half is the company's interpretation of the numbers.

WHAT IS RAW DATA?

Now, I am not prone to car analogies, but I think we could use one here to serve our purposes. Think of your raw data like all the parts of the car that actually make it work, and the testing companies' report of cousins and origins are like the body of the car, the part that we see and interact with. So while one company will show you a Jeep Grand Cherokee, another will show you a Mercedes-Benz M-Class, but underneath all that metal they are basically the same (or at least, that's what my husband told me!). Because you have this raw data file you can take it in between companies (i.e. Jeep and Mercedes-Benz) and get all sorts of new and interesting looks on the same raw data. The auto industry calls this platform sharing. In genetic genealogy, we call this transferring our data.

DOWNLOADING RAW DATA

But before we get into all of that, we need to obtain that raw data file. This means you will want to download your raw data from wherever you were tested. This raw data comes in the form of a .csv file that you can open on Excel if you want (but really, if you have nothing better to do than scroll through 800,000 lines of data, please come talk to me - I have so many more productive things that need to be done!). For instructions on how to download your raw data from your testing company, head over to my website at www.yourDNAguide.com/transfer.

TRANSFERRING DATA

Transferring your data just means you are taking that data file from the company who generated it for you into a company who has some tools that you want to explore. These destination places generally fall into one of two categories: testing companies or third-party tools. As the genetic genealogy industry grows and changes we will see more and more of both kinds of companies cropping up to capitalize on the opportunities that are inherent in large amounts of new data being generated.

In class we will go through each company and third party tool, but here I thought it would be most helpful to just provide a table of these companies and list what I think are the most important and comparable features between them. As of this publication, you can obtain a raw data file from Ancestry.com, Family Tree DNA, 23andMe, MyHeritage, and LivingDNA. The companies on the chart are those you can transfer into.

Company	Cousin Matching	Origins Report	Genealogy Tools	One-time Fee Required	Membership Required	Traits Report	Drug Response	Health Risks
DNA Land	X	X	X			X		
DNAGedcom			X					
FTDNA	X	X	X	X				
Gedmatch	X	X	X					
GPSOrigins		X						
Livewello				X		X	X	X
MyHeritage	X	X	X	X*				
Promethease				X		X	X	X

CAUTION!

Please please please remember that your raw data does contain your own personal information that does identify you uniquely from anyone else on the planet. While you shouldn't be afraid to try new tools and explore your personal genomics, it is very important to read the privacy information of each company carefully to be sure you know what you are consenting to when you are uploading your data. Most companies are fastidious about privacy, but many are also involved in research endeavors, including pharmaceuticals, so please be aware before you upload.

BIG OL' LIST OF TOOLS: http://isogg.org/wiki/Autosomal_DNA_tools

THE ONES I TALK ABOUT:

Family Tree DNA: www.ftdna.com
 AncestryDNA: www.ancestryDNA.com
 My Heritage: www.myheritage.com
 Living DNA: www.livingDNA.com
 Gedmatch: www.gedmatch.com
 DNA Land: www.DNA.land
 Promethease: www.promethease.com
 DNAGedcom: www.DNAGedcom.com
 Livewello: www.livewello.com