POLYMERASES & AMPLIFICATION

Taq PCR Kit

Instruction Manual

NEB #E5000S
200 reactions

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Kit Components:

The *Taq* PCR Kit contains a sufficient supply of recombinant, highly purified *Taq* DNA Polymerase, PCR-qualified buffer solutions, deoxynucleotides and a broad-range, pre-mixed, ready-to-load DNA marker to perform 200 PCR reactions.

Taq DNA Polymerase (NEB #M0273)

250 units (5,000 units/ml)

Supplied in: 100 mM KCl, 10 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.4), 0.1 mM EDTA,
1 mM dithiothreitol, 0.5% Tween-20, 0.5% NP-40, and 50% glycerol.

Unit definition: One unit is defined as the amount of enzyme that will incorporate 15 nmol of dNTP into acid insoluble material in 30 minutes at 75°C.

Unit assay conditions: 1X ThermoPol Reaction Buffer, 200 µM dNTPs including [^{3}H]-dTTP and 200 µg/ml activated Calf Thymus DNA.

Deoxynucleotide Solution Mix (NEB #N0447)

200 µl (10 mM of each dATP, dCTP, dGTP and dTTP)

Deoxynucleotide Solution Mix is an equimolar solution of ultrapure dATP, dCTP, dGTP and dTTP. These deoxynucleotides are supplied at a 10 mM concentration in Milli-Q water as a sodium salt at pH 7.5.

Standard *Taq* Reaction Buffer (NEB #B9014)

1.5 ml (10X)

This minimal PCR buffer is compatible with most existing PCR platforms and is ideal for use in DHPLC and high throughput applications.

1X Standard *Taq* Reaction Buffer: 10 mM Tris-HCl (pH 8.3 @ 25°C), 50 mM KCl,
1.5 mM $MgCl_2$

Standard *Taq* (Mg-free) Reaction Buffer (NEB #B9015)

1.5 ml (10X)

This version of the Standard *Taq* Reaction Buffer lacks $MgCl_2$ to allow complete control over the final magnesium concentration by adding $MgCl_2$ from the supplied stock solution.

Magnesium Chloride ($MgCl_2$) Solution (NEB #B9021)

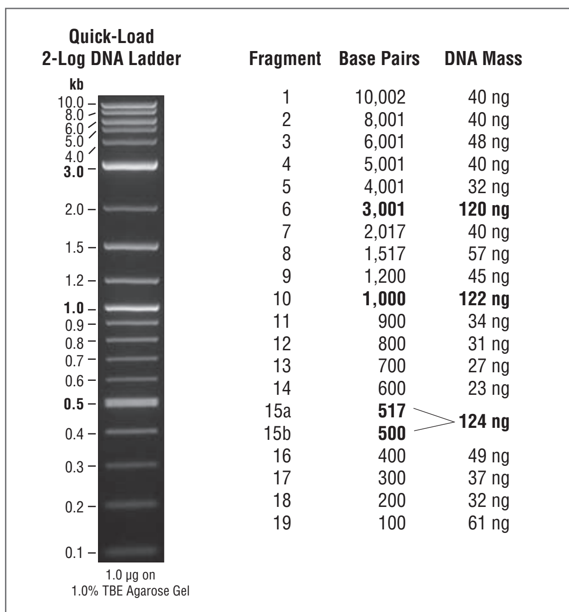
1.5 ml (25 mM)

A 25 mM solution of $MgCl_2$ is provided to allow adjustments to magnesium concentration.

Quick-Load™ 2-Log DNA Ladder (NEB #N0469)

200 µl (100 µg/ml)

The Quick-Load™ 2-Log DNA Ladder is a pre-mixed, ready-to-load molecular weight marker with fragments ranging from 0.1–10 kb. The 0.5, 1.0 and 3.0 kb bands are present at higher concentrations for unambiguous marker identification. The ladder is provided in sample buffer at 100 µg/ml, and 10 µl (1.0 µg) per lane should be used for agarose gel electrophoresis.



Fragment	Base Pairs	DNA Mass
1	10,002	40 ng
2	8,001	40 ng
3	6,001	48 ng
4	5,001	40 ng
5	4,001	32 ng
6	**3,001**	**120 ng**
7	2,017	40 ng
8	1,517	57 ng
9	1,200	45 ng
10	**1,000**	**122 ng**
11	900	34 ng
12	800	31 ng
13	700	27 ng
14	600	23 ng
15a	**517**	**124 ng**
15b	**500**	
16	400	49 ng
17	300	37 ng
18	200	32 ng
19	100	61 ng

Introduction to PCR:

The Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) is a powerful and sensitive technique for DNA amplification (1). PCR amplifies specific DNA sequences exponentially by using multiple cycles of a three-step process. First, the double-stranded DNA template is denatured at a high temperature. Sequence-specific primers are then annealed to sites flanking the target sequence. A thermostable DNA polymerase, such as *Taq* DNA Polymerase (2–6), then extends the annealed primers, thereby doubling the amount of the original DNA sequence. This newly synthesized product then becomes an additional template for subsequent cycles of amplification. These three steps are repeated for 20 to 30 cycles, resulting in a 10^5 –10^9 fold increase in target DNA concentration.

