

Guide to MyHeritage

[Video Link](#)

Why watch [this video](#) or read this handout? Because there is free stuff here!

I am always exploring all options for genealogy research. It is part of what we do as professional genealogists to ensure that we conduct “Reasonably Exhaustive Research,” as set forth by the Board for Certification of Genealogists. It is one of the core pillars of any good family historian.

MyHeritage is another resource that has unique records and features that no one else has.

Here we are going to explore just a few of those features and how you can get started on MyHeritage for free. I am not talking about a free trial here, just a place that gets you started. Of course, they will have some features and records behind a paywall, I am not going to lie.

Full disclosure, this video is now sponsored by MyHeritage. This sponsorship happened only after they learned I was already working on this project. I made it clear to them that they could not have input on what I said, good or bad, what I covered, and or how I presented it. This video is my opinion and mine alone.

MyHeritage Overview

MyHeritage is a family history website just like others you are familiar with, but it has some unique features. While you can build a family tree (for free, by the way) and upload your DNA to find cousin matches just like the other sites, MyHeritage has fun and useful features to help tell the family history story.

This video (linked above) has chapter markers if you want to jump around to get right where you need to learn something new.

Family Tree Builder

When you first go to the MyHeritage website you have the option to download the free Family Tree Builder software that would then download to your computer. It can synchronize with your MyHeritage online tree. You do not need this software, but it is a free download if you want to work on your own computer and sync as needed. If you decide to skip this step, you can go straight to the online platform and start importing your family tree or creating a new tree.

Family Tree Builder

Used by millions of people worldwide, Family Tree Builder helps you research your family history, build your family tree and add photos, historical records and more.

[Free Download](#)



GenealogyTV.org



YouTube.com/GenealogyTV

Family Tree

Building a family tree online is easy. You have two options, start from nothing, or import a Gedcom file.

Start a Free Family Tree on MyHeritage

There are a few options to starting a family tree on MyHeritage.

Free Trial v. Free Tree

You can start a [free trial](#) (affiliate link), or you can start a [free tree](#) without the free trial.

Import Your Tree

You also have the option to upload your tree as Gedcom file from another service (like Ancestry).

Gedcom Files

Gedcom files are simply a compressed file containing the data from your family tree on any family tree platform. Therefore, you can download it and upload it elsewhere. There is no need to open it. Just upload it to the new location like a zip file. No worries, your family tree originating on the other site will not be deleted or go away, you are just making a copy and transferring that copy to MyHeritage.

Start a New Tree

To start and build a new tree for free, go here [LINK](#).

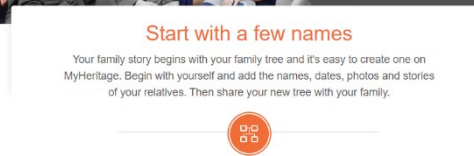
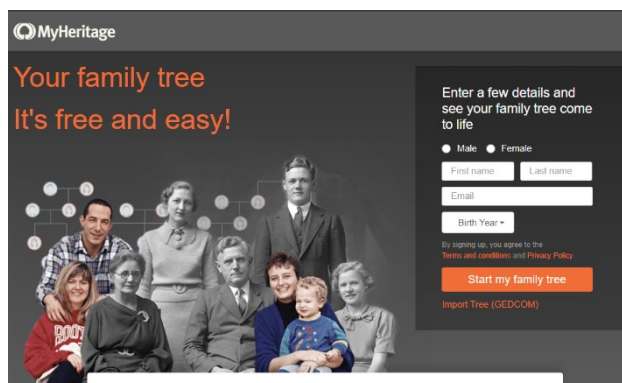
I recommend this option for people who are just starting in family history and are not sure they want to jump in with both feet just yet. However, if you have been working on your family history on another platform, consider uploading a Gedcom file to save time.

Upload Gedcom

If you have started a tree on another website (and would like to not type everything over again), you can download a Gedcom file and upload it to MyHeritage for free.

Depending on what platform you are downloading your Gedcom file from, will depend on where and how you download the Gedcom file. It is simple on any platform; it typically is found in the tree settings. Be aware that not all the records and images will be exported. Typically, only the data (such as the facts data) of your family tree on the other website will be downloaded to the Gedcom file.

[Here is a convenient link](#) for you so that you can upload your Gedcom file.

