

# RAGofAZ

Rescue A Golden of Arizona

*Understanding Your Dog's DNA Test Results*

DNA tests reveal fascinating clues about your dog's ancestry - but the numbers don't tell the whole story. Use this guide to make sense of the results and remember: every dog is unique, regardless of what percentage shows up on the report!

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## What Is a DNA Test?

A canine DNA test analyzes your dog's saliva or cheek swab and compares it to a database of known breeds. The result is a percentage breakdown showing which breeds appear in your dog's genetic background - sometimes going back several generations.

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## What Do the Percentages Mean?

A result like "50% Golden Retriever, 25% Labrador, 25% Mixed" means roughly half of the detectable genes match Golden lines. Lower percentages (under 12-15%) are often trace amounts from distant ancestors and may not affect appearance or behavior much.

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## What About Health Markers?

Many tests flag genetic variants linked to certain health conditions (e.g., hip dysplasia risk, heart conditions). A marker means a predisposition - NOT a diagnosis. Share results with your vet; they can guide monitoring or preventive care.

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## What DNA Can't Tell You

Genetics don't determine personality. A dog's behavior, temperament, and trainability are shaped far more by environment, early socialization, and individual history than by breed percentages. Your dog is who they are - not just what their genes say!

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## The Bottom Line for Adopters & Fosters

Use DNA results as one fun data point, not a rulebook. Talk to your RAGofAZ coordinator if you have questions about your dog's specific results. The most important ingredient? Love, patience, and consistency.