

Troubleshooting Guide

Problem	Possible Reason	Solution
Poor bacterial growth	Inoculated bacterial sample from a plate or a culture stock stored over a long time period	Always inoculate bacterial cells from a freshly streaked plate and grow with required antibiotic(s).
	Inadequate shaking during incubation	Grow cells with vigorous shaking (e.g. 250 rpm). Adjust a suitable shaking speed according to the angular magnitude of an orbital shaker platform.
Poor cell lysis	Use of excessive amount of bacterial cells harvested from a large or over-grown culture	Up to 50 (Midi)/100(Maxi) ml culture for high-copy plasmid. Up to 250 (Midi)/500 (Maxi) ml culture for low-copy plasmid. When the culture volume is more than 50(Midi)/100 (Maxi) ml, use increased amount of VP1, VP2 and VP3 Buffer.
	Insufficient resuspension of cell	Do not add VP2 Buffer until cells are completely resuspended by vortexing or pipetting.
Low yield of plasmid DNA	Insufficient amount of bacterial cells	Ensure that bacteria have been grown well ($OD_{600} > 1$) after overnight incubation at vigorous shaking.
	Overgrowth of bacteria	Incubate bacterial culture with LB medium and do not incubate for more than 16 hours.
	Plasmid does not propagate	Always inoculate bacterial cells from a freshly streaked plate and grow with required antibiotic(s).

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Low yield of plasmid DNA	Inefficient or incomplete DNA elution	Use no less than 5 ml VPE Buffer for elution.
	Poor cell lysis	Refer to Solution section of problem – “Poor cell lysis”.
	Plasmid is larger than 50-kbp	Use VPE Buffer preheated to 40°C.
Plasmid appears smeared or degraded	Host strain is <i>endA</i> ⁺	Use <i>endA</i> ⁻ strain.
	Overgrowth of bacteria	Incubate bacterial culture with LB medium and do not incubate for more than 16 hours.
Genomic DNA contamination in eluate	Lysate improperly prepared	After addition of VP2 Buffer, mix gently to prevent shearing of genomic DNA, and do not incubate for more than 5 minutes.
RNA contamination	Insufficient RNase A activity in VP1 Buffer	Ensure that entire RNase A is added into VP1 Buffer and stored at 4°C. After long-term storage (> 6 months), add RNase A into VP1 Buffer to a conc. of 100µg/ml and store at 4°C.
Plasmid of poor quality	Eluted DNA contains excessive salt residuals.	After isopropanol precipitation wash DNA pellet twice with 70% ethanol at room temperature.
	Use of excessive amount of bacterial cells harvested from a large or over-grown culture	Reduce the amount of the used sample. Incubate bacterial culture with LB medium and do not incubate for more than 16 hours.