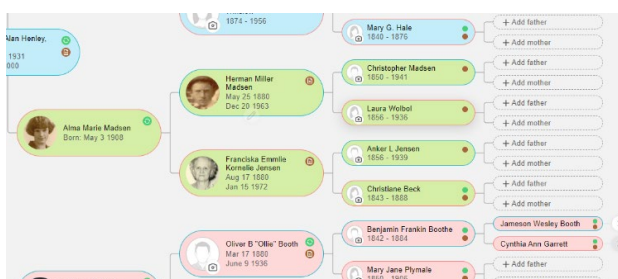
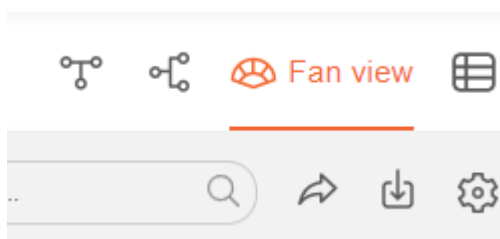


The MyHeritage Platform

Here are my favorite uses for the MyHeritage Platform. While this is not a comprehensive guide, this should help you get started navigating around the website. Once you have started or uploaded your tree, you will find it where it says, "Your Tree Name Web Site" (it is your family tree website on their platform). It is in the upper left corner.

Tree View

Just like most platforms, the Family Tree view has three different views, the horizontal Ancestral View, the vertical Descendants view, and the Fan view. You can switch views with the icons in the upper right corner of the screen.



Experiment with the menus in the lower right corner will provide options like turning on and off color mode.

Fan View

The ability to go to 10 generations on the fan chart is one of the features that you can only find on MyHeritage.



Same Ancestors on Two Branches of the Tree

In my tree I have my fourth great grandparents **John Henley** and **Keziah Nixon** on two different branches of the family tree. Thus, my great grandparents **Henry G. Henley** and his wife **Nancy W. Winslow** were

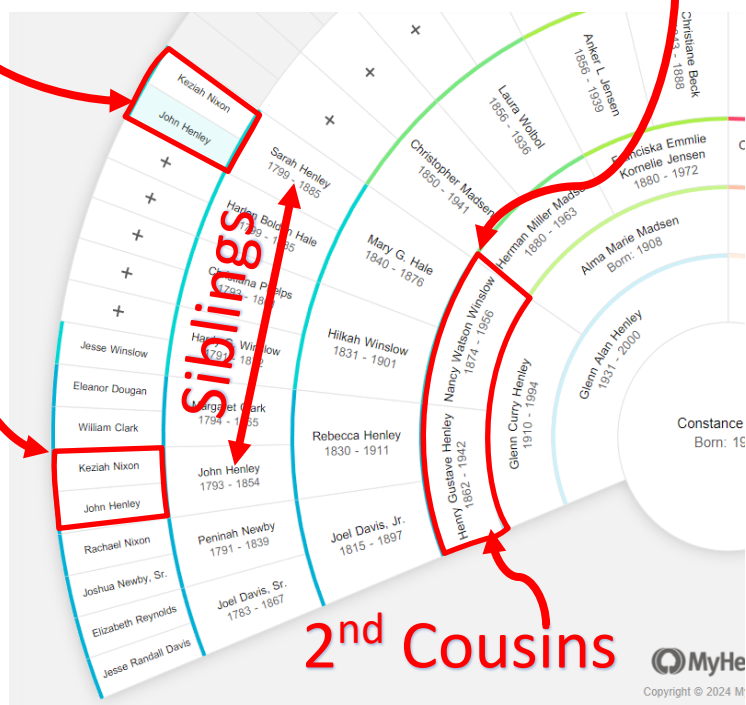
second cousins when they married.

Henry Henley and Nancy Winslow shared their great grandparents John Henley and Keziah Nixon as ancestors in common. It happens all the time, especially in small towns or locales.

So how do you add ancestors into the MyHeritage tree, without duplicating people?

Use the **Connect/Disconnect** tool.

In this case, I would go to one of the two siblings, either John Henley (the son of John and Keziah Henley) or Sarah Henley (child of the same John and Keziah Henley couple). In this case we will use the sister Sarah Henley.



