



Why isn't my Search Successful?

DNA searches can be incredibly frustrating. Sometimes it feels as though you know every possible detail about most of your Matches, but you're still no closer to finding the people you're searching for. It is always worth double-checking your own research, but the problem may not always lie with you...

? **Sometimes, there are not enough of the right matches/information available to provide an answer at the present time.**

- Many searches get very close to an answer, but it can take months before that one extra match/fact appears and enables the final pieces of the puzzle to fall into place.
- Another stage which many birth-Father searches reach is "which brother is my Father?" – you may need to find information to prove people could/could not be in the right place at the right time, or you may need to approach specific people and ask them to test.
- All the research you gather will be useful in the long run, so do not give up! If you have covered all the available options (ie, uploading your DNA to all the available sites, building trees extensively, accepting help and advice from other people) it may be a waiting game. Take a break. Returning with a clear head and fresh pair of eyes may help.

? **Your Match may (unintentionally) be the cause of the problem.** People can do some unexpected things which can lead you down the wrong path! For example:

- Someone may have activated another person's DNA under their own name. Despite what it says on your Match's profile, the DNA sample may in fact belong to the person's spouse/grandparent/friend/work colleague/next door neighbour... So, if you have done detective work and built a tree for your match, it could be for the wrong person.
- Your Match may have accidentally attached their DNA to the wrong person in their tree. This could lead you totally astray, or if, for example, they have attached it to their parent, you could be starting your research from the wrong generation.
- Your Match may not be aware that they are adopted/have a different parent than expected, so their tree does not reflect their biological family. This could also apply to any of their ancestors.
- Your Match knows they were adopted, but has still decided to attach their DNA to a tree that reflects their adoptive family.

? **Your Match's tree may be wrong:**

- Everyone makes mistakes. Disputes between family historians over which ancestors are the correct ones can be on-going for years!
- If information is missing from your Match's tree there may be a good reason. If there is an extensive well-researched tree with no information on one branch, perhaps your Match is aware of a family mystery and is trying to solve it using DNA.

? **Unlinked Trees can be very helpful - but may also be deceptive:**

- An unlinked tree might be a tree created for your Match's friend/spouse/neighbour, or it could reflect their adoptive family and has been left unlinked deliberately.
- Even if it is your Match's tree, they may not have set themselves to be the home person – they might have used one of their parents or a totally different ancestor.