

Working with Trees

When you get a tree or gedcom from a match, it will not be complete enough for your purpose. You will need to take the tree back about two generations further than your predicted relationship. So if you are predicted 4th cousins, this means that you would share great, great, great grandparents. Go back two more generations and then start identifying all their offspring and who they married and add the spouses' ancestors. Then identify all of their offspring and spouses, etc. Keep doing this until you have the generation that would include the birth parents documented.

At first concentrate on the trees of the closest matches, either those in FTDNA or 23andme with the longest overlapping segments who are ICW with each other. In Ancestry, be sure to upload your results to gedmatch to get additional input, but if you do not have that information on one of your close matches, then work the trees with predicted DNA cousins closest to you.

This can take a week to 2 weeks per tree. So do not get discouraged.

Once you have the tree filled in, go to a genealogy software product like Family Tree Maker or Legacy or any product that has the ability to do a kinship or relationship report. To create this report, you choose the person you want to base your report on. In this example, Fred is probably a second cousin once or twice removed from Sandra. So Fred is selected as the base person. Export the file to a csv format so you can work with it in a spreadsheet.

In this example, the last names were removed for anonymity but the report does include that:

The report looks like this, but of course, it includes last names.

Kinship of Fred			
Name	Relationship with Fred	Civil	Canon
Cora Elizabeth	Wife of the 1st cousin once removed		
Cheryl D.	Wife of the 2nd cousin		
Mary	4th great-grandmother	VI	6
Samuel	5th great-grandfather	VII	7
Eunice Frances	Wife of the half 1st cousin twice removed		
Pinkie L.	Wife of the granduncle		
Dorothy Frances	Half 1st cousin once removed	V	3
Eugene Vanda	Half 1st cousin once removed	V	3
McDonald O.	Ex-husband of the half grandaunt		
Ann Louise	2nd cousin	VI	3
Betty Lee	2nd cousin	VI	3
Chester Lee	1st cousin once removed	V	3
Clifton Edward I	2nd cousin once removed	VII	4
Clifton Edward,	2nd cousin	VI	3
Clifton Edward,	1st cousin once removed	V	3
Dominique Dwa	2nd cousin once removed	VII	4
Donna Delores	2nd cousin	VI	3
Florence	1st cousin once removed	V	3
Gladys M.	1st cousin once removed	V	3
Irene	1st cousin once removed	V	3
Jack Wayne	2nd cousin	VI	3

Delete the right two columns and sort on the relationship column,

The results look like this:

Kinship of Fred	
Peter, Sr.	10th great-grandfather
Robert	11th great-grandfather
James	12th great-grandfather
Christopher	13th great-grandfather
Gene Roxie	1st cousin
James Archie	1st cousin
Charles Owen	1st cousin
Ralph Edwards S	1st cousin
William James, .	1st cousin
Allen Collette	1st cousin
Charles Lee	1st cousin
Clara Louise	1st cousin
Dennis Wayne	1st cousin
Don Edward	1st cousin
Grace Josephine	1st cousin

Since we believe Fred is a 2nd cousin, once or twice removed, go to the section of the report that includes them.

Jesse Edward	2nd cousin once removed
Lenard	2nd cousin once removed
Lillie Mae	2nd cousin once removed
Mary Francis	2nd cousin once removed
Netta	2nd cousin once removed
Reuben Earl	2nd cousin once removed
William	2nd cousin once removed
Zeb D., Jr.	2nd cousin once removed
Zelda Mae	2nd cousin once removed
H. L.	2nd cousin once removed
Reagan Mae	2nd cousin twice removed
Richard Reed	2nd cousin twice removed
Mario Anthony	2nd cousin twice removed
Toni Marie	2nd cousin twice removed
Julian Austin	2nd cousin twice removed

Now add some additional columns on this report for birth year, birth place, the place the person was in the year of the adoptee birth, mother's name and father's name if you wish and a column for Y or N to say whether to discard this person from consideration or to keep investigating the person as a birth parent.

D	E	F	G	H	I
byear	bplace	1920	mother	father	status

There may other columns you like to have to work with. These are what I use. Save the file as an Excel file or in whatever spreadsheet software you use. Csv files do not retain some formatting changes.