

How much of our genome do we share with other organisms? Take this quiz.

A Human and a grain of rice may not, at first glance, look like cousins. And yet we share a quarter of our genes with that fine plant. The genes we share with rice—or rhinos or reef coral—are among the most striking signs of our common heritage. All animals, plants, and fungi share an ancestor that lived about 1.6 billion years ago. Every lineage that descended from that progenitor retains parts of its original genome, embodying one of evolution's key principles: If it's not broke, don't fix it. Since evolution has conserved so many genes, exploring the genomes of other species can shed light on genes involved in human biology and disease. Even yeast has something to tell us about ourselves.

Read the full, original story: [Genes Are Us. And Them.](#)

Additional Resources:

- [The Human Edge: Finding Our Inner Fish](#), NPR
- [Clocks versus rocks: Genetics and the origin of placental mammals](#), Genetic Literacy Project