**T7 Express High Efficiency Sampler**

**C3009I**

8 x 0.2 ml/tube  
Lot: 17

**Store at –80°C**

**CAUTION:** This product contains DMSO, a hazardous material. Review the MSDS before handling.

**Description:** Chemically competent *E. coli* cells suitable for high efficiency transformation and protein expression.

**Features:**
- Transformation efficiency: 0.6–1 x 10⁶ cfu/µg pUC19 DNA
- T7 RNA Polymerase in the lac operon - no lambda prophage
- Tight control of expression by lacIq/λ allow potentially toxic genes to be cloned
- Control of T7 RNA Polymerase by mutant lysozyme (LysY) allows toxic genes to be expressed
- LysY is a variant of T7 lysozyme lacking amidase activity, thus cells are less susceptible to lysis during induction
- Maintenance of lysozyme plasmid does not require antibiotic selection
- Deficient in proteases Lon and OmpT
- Resistant to phage T1 (θuA2)
- Does not restrict methylated DNA (McrA–, McrBC–, EcoBr–m–, Mrr–)
- B Strain

**Reagents Supplied:**
- 2 x 0.2 ml/tube of chemically competent T7 Express T7 Express strain (NEB #C2566)
- 2 x 0.2 ml/tube of chemically competent T7 Express T7 Express strain (NEB #C3016)
- 2 x 0.2 ml/tube of chemically competent T7 Express T7 Express strain (NEB #C3010)
- 2 x 0.2 ml/tube of chemically competent T7 Express T7 Express strain (NEB #C3013)
- 25 ml of SOC Outgrowth Medium (Store at room temperature)
- 0.025 ml of 50 pg/µl pUC19 Control DNA (Store at –80°C)

**Quality Control Assays**

**Transformation Efficiency:** 100 pg of pUC19 plasmid DNA was used to transform 0.05 ml of Competent *E. coli* following the high efficiency protocol provided. 0.6–1 x 10⁶ colonies formed/µg after an overnight incubation on LB-ampicillin plates at 37°C.

Untransformed T7 Express cells were also tested for resistance to phage φ80, a standard test for resistance to phage T1, and sensitivity to ampicillin, chloramphenicol, tetracycline, kanamycin and streptomycin.

Untransformed cells of all other strains were also tested for resistance to phage φ80, a standard test for resistance to phage T1 cells are resistant to chloramphenicol and sensitivity to ampicillin, tetracycline, kanamycin and streptomycin.

**High Efficiency Transformation Protocol**

1. Thaw a tube of Competent *E. coli* cells on ice until the last ice crystals disappear. Mix gently and carefully pipette 50 µl of cells into a transformation tube on ice.
2. Add 1–5 µl containing 1 pg–100 ng of plasmid DNA to the cell mixture. Carefully flick the tube 4–5 times to mix cells and DNA. Do not vortex.
3. Place the mixture on ice for 30 minutes. Do not mix.
5. Place on ice for 5 minutes. Do not mix.
6. Pipette 950 µl of room temperature SOC into the mixture.

**Storage and Handling:** Competent cells should be stored at –80°C. Storage at 20°C will result in a significant decrease in transformation efficiency. Cells lose efficiency whenever they are warmed above 30°C, even if they do not thaw.

**Transformation Protocol Variables**

**Thawing:** Cells are best thawed on ice and DNA added as soon as the last bit of ice in the tube disappears. Cells can also be thawed by hand, but warming above 2°C will decrease the transformation efficiency.

**Incubation of DNA with Cells on Ice:** For maximum transformation efficiency, cells and DNA should be incubated together on ice for 30 minutes. Expect a 2-fold loss in transformation efficiency for every 10 minutes you shorten this step.

**Heat Shock:** Both the temperature and the timing of the heat shock step are important and specific to the transformation volume and vessel. Using the transformation tube provided, 10 seconds at 42°C is optimal.

**Outgrowth:** Outgrowth at 37°C for 1 hour is best for cell recovery and for expression of antibiotic resistance. Expect a 2-fold loss in transformation efficiency for every 15 minutes you shorten this step.

**Plating:** Selection plates can be used warm or cold, wet or dry without significantly affecting the transformation efficiency. However, warm, dry plates are easier to spread and allow for the most rapid colony formation.