- Then click on her in the tree to open her mini profile on the side view (if you are in tree view) and click on “More” where the three dot menu is located.
- Choose **Connect to Existing Person**.
- Choose the relationship you wish to add.
- Start typing the name and the dropdown menu will populate with people already in your tree.

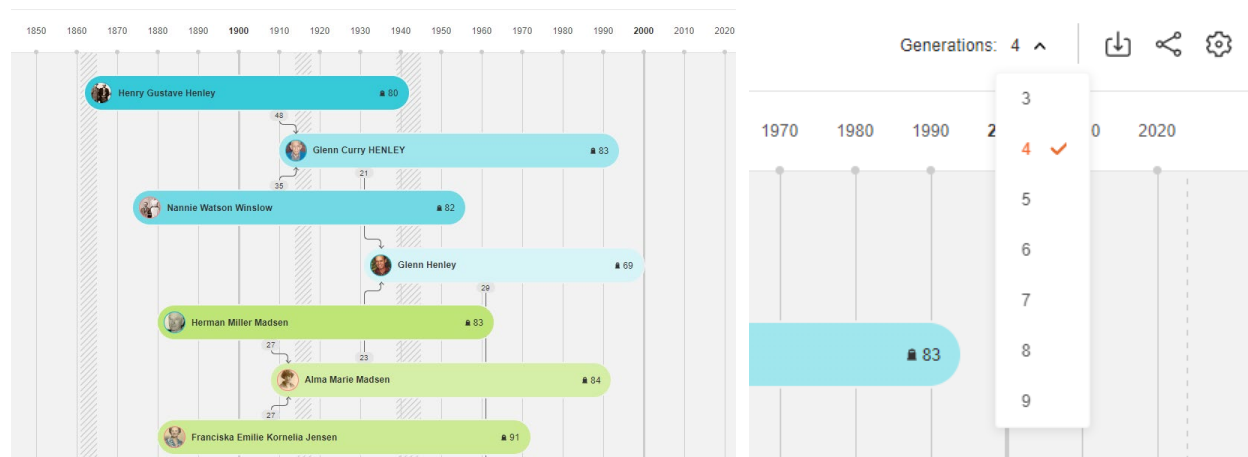
In my case, I had already added Sarah’s father (John Henley), so it automatically added John’s wife Keziah to the tree as an existing person as well.

If this is not correct, **you can cancel or disconnect** the relationship using the same steps but **choosing Remove Connection** when clicking on the three dot menu you started with.

Timeline

I think one of the most underutilized tools that MyHeritage yet has incredible usefulness is the timeline.

This is something I do not see on any other platform, and if you just look at it you can obviously see the lifespan of your ancestors. And how they overlap. This can be incredibly helpful when you are studying the history of an area to get further context in your family story.



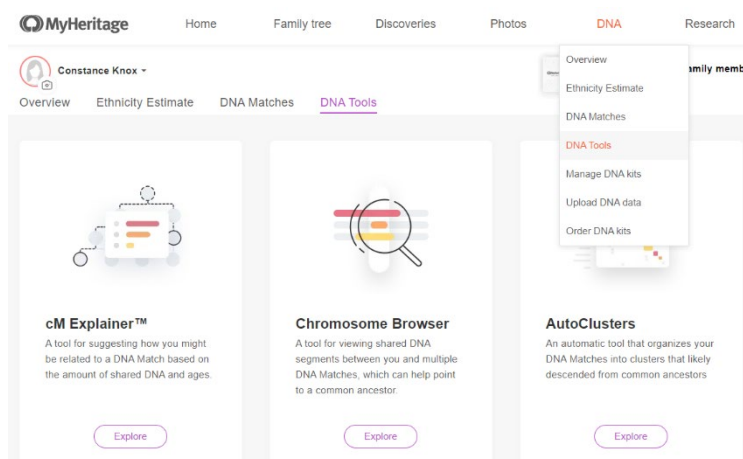
To get there, hover over the Family Tree tab, drop down to timeline. If you have a tree on MyHeritage, it will show you a timeline in tree format. It is very cool.

Do not forget to change the generations to see how the timeline increases.

DNA TOOLS

MyHeritage.com offers a suite of powerful DNA tools designed to provide users with comprehensive insights into their genetic heritage and family connections.

