

Advanced Matches at Family Tree DNA  
GSSCC DNA Special Interest Group - - handout compiled by Gail Burk  
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Advanced Matches at Family Tree DNA is a matching tool for Y-DNA tests and mitochondrial DNA tests that is often overlooked. Advanced Matches provides the ability to filter for the intersection of several different kinds of matches, including different levels of Y-DNA and mt-DNA tests, autosomal (Family Finder), x-DNA, projects, and surnames. Look at the bottom of your home page at FT-DNA for “Additional Tests and Tools,” and click on “Advanced Matches.” You can select any combination of tests to view people who match you on all of the combined tests or criteria.

The Advanced Matches tool is useful for comparing your autosomal (Family Finder) matches at FT-DNA with your mitochondrial DNA matches and/or your Y-DNA matches at FT-DNA. You can also use Advanced Matches to search for testers who participate in the same group projects you are in, to see which ones match you autosomally. And you can even use Advanced Matches to search for testers with surnames you are researching.

If you are a Y-DNA or mt-DNA tester at FT-DNA you can select a combination of tests to see matches who match you on all selected tests, such as “all Y-DNA” and “Family Finder.” Or, for example, search for “Y-DNA” plus the surname “Waterbury.” Or, as another example, search for “mt-DNA” plus “Acadian Amerindian Project.” Of course, in order to run Advanced Matches with a group project, you must be a participant in that project. You can also run reports for autosomal DNA tests with surnames and projects.

Searching for testers who match you by way of both Y-DNA and autosomal DNA at FT-DNA enables you learn which matches are more closely related to you in time. You can select “all Y-DNA,” or limit the report to “Y-DNA67,” for example. Roberta Estes recommends running a report beginning with Y-DNA111, then running a separate report for Y-DNA 67, and on down, one report at a time, through Y-DNA37, Y-DNA25, and Y-DNA12; that is, you can run a separate report against each level of Y-DNA testers.

If you have done the full-sequence mt-DNA test, select “FMS” and run it against “Family Finder” to find mitochondrial matches who are also autosomal matches. Just as with Y-DNA, Advanced Matches works well in discovering who among your autosomal matches is also among your closer maternal matches. Testers who have taken an mt-DNA test at Family Tree DNA can run reports filtered for mt-DNA and various group projects or surnames. The combination of the FMS, full sequence test, plus Family Finder displays just the people you match on both tests - - but keep in mind that it’s possible that you match those people because of different ancestors in a similar population. This is

especially true in endogamous populations, or groups, like the Acadians, with a significant degree of pedigree collapse.

By running reports for Y-DNA tests, mt-DNA tests, and/or autosomal tests against the surnames in your tree, you may find hints to help break down your genealogical brick walls. And you can find more genealogists with whom to collaborate.

Be sure to select “yes” where the text reads, “Show only people I match in all selected tests,” which means both tests. If you don’t select “yes,” you will get all your autosomal matches, plus all your Y-DNA matches, or all your mt-DNA matches, which is not what you want. You want only the people who match you on both tests – so be sure to select “yes.”

Advanced Matching Tip from Roberta Estes - - Running a report for matches within specific projects may be useful for people who do not carry the mitochondrial DNA of the mt-DNA population in that project, but who descend from the earliest known ancestor reported for the project. If you have identified the haplogroup for that earliest known ancestor, the haplogroup can be used to filter autosomal matches who participate in the project to find those matches most closely related to you. By clicking on the match’s name, you can see information about that person’s earliest known ancestor. By clicking on their trees, you can verify the ancestral line of descent.

A Word about Projects - - Group projects are especially useful for Y-DNA testers. Utilizing Advanced Matches allows you to see people in your group projects who are the closest matches to you, which encourages collaboration. By joining a number of projects, by haplogroup, by surname, and geographic projects, you can maximize the usefulness of the Advanced Matches tool. Be aware, though, that project parameters vary. Some surname project administrators only take Y-DNA testers, or mt-DNA testers; not all projects accept autosomal testers.

Sources      DNAeXplained blog by Roberta Estes  
                  “Mitochondrial DNA A–Z, etc.”  
                  accessed September 29, 2025

<https://dna-explained.com/2025/09/02/mitochondrial-dna-a-z-a-step-by-step-guide-to-matches-mitotree-and-mtdna-discover/>

*The Complete Guide to Family Tree DNA*, by Roberta Estes; published by Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 2024; pages 66-67, 128-129, 207-208.