Using Family Tree DNA - - Family Finder results

Note: This session will concentrate on autosomal DNA matches at FT-DNA, called Family Finder. We will cover mt-DNA and Y-DNA matches in a future session.

FT-DNA provides a range of tools including a 7-person chromosome browser, ICW and NICW (in-common-with and not-in-common-with) for all matches, a Matrix tool, and a range of search options and filters. The Advanced Matches tool can be used to look for matches across the different test types and to find matches in the same FT-DNA project groups.   Family Matching (paternal/maternal) links known relatives to your tree. FT-DNA also provides the ability to download all matches and chromosome data to spreadsheets.

FT-DNA has hundreds of thousands of Y-DNA and mtDNA customers who tested their Y-DNA and/or mtDNA up to 20 years ago, and whose stored samples could potentially be used to test their autosomal DNA (some of those testers are now deceased so can't be tested elsewhere).   At FT-DNA, you can manage DNA accounts for other family members. There are numerous surname, ethnic, and geographic DNA projects which you can join.

Family Tree DNA allows you to turn on or turn off the visibility of your matches (Account Settings > Privacy & Sharing > Matching Preferences). If you opt out of matching, you won't be able to see any people who share DNA with you, and they won't be able to see you in their match lists. You can select different settings for each of your test types (e.g. Family Finder, Y-DNA, mtDNA). Family Tree DNA's terms of service allow law enforcement to upload DNA kits from samples taken from scenes of violent crimes. You can opt out of visibility to law enforcement, which means they won't see your kit in their matches if you are related.

FT-DNA autosomal DNA results dashboard

Autosomal DNA results and tools - - There are five tabs across the top of the home page: Family Finder matches; myOrigins; Chromosome Browser; Chromosome Painter; See More. The "See More" tab includes Matrix, ancientOrigins, and Data Download.

Click on "Family Finder matches" to see your list of matches. It can sometimes take several minutes for the site to generate the list. Each match will show the match's name,

which FT-DNA test or tests the person has taken, assigned haplogroup, relationship range, amount of shared DNA and length of longest shared segment. On the far right side of each DNA match's information, it shows if the match has a linked family tree, the match date, and whether or not the person matches on the X chromosome. Be sure to check out the lists of ancestral surnames, and trees of matches, to search for clues. Also make sure to link a tree to your own results.

When you click on the match name, a display shows the contact e-mail, earliest known paternal and maternal ancestor by name, haplogroup detail, and ancestral surnames. By clicking on the "view details" link next to the list of ancestral surnames, you can opt to see only the matching surnames, or you choose to view the match's entire list of surnames, together with locations for each name.

Family Finder matches are listed in descending order, based on the amounts of shared DNA, with the matches showing the highest amount of shared DNA at the top. The default shows all matches, but one can choose to show specific categories of matches by clicking on the down arrow at the top left, next to the words "All Matches." This enables you to limit the match list to immediate relatives (nuclear family members); close relatives (aunts, uncles, first and second cousins); distant relatives and remote relatives.

By clicking on the up-down arrows on the top right, you can choose to see the list of DNA matches sorted in different ways - - by segment length, by Y or mt haplogroup, by ancestral surnames, or according to the most recent matches. The list of matches is shown in "detail view" by default. One can also see the list of matches in "table view," which makes it easier to copy and paste the information into a word document.

One can search for surnames in the match list by clicking on the magnifying glass and entering the name, using either a general search, or an exact search, and searching the entire list, or some sub-category of the match list. The name search will show both DNA matches who carry that surname, as well as DNA matches who have that surname somewhere in their linked tree.

Each match also shows icons for tools to help identify how the match is related. Click on the human head icon, then choose "in common with" or "not in common with" to see shared matches (or not) with that person. By looking at matches ICW or NICW an individual known match, one can separate shared matches into maternal and paternal lines. The notes icon is useful for recording the match connection. A dark notes icon shows that there are notes; a white notes icon has no notes yet. Be sure to click on "save" so you don't lose your notes!