One of the standout features is the DNA Matching tool, which compares an individual's DNA with others in the MyHeritage database to identify potential relatives and shared ancestors. This tool employs advanced algorithms to calculate the degree of genetic relatedness, helping users discover previously unknown family connections and build their family trees with greater accuracy.



Ethnicity Estimates

Additionally, MyHeritage provides users with Ethnicity Estimate, a feature that analyzes DNA samples to determine the geographical regions and ethnic groups that contribute to an individual's genetic makeup. This tool offers users a fascinating glimpse into their ancestral origins, often revealing unexpected heritage connections and providing a deeper understanding of their family history. Furthermore, the Chromosome Browser tool enables users to visualize and explore their DNA matches on a chromosomal level, facilitating detailed analysis of shared DNA segments and further enhancing the process of uncovering familial relationships. With these innovative DNA tools, MyHeritage empowers users to unlock the secrets hidden within their genetic code and connect with their heritage in meaningful ways.

Do not get caught up in the differences between the ethnicity estimates from one company to another. They are using different reference panels, and they are dividing the regions differently.

DNA Matches

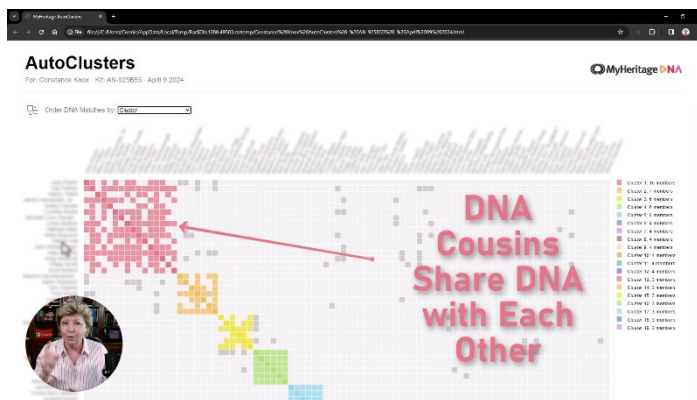
MyHeritage's DNA Matching feature is renowned for its ability to uncover familial connections and identify relatives within its extensive global user base. Through sophisticated algorithms, MyHeritage compares an individual's DNA with millions of others in its database, facilitating the discovery of potential genetic matches. This process often leads to exciting revelations about users' family histories, transcending generational and geographical boundaries.

What distinguishes MyHeritage's DNA Matching is its precision in providing users with accurate and meaningful matches. By analyzing shared segments of DNA, the platform determines the degree of genetic relatedness between individuals, enabling users to confidently explore their familial connections. Moreover, MyHeritage seamlessly integrates its DNA Matching feature with its broader suite of genealogical tools, allowing users to effortlessly incorporate DNA data into their family trees.

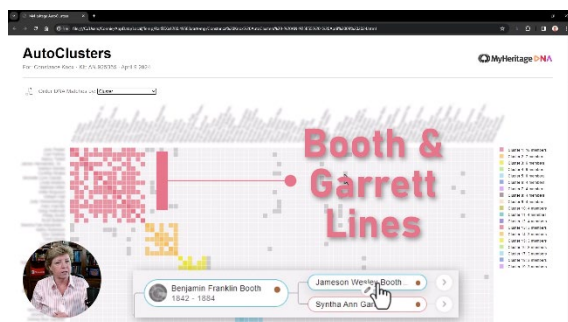
Overall, MyHeritage's DNA Matching empowers users to unravel the mysteries of their genetic heritage and forge connections with relatives in profound ways. Whether users are reuniting with long-lost family members or simply curious about their ancestral origins, MyHeritage offers a comprehensive platform for exploring and celebrating one's family history through the insights provided by DNA analysis.

AutoCluster

MyHeritage's AutoCluster tool is a unique feature that offers users a visual representation of their DNA matches, grouping them into clusters based on shared genetic connections. This innovative tool employs advanced algorithms to analyze users' DNA match lists and identify clusters of individuals who are likely related to each other. By organizing DNA matches



into clusters, the AutoCluster tool provides users with a clearer understanding of their genetic relationships and helps them identify common ancestors more easily.



What sets the AutoCluster tool apart is its ability to simplify the complex task of analyzing DNA match lists. Instead of manually sorting through long lists of matches, users can quickly identify patterns and relationships within their genetic data through the visual representation of clusters. This streamlined approach saves users time and effort while empowering them to uncover connections they may have otherwise overlooked.