**Protocol for Expression Using T7 Express Strains**

1. Resuspend a single colony in 1 ml liquid culture with antibiotic.
2. Incubate at 37°C until OD₆₀₀ reaches 0.4–0.6.
3. Induce with 40 µl of a 1 mM stock of IPTG (final concentration of 0.4 mM) and induce for 2 hours at 37°C.
4. Check for expression either by Coomassie stained protein gel, Western Blot or activity assay. Check expression in both the total cell extract (solute + insoluble) and the soluble fraction alone.
5. For large scale, inoculate 1 L of liquid medium (with antibiotic) with a freshly grown colony or 10 ml of freshly grown culture. Incubate at 37°C until OD₆₀₀ reaches 0.4–0.6. Add IPTG to 0.4 mM. Induce 2 hours at 37°C or 15°C overnight.

**Transformation Efficiency:**

BL21 (DE3)  
T7 Express  
lysY  
lysY/Iq  
lacIq  
lac

**Transformation of a Toxic Mammalian Clone into E. coli Hosts:** A T7 expression plasmid and the same plasmid containing a gene encoding a toxic mammalian protein were transformed into each host. Comparison of the relative transformation efficiencies demonstrates that the T7 Express hosts provide the levels of control necessary for transformation of potentially toxic clones. BL21(DE3) could not be transformed with the toxic clone.

**CERTIFICATE OF ANALYSIS**
DNA Contaminants to Avoid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contaminant</th>
<th>Removal Method</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detergents</td>
<td>Ethanol precipitate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phenol</td>
<td>Extract with chloroform and ethanol precipitate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethanol or isopropanol</td>
<td>Dry pellet before resuspending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEG*</td>
<td>Column purity or phenol/chloroform extract and ethanol precipitate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNA binding proteins* (e.g. Ligase)</td>
<td>Column purity or phenol/chloroform extract and ethanol precipitate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ideal DNA for transformation should be purified and resuspended in water or TE. However, up to 10 µl of DNA directly from a ligation mix can be used with only a two-fold loss of transformation efficiency. Where it is necessary to maximize the number of transformants (e.g. a library), a purification step, either a spin column or phenol/chloroform extraction and ethanol precipitation should be added.

Troubleshooting T7 Protein Expression

No colonies or no growth in liquid culture: Even though T7 expression is tightly regulated, there may be a low level of basal expression in the T7 Express host. If toxicity of the expressed protein is likely, transformation of the expression plasmid should be carried out in one of the following strains:

- T7 Express: over-expression of the Lac repressor reduces basal expression of the T7 RNA polymerase
- T7 Express lysY: lysY produces mutant T7 lysozyme which binds to T7 RNA polymerase, reducing basal expression of the target protein. Upon induction, newly made T7 RNA polymerase titrates out the lysozyme and results in expression of the target protein
- T7 Express P/lysY: combines both above effects. Incubation at 30°C or room temperature may also alleviate toxicity issues. In addition, check antibiotic concentration (test with control plasmid).

No protein visible on gel or no activity: Check for toxicity - no protein may mean the cells have eliminated or deleted elements in the expression plasmid.

- Culture cells for protein induction. Just before induction, plate a sample on duplicate plates with and without antibiotic selection. If toxicity is an issue, there will be a significant difference between the number of colonies on the plates. Fewer colonies will be seen on plates containing antibiotic (indicating that the plasmid has been lost) compared to plates without antibiotic.
- If toxicity is the problem test the above protocols and P and lysY hosts to reduce basal level expression.

Induced protein is insoluble: Check for insolubility - this is important because T7 expression often leads to very high production of protein that can result in the target protein becoming insoluble. Potential solutions for this are:

- Induce at lower temperatures (as low as 15°C overnight)
- Reduce IPTG concentration to 0.1 mM and 0.01 mM
- Induce for less time (as little as 15 minutes)
- Induce earlier in growth (OD600 = 0.3 or 0.4)

Solutions/Recipes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOB: 2% Vegetable peptone (or Tryptone)</th>
<th>SOC: SOB + 20 mM Glucose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5% Yeast Extract</td>
<td>LB agar: 1% Tryptone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 mM NaCl</td>
<td>0.5% Yeast Extract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 mM KCl</td>
<td>0.17 M NaCl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 mM MgCl</td>
<td>1.5% Agar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Antibiotics for Plasmid Selection

- **T7 Express Genotype:** fhuA2 lacZ::T7 gene1 [lon] ompT gal sulA11 R(mcr-73::miniTn10--) [dcm] R(28::T10::Tet--) endA1 (mcrC-mrr)114::IS10
- **T7 Express P Genotype:** minF-lacI(CamR) / fhuA2 lacZ::T7 gene1 [lon] ompT gal sulA11 R(mcr-73::miniTn10--)[dcm] R(28::T10::Tet--) endA1 (mcrC-mrr)114::IS10
- **T7 Express lysY Genotype:** minF-lysY lacZ::T7 gene1 [lon] ompT gal sulA11 R(mcr-73::miniTn10--)[dcm] R(28::T10::Tet--) endA1 (mcrC-mrr)114::IS10
- **T7 Express lysY/P Genotype:** minF-lysY lacZ::T7 gene1 [lon] omp gal sulA11 R(mcr-73::miniTn10--)[dcm] R(28::T10::Tet--) endA1 (mcrC-mrr)114::IS10

Strain Properties

The properties of this strain that contribute to its usefulness as a protein expression strain are described below. The genotypes underlying these properties appear in parentheses.