Protocol for a Routine PCR Reaction:

All components should be mixed and spun down prior to pipetting. These recommendations serve as a starting point; in order to maximize amplification the reaction conditions may require optimization (see page 4).

1. Prepare the following 50 µl reaction in a 0.5 ml PCR tube on ice:

Component	**Volume (µl)**	**Final Concentration**
Standard *Taq* Reaction Buffer (10X)	5 µl	1X
Deoxynucleotide Solution Mix (10 mM)	1 µl	200 µM
Upstream Primer (10 µM stock)	1 µl	0.2 µM (0.05–1.0 µM)
Downstream Primer (10 µM stock)	1 µl	0.2 µM (0.05–1.0 µM)
DNA Template	determined by user	1 pg–1 ng plasmid DNA 1 ng–1 µg genomic DNA
Taq DNA Polymerase*	0.25 µl	1.25 units/50 µl PCR
Nuclease free water	Bring reaction to a final volume of 50 µl	

**Due to the difficulties in pipetting small volumes of enzyme, Taq DNA Polymerase can be diluted in Diluent F (NEB #B8006) or 1X reaction buffer. For example, 1 µl of Taq DNA Polymerase is mixed with 3 µl of diluent and 1 µl of that mixture is added to the reaction. Enzyme diluted in Diluent F can be stored at –20°C for future use.*

2. Gently mix the reaction and spin down in microcentrifuge.

If the thermocycler does not have a heated cover, add one drop of mineral oil to the reaction tube to prevent evaporation.

3. Cycling Conditions for a Routine PCR Reaction:

INITIAL DENATURATION	95°C	30 SECONDS
30 Cycles	95°C 45–68°C 68°C	15–30 seconds 15–60 seconds 1 minute per kb
Final Extension	68°C	5 minutes
Hold	4°C	∞

PCR Optimization:

Taq DNA Polymerase is an enzyme widely used in PCR (7). The following guidelines are provided to ensure successful PCR using New England Biolabs' *Taq* DNA Polymerase. These guidelines cover routine PCR reactions. PCR of templates with high GC content, high secondary structure, low template concentrations, or amplicons greater than 5 kb may require further optimization.

1. **DNA Template:** Use of high quality, purified DNA templates greatly enhances the success of PCR reactions. It is also critical that contamination from outside sources, especially previous PCR reactions, be avoided.

   Approximately 10^4 copies of the target DNA are required to detect a product in 25–30 cycles of PCR. Recommended amounts of template DNA for a 50 µl reaction are 1 pg–1 ng of plasmid or viral templates and 1 ng–1 µg of genomic templates. In general, the higher the DNA concentration and number of cycles, the lower the primer specificity. High DNA concentrations can be advantageous when fewer cycles are desired to increase the fidelity of the reaction.

2. **Primers:** Oligonucleotide primers are generally 20–30 nucleotides in length and ideally have a GC content of 40–60%, with GC residues spaced evenly within the primer. Calculated melting temperatures (T_m) for the two primers should be above 45°C and the T_m for the two primers should be within 5°C of each other.

   The final concentration of each primer in a PCR reaction may be 0.05–1.0 µM (typically 0.1–0.5 µM). Higher concentrations increase the possibility of secondary priming, which potentially creates spurious amplification products.

3. **Magnesium Concentration:** A magnesium concentration of 1.5–2.0 mM is optimal for most PCR products generated with *Taq* DNA Polymerase. Optimization normally involves supplementing the magnesium concentration in 0.5 or 1.0 mM increments.

4. **Deoxynucleotides:** The final concentration of dNTPs is typically 200 µM of each deoxynucleotide. Concentrations > 500 µM should be avoided.

5. ***Taq* DNA Polymerase Concentration:** *Taq* DNA Polymerase is normally present at a final concentration of 25 units/ml (1.25 units/50 µl reaction), but can range from 5–50 units/ml (0.25–2.5 units/50 µl reaction) in specialized applications. Enzyme dilutions can be made in 1X reaction buffer if used immediately. If dilutions must be stored, use Diluent F (NEB #B8006).

