

Mar 23, 2018

Measuring Droplet Volume in Home-Made Microfluidic Devices

DOI

dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.mj5c4q6

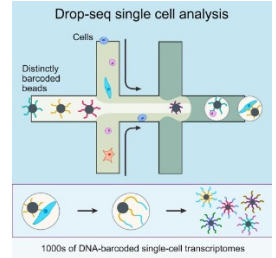
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Human Cell Atlas Metho...



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OPEN ACCESS



DOI: dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.mj5c4q6

External link: <http://mccarrolllab.com/dropseq/>

Protocol Citation: Steve McCarroll's lab 2018. Measuring Droplet Volume in Home-Made Microfluidic Devices. **protocols.io** <https://dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.mj5c4q6>

Manuscript citation:

Macosko et al. (2015) Highly Parallel Genome-wide Expression Profiling of Individual Cells Using Nanoliter Droplets. *Cell* Volume 161, Issue 5, 21 May 2015, Pages 1202-1214. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cell.2015.05.002>

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Protocol status: Working

Created: January 11, 2018

Last Modified: March 28, 2018

Protocol Integer ID: 9565

Abstract

Drop-seq is a technology we developed to enable biologists to analyze RNA expression genome-wide in thousands of individual cells at once. We first described this in [a 2015 paper in *Cell*](#). Though commercial implementations of droplet-based single-cell RNA-seq also now exist, we have made Drop-seq open-source and want to make sure that any lab can build their own system. The materials for constructing a Drop-seq setup in one's own lab can be obtained for about \$6,000. The reagents for performing Drop-seq cost about 6 cents per cell.

This is a supplemental protocol of our [Drop-Seq Protocol](#) for measuring droplet volume in home-made microfluidic devices.

Attachments



[Measuring-Droplet-Vo...](#)

114KB

Guidelines

Videos and FAQs

These [tutorials, images, and diagrams](#) may be helpful in building your own Drop-seq setup and doing Drop-seq experiments in your lab.

We have also created a YouTube channel with a variety of [videos](#) to help scientists through the steps that most benefit from watching.

This [FAQ](#) provides also provides supplementary information.

Before start

To measure droplet volume, purchase some durable, monodisperse polystyrene beads with a hydrophilic coating (e.x. 10-micron carboxylated polystyrene beads from Bangs Labs, product #PC06N-11355. It can be helpful to use fluorescent beads to be sure you can identify them in droplets. Bangs cells these under product # FC06F-10163).



1 Wash and resuspend beads in Drop-seq lysis buffer at a concentration of 1000 beads per microliter.

2 Draw the beads into a syringe with a magnetic mixer (as you would with the standard barcoded beads) and load into a syringe pump.

3 Load the syringe pump intended for cells with regular PBS.

Note

Since we are co-flowing beads with PBS, we estimate that the concentration of beads in the droplet fluid will be 500 beads per microliter

4 Connect all tubing to the appropriate channels in the microfluidic device, and generate droplets.

5 For a given number of droplets, count the number of beads inside. You should count the beads inside several hundred droplets to make sure that you have a statistically sound estimate.

6

Divide the total number of beads counted inside droplets by the number of droplets you counted. This is your

droplet occupancy

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7

Here is how to calculate droplet volume:

Droplet volume = (droplet occupancy) / (500 beads per microliter) = # microliters per droplet.