T7 RNA Polymerase (lacZ::T7 gene1): T7-Express has the T7 RNA polymerase gene inserted into the lac operon on the E. coli chromosome and is expressed under the control of the lac promoter. This configuration provides controlled induction of the polymerase and consequently, inducible control of transcription of genes downstream of the T7 promoter. This system provides potential advantages over strains such as BL21(DE3), that carry the T7 RNA polymerase on a lysogenic prophage. Although BL21 is normally dormant in the host chromosome, the induction of the SOS cascade can occur as the result of expressing proteins that damage the E. coli chromosome, either directly or indirectly. This may lead to cell lysis.

Protease Deficient (lon) ompT: E. coli B strains are “naturally” deficient in the lon protease which in K-12 strains serves to degrade misfolded proteins and to prevent cell cycle-specific proteins from accumulating. The OmpT protease resides at the surface of wild type E. coli in both K-12 and B strains, presumably helping the cells to derive amino acids from their external environment. Cells deficient in both these proteases are much more amenable to the production of proteins from cloned genes. Mutations of other genes can help to ameliorate the sometimes-deleterious effects of these protease defects (e.g. sulA, below).

Recovery from DNA Damage (sulA11): E. coli cells can tolerate a substantial amount of chronic DNA damage as long as repair is allowed to proceed. This capacity is compromised if the cells are unable to divide following repair. In lon cells, SulA, a cell division inhibitor, accumulates and causes cells to become hypersensitive to DNA damage. The sulA mutation introduced into the T7 Express strain allows cells to divide more normally in the absence of Lon protease.

Endonuclease I Deficient (endA): The periplasmic space of wild type E. coli cells contains a nonspecific endonuclease. Extreme care must be taken to avoid degradation of plasmids prepared from these cells. The endA mutation deletes this endonuclease and can significantly improve the quality of plasmid preparations.

Restriction Deficient (mcrC-mrr)114::IS10: Wild type E. coli B strains carry a Type I restriction endonuclease which cleaves DNA with the TGA(N8)TGC7 sequence. While desired sequences for some cell cycle-specific proteins from accumulating. The OmpT protease resides at the surface of wild type E. coli in both K-12 and B strains, presumably helping the cells to derive amino acids from their external environment. Cells deficient in both these proteases are much more amenable to the production of proteins from cloned genes. Mutations of other genes can help to ameliorate the sometimes-deleterious effects of these protease defects (e.g. sulA, below).

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Methyl Restriction Deficient (mcrC-mrr)114::IS10 and R(mcr-73::miniTn10--)2: E. coli has a system of enzymes encoded by mcrA, mcrB, and mrr which cleave DNA with methylation patterns found in higher eukaryotes, as well as some plant and bacterial strains. All three Mcr enzymes and Mrr have been inactivated in T7 Express allowing the introduction of eukaryotic DNA of genomic origin (e.g. primary libraries) if desired.

T1 Phage Resistant (thuA2): T1, an extremely virulent phage requires the E. coli LPS for cell lysis. While desired sequences for some cell cycle-specific proteins from accumulating. The OmpT protease resides at the surface of wild type E. coli in both K-12 and B strains, presumably helping the cells to derive amino acids from their external environment. Cells deficient in both these proteases are much more amenable to the production of proteins from cloned genes. Mutations of other genes can help to ameliorate the sometimes-deleterious effects of these protease defects (e.g. sulA, below).

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LacI strains also contain Lac Promoter Control (IacP): The Lac repressor blocks expression from lac, tac, trc and T7-lac promoters frequently carried by expression plasmids. If the level of Lac repressor in E. coli cells is not sufficient to inhibit expression via these promoters during transformation or cell growth, even low levels of expression of toxic genes can reduce transformation efficiency and select against desired transformants. The extra molecules of Lac repressor in IacP strains help to minimize promoter activity until IPTG is added.

LysY strains also contain T7 Lysozyme (IysY): This strain expresses T7 lysozyme variant K128Y which lacks amidase activity, yet retains the ability to inhibit T7 RNA polymerase. Basal expression of the target gene is minimized without inhibiting IPTG-induced expression. The IysY gene is carried on a single-copy mini plasmid.

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