6. **Hot Start:** Non-specific primed synthesis during the assembly of the reaction prior to PCR cycling has been identified as a source of nonspecific products in some PCR reactions. These undesired products can often be avoided by assembling all components on ice, adding the polymerase last and immediately transferring the reactions to a thermocycler preheated to the denaturation temperature (95°C). If this approach continues to yield non-specific products, use of a hot start polymerase is recommended. One*Taq*™ Hot Start DNA Polymerase (NEB #M0481) is available from NEB to accommodate these situations.

7. **DNA Contamination:** To minimize DNA contamination during reaction setup, it is recommended that positive-displacement pipets or aerosol barrier tips be used to aliquot and mix reagents. In order to further minimize contamination, as well as decrease pipetting errors, users are encouraged to make master mixes of reagents.

8. **Master Mix:** When setting up multiple reactions it is faster and more accurate to create a master mix of the components that are common to all reactions. In general, this involves creating a stock solution of polymerase, deoxynucleotides, reaction buffer, water, and occasionally primers. The master mix is then aliquotted and mixed with the DNA template and any required primers.

9. **Denaturation Temperature and Duration:** An initial denaturation of 30 seconds at 95°C is sufficient for most amplicons from pure DNA templates. For difficult templates such as GC-rich sequences, a longer denaturation of 2–4 minutes at 95°C is recommended prior to PCR cycling to fully denature the template. With colony PCR, an initial 5 minute denaturation at 95°C is recommended.

   During thermocycling, a 15–30 second denaturation at 95°C is recommended, although this can depend on the thermocycler and tubes used. Consult the product literature accompanying the thermocycler being used for more specific recommendations.

10. **Annealing Temperature and Duration:** Annealing temperatures should be chosen to match the T_m values of the primer pair and are typically 45–68°C. If extra bands are observed, higher annealing temperatures should be considered. The absence of product can indicate the need for a lower annealing temperature. Annealing times of 15–60 seconds are usually adequate.

11. **Extension Time:** Extensions are normally done at 68°C. As a general rule, extension times of one minute per kb should be used. For products less than one kb, an extension time of 45–60 seconds should be used. A final extension of 5 minutes at 68°C is recommended.

Troubleshooting Guide:

Observation	Probable Cause(s)	Solution(s)
No amplification product	Poor primer design	Verify that primers are non-complementary, both internally and to each other. Increase length of primer.
	Poor primer specificity	Verify that oligos are complementary to proper target sequence.
	Insufficient primer concentration	Increase primer concentration to 0.1–0.5 μM.
	Missing reaction component	Repeat reaction setup.
	Target sequence not present in template DNA	Try other sources of template DNA.
	Poor reaction conditions	Optimize (Mg^{++}), annealing temperature and extension time. Thoroughly mix Mg^{++} solution. Check primer concentrations.
	Questionable template quality	Analyze DNA via gel electrophoresis after incubation with Mg^{++}.
	Inhibitory substance in reaction	Decrease sample volume. Try alcohol precipitation or drop dialysis to further purify DNA.
	Insufficient number of cycles	Rerun the reaction with more cycles.
	Incorrect thermocycler programming	Check program, verify times and temperatures.
	Inconsistent block temperature	Test calibration of heating block.
	Reaction tubes or solutions contaminated	Autoclave tubes prior to use to eliminate biological inhibitors.

Observation	Probable Cause(s)	Solution(s)
Multiple or non-specific products	Premature *Taq* DNA Polymerase replication	Set up reactions on ice with chilled components. Add samples to pre-heated (95°C) thermocycler. Try a hot start polymerase, such as One*Taq*™ Hot Start DNA Polymerase (NEB #M0481).
	Primer annealing temperature too low	Raise annealing temperature in 2°C increments.
	Insufficient mixing of reaction buffer	Reaction buffer must be thoroughly mixed.
	Improper Mg^{++} concentration	Adjust Mg^{++} concentration in 0.5 mM increments.
	Poor primer design	Verify that primers have no complementary regions – either internally or to each other. Try longer primers. Avoid GC-rich 3´ ends.
	Excess primer	Reduce primer concentration to 0.1–0.5 µM.
	Contamination with exogenous DNA	Use positive displacement pipettes or non-aerosol tips. Set-up dedicated work area and pipettor for reaction setup. Wear gloves during reaction setup.
	Multiple target sequences in template DNA	Redesign primers with higher specificity to target sequence.

Observation	Probable Cause(s)	Solution(s)
Clones contain excessive mutations	Excessive Mg^{++}	Use minimal concentration of Mg^{++} to produce desired amount of product.
	Wild-type target sequence may be toxic to host	Clone into non-expression vector. Use low-copy cloning vector.

