

R1b1b2a1a2f* is a subgroup of R1b1b2

Locations of haplogroup R1b1b2 before the widespread migrations of the past few hundred years.



R1b1b2 is the most common haplogroup in western Europe, where its branches are clustered in various national populations. R1b1b2a1a2b is characteristic of the Basque, while R1b1b2a1a2f2 reaches its peak in Ireland and R1b1b2a1a1 is most commonly found on the fringes of the North Sea.

Paternal haplogroups are families of Y chromosomes that all trace back to a single mutation at a specific place and time. By looking at the geographic distribution of these related lineages, we learn how our ancient male ancestors migrated throughout the world.

Haplogroup: R1b1b2, a subgroup of R1b1

Age: 17,000 years

Region: Europe

Example Populations: Irish, Basques, British, French

Highlight: R1b1b2 is the most common haplogroup in western Europe, with distinct branches in specific regions.



Early inhabitants of Ireland constructed monuments such as this one more than 6,000 years ago.

Introduction

Haplogroup R is a widespread and diverse branch of the **Y-chromosome** tree that is extremely common in Europe, where it spread after the end of the Ice Age about 12,000 years ago. The haplogroup appears to have originated in southwestern Asia about 30,000 years ago. It then split into two main branches. R1 ultimately spread widely across Eurasia, from Iceland to Japan, whereas R2 mostly remained near its region of origin. Today it can be found in southwestern Asia and

India.

Because of recent immigration, both branches of R are now found worldwide among men of European, Middle Eastern and South Asian descent - though our haplogroup maps indicate only their pre-colonial distributions.

Haplogroup R1

R1 is the dominant **haplogroup** in Europe today, accounting for well over half of all men. After being confined to the continent's southern fringes during the Ice Age, it expanded rapidly in the wake of the receding glaciers about 12,000 years ago. Various branches of R1 also trace the many migrations that have shaped Europe since then, from the arrival of farmers between about 10,000 and 7,000 years ago to the movements of ethnic groups such as the Anglo-Saxons and Vikings.

Haplogroup R1b

Haplogroup R1b was confined during the Ice Age to pockets of territory in Mediterranean Europe. The largest was in the Iberian peninsula and southern France, where men bearing the haplogroup created the famous cave paintings at Lascaux and Altamira. They also hunted mammoth, bison and other large game in a climate that was more like present-day Siberia's than the mild conditions prevailing in southern Europe today.

Some men bearing R1b Y-chromosomes also seem to have spent the Ice Age in the Balkans and Anatolia, where the haplogroup is still present today.

After the Ice Age, the haplogroup expanded rapidly in the wake of the retreating glaciers. Today R1b is by far the most common haplogroup in the western half of the continent.

Haplogroup R1b1b2

R1b1b2 is the most common **haplogroup** in western Europe, where it is found in more than 50% of men. Ancient representatives of the haplogroup were among the first people to repopulate the western part of Europe after the Ice Age ended about 12,000 years ago. In the process the haplogroup differentiated into even more distinct groups that can trace the details of the post-Ice Age migrations.

Haplogroup R1b1b2a1a2b

R1b1b2a1a2b arose about 20,000 years ago, when the Ice Age was at its peak. It appears to have originated among the ancestors of the present-day Basque, because of the relatively high diversity of the **haplogroup** in that population compared to neighboring ones. Today R1b1b2a1a2b is found in about 5% of Basque and 1% of Iberians.

Haplogroup R1b1b2a1a2f2

R1b1b2a1a2f2 reaches its peak in Ireland, where the vast majority of men carry Y-chromosomes belonging to the **haplogroup**. Researchers have recently discovered that a large subset of men assigned to the haplogroup may be direct male descendants of an Irish king who ruled during the 4th and early 5th centuries. According to Irish history, a king named Niall of the Nine Hostages established the Ui Neill dynasty that ruled the island country for the next millennium.

Northwestern Ireland is said to have been the core of Niall's kingdom; and that is exactly where men bearing the genetic signature associated with him are most common. About 17% of men in northwestern Ireland have Y-chromosomes that are exact matches to the signature, and another few percent vary from it only slightly. In New York City, a magnet for Irish immigrants during the 19th and early 20th century, 2% of men have Y-chromosomes matching the Ui Neill signature. Genetic analysis suggests that all these men share a common ancestor who lived about 1,700 years ago. Among men living in northwestern Ireland today that date is closer to 1,000 years ago. Those dates neatly bracket the era when Niall is supposed to have reigned.

Outside Ireland, R1b1b2a1a2f2 is relatively common only along the west coast of Britain.

Haplogroup R1b1b2a1a1

Today R1b1b2a1a1 is found mostly on the fringes of the North Sea in England, Germany and the Netherlands, where it reaches levels of one-third. That distribution suggests that some of the first men to bear the **haplogroup** in their Y-chromosomes were residents of Doggerland, a real-life Atlantis that was swallowed up by rising seas in the millennia following the Ice Age.

Doggerland was a low-lying region of forests and wetlands that must have been rich in game; today, fishing trawlers in the North Sea occasionally dredge up the bones and tusks of the mastodons that roamed there. Doggerland had its heyday between about 12,000 years ago, when the Ice Age climate began to ameliorate, and 9,000 years ago, when the meltwaters of the gradually retreating glaciers caused sea levels to rise, drowning the hunter's paradise. Doggerland's inhabitants retreated to the higher ground that is now the North Sea coast.