<u>Other features - - from links at top of page</u>

<u>MyOrigins</u> - - Shows where one's DNA has come from, together with a map and ethnic percentages. This feature is rather basic, and not terribly useful.

<u>Chromosome browser</u> - - This is much more useful! One can choose up to seven DNA matches to compare in the chromosome browser. It is helpful if one can identify one or more of the matches as belonging to a particular line in one's tree. If one has tested at more than one company, compare names and trees, to try to determine which match might be most useful for comparing other matches against that person.

<u>Chromosome painter</u> - - This is fun for a moment. It does not appear that you can paint anyone's chromosomes besides your own. This is when you hope you have an extremely varied list of continents where your ancestors once lived. If all your ancestors come from one continent, say Europe, your chromosome painting will be monochromatic! This feature should not be confused with the chromosome painter at the DNA Painter third-party website, which facilitates chromosome painting for multiple individuals.

<u>Features under "See More" link</u>

<u>Family Finder Matrix</u> - - This tool can be used to find genetic connections among people in the match list. The Family Finder Matrix page allows you to select up to ten people and compare their Family Finder relationships in a grid (matrix). Add matches to the matrix by clicking a name or names on the Matches list on the left and then clicking the "Add" button. Remove matches from the matrix by clicking a name or names in the Selected Matches list and then clicking the "Remove" button.

The grid displays underneath the main list as you begin to add matches to the Selected Matches list. The grid shows those who share a genetic relationship according to Family Finder results with a white check mark on a blue background. When two matches do not match each other, the grid shows a blank white square. But this tool can be useful in confirming (or not) if specific DNA matches you select also match each other. It's a sort of clustering tool - - but you have to manually add people to the grid, in groups of ten, and then remove ones who don't match. Using the matrix tool is not a rapid process!

<u>Ancient Origins</u> - - This an interesting page. It shows various waves of ancient population of your ancestral region(s), and what percentage of your DNA is allocated to each. For example, on the European ancient origins page, my DNA results show various percentages each for metal age invaders, farmers, and hunter-gatherers. There is also a

category for non-European. By clicking on one of the percentage buttons, e.g., metal age invaders, the site displays a migration map and indicates areas of settlement, together with a brief history of that ancient era. In addition, you can use filters to show migration routes and archaeological sites for all categories of settlement. Clicking on each archaeological site icon brings up a brief summary of what was found there.

Data download - - Click on this link to download your raw DNA data for the purpose of uploading your data from FT-DNA to another DNA site.

Home page - - top tabs

Results and tools - - This tab lists the tests taken, and provides quick links to each test - - autosomal, mt-DNA and Y-DNA, and provides links to the tools for each type of test. Essentially, this tab is just an alternate way to get to the matches and tools shown in the center of the dashboard.

Family tree - - This tab takes you to the family tree you have linked to your DNA results. You can revisit your tree and update it with additional information, which then helps you to determine how more of your matches connect to you.

Group projects - - By all means, check out the group projects. This is a feature that is unique to Family Tree DNA. There are group projects for every conceivable category of genetic genealogy, including many, many surname groups, regional groups, ethnic groups. Some groups are limited to Y-DNA testers, others to mitochondrial DNA testers. Many groups include autosomal testers. Some groups are more active than others, but the groups provide places to connect with other FT-DNA testers who are researching the same family lines you are.

Conclusion

If you have DNA tested at more than one company, you will want to run the names of your FT-DNA matches at the other companies, to see if they also match you there. Sometimes, you can learn more about a particular matching individual at one of the other DNA sites, which then allows you to confirm the connection with that same match at FT-DNA.

The best way to get the most out of your DNA results at Family Tree DNA is to spend time exploring the various features and how they help you identify the ancestral lines for your DNA matches as you work with them. Practice, practice, practice!