Quality Controls:

5 kb Lambda PCR

25 cycles of PCR amplification of 5 ng Lambda DNA with 1.25 units of *Taq* DNA Polymerase in the presence of 200 µM dNTPs and 0.2 µM primers in Standard *Taq* Reaction Buffer results in the expected 5 kb product.

3´→5´ Exonuclease Activity

Incubation of a 20 µl reaction in ThermoPol Reaction Buffer containing a minimum of 20 units of *Taq* DNA Polymerase with 10 nM fluorescent internally labeled oligonucleotide for 30 minutes at either 37°C or 75°C yields no detectable 3´→5´ degradation as determined by capillary electrophoresis.

Endonuclease Activity

Incubation of a 50 µl reaction in ThermoPol Reaction Buffer containing a minimum of 20 units of *Taq* DNA Polymerase with 1 µg of supercoiled ϕX174 DNA for 4 hours at 75°C results in < 10% conversion to the nicked form as determined by agarose gel electrophoresis.

Reaction Buffers

The supplied NEB reaction buffers and supplements are free of detectable nucleases.

Deoxynucleotide Solution

Deoxynucleotide solutions are certified free of detectable nucleases and phosphatases.

References:

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3. Kaledin, A.S., Sliusarenko, A.G. and Gorodetskii, S.I. (1980) *Biokhimiya,* 45, 644–651.
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6. Lyamichev, V., Brow, M.A. and Dahlberg, J.E. (1993) *Science,* 260, 778–783.
7. Powell, L.M. et al. (1987) *Cell*, 50, 831–840.

Ordering Information

PRODUCT	NEB #	SIZE
Taq PCR Kit	E5000S	200 reactions
KIT COMPONENTS SOLD SEPARATELY		
Taq DNA Polymerase with Standard *Taq* Buffer	M0273S/L/X	400/2,000/ 4,000 units
Standard *Taq* Reaction Buffer	B9014S	6 ml
Standard *Taq* (Mg-free) Reaction Buffer Pack	B9015S	6 ml
Magnesium Chloride ($MgCl_2$) Solution	B9021S	6 ml
Quick-Load™ 2-Log DNA Ladder	N0469S/L	125/375 gel lanes
Deoxynucleotide Solution Mix	N0447S/L	8/40 µmol of each
COMPANION PRODUCTS		
One*Taq*™ Hot Start DNA Polymerase	M0481S/L/X	200/1,000/ 12,000 units
Taq DNA Polymerase with ThermoPol Buffer	M0267S/L/X	400/2,000/ 4,000 units
Taq DNA Poly w/Standard *Taq* (Mg-free) Buffer	M0320S/L	400/2,000 units
Taq DNA Poly w/Thermopol II (Mg-free) Buffer	M0321S/L	400/2,000 units
Diluent F	B8006S	4 ml
ThermoPol Reaction Buffer Pack	B9004S	6 ml
ThermoPol II (Mg-free) Reaction Buffer Pack	B9005S	6 ml
ThermoPol DF (Detergent-free) Reaction Buffer Pack	B9013S	6 ml
Deoxynucleotide Solution Set	N0446S	25 µmol of each

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USA
New England Biolabs, Inc.
240 County Road
Ipswich, MA 01938-2723
Telephone: (978) 927-5054
Toll Free: (USA Orders) 1-800-632-5227
Toll Free: (USA Tech) 1-800-632-7799
Fax: (978) 921-1350
e-mail: info@neb.com
www.neb.com

Canada
New England Biolabs, Ltd.
Telephone: (905) 837-2234
Toll Free: 1-800-387-1095
Fax: (905) 837-2994
Fax Toll Free: 1-800-563-3789
e-mail: info@ca.neb.com

China, People's Republic
New England Biolabs (Beijing), Ltd.
Telephone: 010-82378265/82378266
Fax: 010-82378262
e-mail: info@neb-china.com

France
New England Biolabs France
Free Call: 0800/100 632
Free Fax: 0800/100 610
e-mail: info@fr.neb.com

Germany
New England Biolabs GmbH
Telephone: +49/(0)69/305 23140
Free Call: 0800/246 5227 (Germany)
Fax +49/(0)69/305 23149
Free Fax: 0800/246 5229 (Germany)
e-mail: info@de.neb.com

Japan
New England Biolabs Japan, Inc.
Telephone: +81 (0)3 5669 6191
Fax +81 (0)3 5669 6192
e-mail: info@neb-japan.com

United Kingdom
New England Biolabs (UK), Ltd.
Telephone: (01462) 420616
Call Free: 0800 318486
Fax: (01462) 421057
Fax Free: 0800 435682
e-mail: info@uk.neb.com

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