Upload DNA to MyHeritage

MyHeritage allows you to upload your DNA for free most of the time. To do so, you will need to download your DNA from another site such as AncestryDNA. If you have DNA on other sites, you may be able to download the DNA from there as well. See below for instructions on downloading DNA from Ancestry.

Once you have downloaded your DNA from another site, you can upload it to MyHeritage and start a free account all at the same time.

Go to this page <https://www.myheritage.com/dna/upload> and follow the instructions for uploading your DNA to MyHeritage.

MyHeritage says “Receiving DNA Matches and contacting them is free and unlimited. Unlocking additional DNA features (Chromosome Browser, Ethnicity Estimate, Shared Ancestral Places, and more) costs an extra fee.”

Upload DNA data

If you or your family members have already taken a DNA test with another provider, you can upload the DNA data to MyHeritage and receive DNA Matches for FREE*.

Start

Haven't tested your DNA yet? [Order your DNA kit](#)

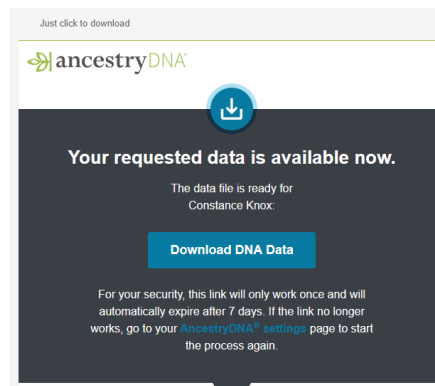
* Receiving DNA Matches and contacting them is free and unlimited. Unlocking additional DNA features (Chromosome Browser, Ethnicity Estimate, Shared ancestral places, and more) costs an extra fee.



Downloading DNA from Ancestry

1. **Log into Ancestry** and go to the DNA tab and drop down to **Your Results Summary**.
2. Next click on the **gear icon** in the **upper right corner**.
3. **Scroll down** to where you see **download or delete**.

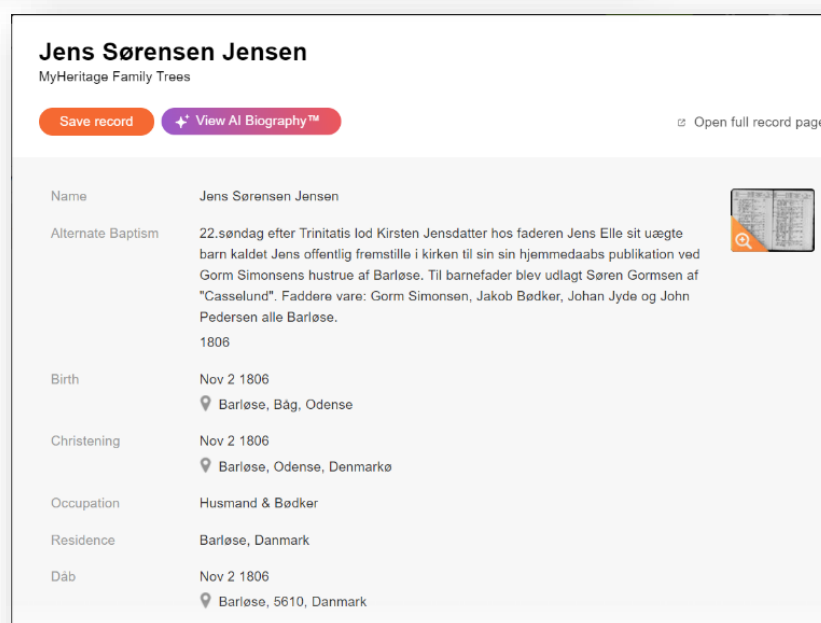
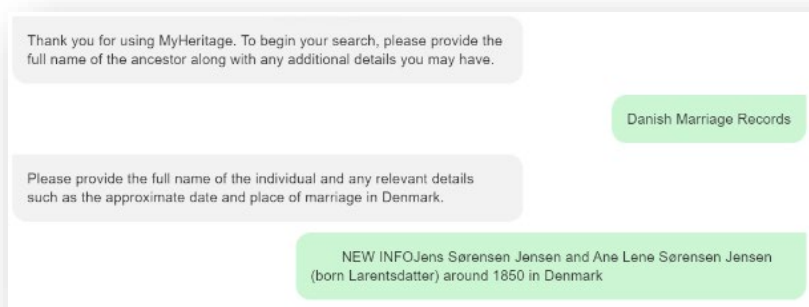
4. Click download.
5. Accept the terms and conditions and click continue.
6. Verify Your Account & enter the code as they require.
7. Your **raw DNA file** will be sent to your email. It may take some time to arrive. There is no need to open this file, just **download it to your computer** where you will remember its location. This is the file you will **upload to MyHeritage**.



AI Record Finder

This AI time machine has really helped me discover some of my Danish ancestry. You simply ask it a question. It asks you a question and the more information you give it, the easier it is for it to find the records, but it did not take me long to find the ancestors that I was looking for.

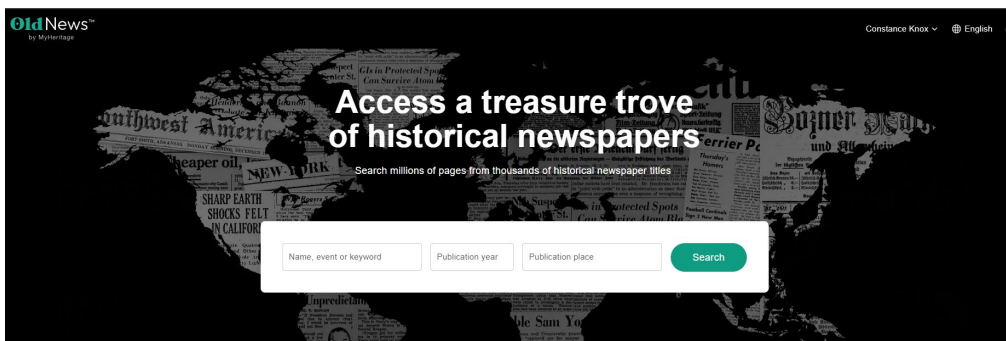
To get to the **AI record finder go to research and drop down to AI Record Finder**.



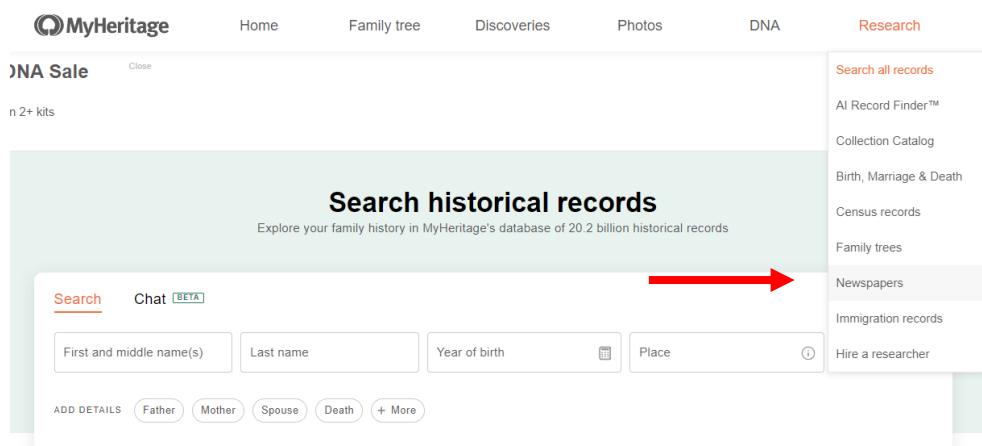
Old News

At RootsTech 2024 MyHeritage announced a new newspaper website called OldNews.com. This is in addition to their current newspaper section of the research tab (shown below).

MyHeritage tells me that the image viewer is a better experience on Old News than the newspaper viewer on the MyHeritage website itself.



Keep in mind that you should be looking in both locations, the MyHeritage research tab, then drop down to newspapers, and on OldNews.com site, if your subscription supports it.



[👉 MyHeritage Family Tree Builder](#)

[👉 Free DNA upload](#)

[👉 Free Trial of MyHeritage Complete Plan](#)

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- [MyHeritage Updates 2023](#)
- [MyHeritage Photo Repair, Enhance, Colorize, and Animate: June 2021](#)
- [MyHeritage.com DNA Website Tutorial \(2019\)](#)