

# Bradford Protein Assay

## Introduction

Use of the coomassie G-250 dye in a colorimetric reagent for the detection and quantitation of total protein was first described by Dr. Marion Bradford in 1976. Protein binds to the coomassie dye in the acidic environment of the reagent which results in a spectral shift from the reddish/brown form of the dye (absorbance maximum at 465 nm) to the blue form of the dye (absorbance maximum at 610 nm). The difference between the two forms of the dye is greatest at 595 nm. In conjunction with the micro-volume capability of the Thermo Scientific™ NanoDrop™ Spectrophotometers the assay provides an accurate means of protein quantitation with minimal consumption of sample.

## Dynamic range

The micro-assay has a linear range of 15–100 ug/ml using a 1:1 sample to reagent ratio. The standard assay has a higher linear range of 100-1000 ug/ml and may be obtained using a 1:30 sample to reagent ratio.

## Supplies

### Equipment:

- NanoDrop 8000 Spectrophotometer
- Low volume 8-channel pipettor for loading samples onto measurement pedestals (low retention tips)
- Vortex mixer

### Materials:

- Low lint laboratory wipes
- 0.5 ml Eppendorf tubes (for stock reagent)
- 0.2 ml mini-centrifuge strip tubes and caps or 96 well PCR plate (for standards and sample reactions)

### Recommended Reagents:

- Coomassie Plus reagent, Thermo Scientific™ Pierce™ product numbers 23236, 23238
- Pierce pre-diluted BSA standards, Pierce product number 23208 (optional) or other protein standard
- PR-1 Reconditioning Kit, part number CHEM-PR1-KIT

## Assay recommendations

- Measure 2 µL standard and sample aliquots.
- Making triplicate measurements for both standards and samples is good practice, especially with the limited signal obtained with the Bradford assay. Use fresh aliquots for all replicate measurements.
- Use an 8-channel pipettor to simultaneously load all 8 measurement positions. **Note: The use of a single channel pipettor to load multiple positions may result in erroneous results.**

## Sample ID entry

The NanoDrop 8000 Spectrophotometer offers several options for entering sample IDs. When making only a few measurements, it is easy to type in sample names prior to measurement or use the Manual Plate Set-up. When measuring several samples, the user may load a list of predefined sample IDs. The lists may be created in Excel or Notepad but lists must be saved as a .txt file. It is recommended that a list file be generated prior to starting the assay if many samples are to be measured.

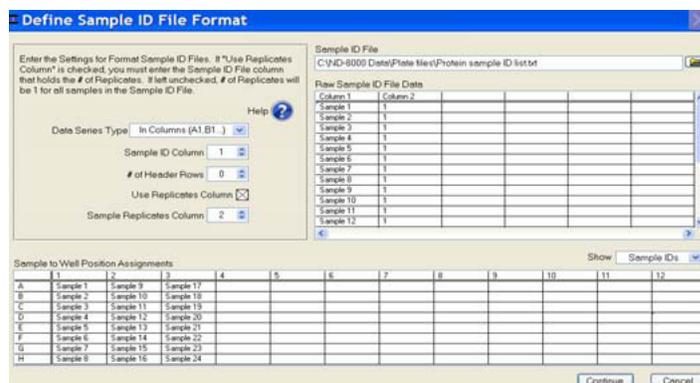


Figure 1. The NanoDrop 8000 software allows the use of predefined sample ID lists

## Bradford Protein Assay sample preparation

1. Equilibrate all reagents and samples to room temperature, then mix each thoroughly but gently to avoid micro bubbles.
2. Add the appropriate reagent volume to each tube of a PCR strip or each well of a PCR plate. If using the micro-assay (1:1) sample to reagent ratio add 10  $\mu\text{L}$  of reagent to each the standard and sample tube. If using the standard assay (1:30) sample to reagent ratio add 300  $\mu\text{L}$  of reagent to each standard and sample tube.
3. Add 10  $\mu\text{L}$  of standards or samples to the appropriate tube. Mix well by gentle vortexing. If necessary, collect the solution at the bottom of the tube by a brief centrifugation.
4. Follow the reagent manufacturer's recommended incubation time.

5. Use an 8-channel pipettor to transfer 2  $\mu\text{L}$  of  $\text{dH}_2\text{O}$  onto each of the 8 lower pedestals. Lower the arm and click **Blank**. When the measurement is complete wipe the pedestals with a lab wipe.
6. Gently mix the standards, then use a 8-channel pipettor to simultaneously load the reference (reagent and buffer, no protein) and standards to generate a new standard curve. Use fresh 2  $\mu\text{L}$  aliquots to measure additional replicates.
7. Select the sample ID loading mode when prompted. Refer to page 1 for additional details.
8. Gently mix the samples and use an 8-channel pipettor to simultaneously load multiple pedestal positions. Use fresh 2  $\mu\text{L}$  aliquots for each replicate.
9. After completing all the measurements, recondition the pedestals with PR-1.

## Protocol

1. Clean pedestals by pipetting 2  $\mu\text{L}$  of  $\text{dH}_2\text{O}$  onto each all 8 lower pedestals, and then lowering the arm so that the water makes contact with both the upper and lower measurement surfaces. Raise the arm and wipe all pedestals with a dry laboratory wipe.
2. Launch the NanoDrop 8000 software and open the **Protein Bradford** module.
3. Initialize the instrument by loading 2  $\mu\text{L}$  of  $\text{dH}_2\text{O}$  to all 8 lower pedestals, lower the arm and click **OK**. When initialization is complete, use a dry laboratory wipe to wipe the water from all measurement surfaces.
4. From the **Standards Choose Source** window select the standard curve source. It is recommended that new standard absorbance values be measured each time the assay is run. Manually enter standard concentration values or enter a concentration series using a previously stored standard curve. If using a preloaded standard curve, continue to step 7.

Measurements Table		Double Click on any row to change the concentration or delete replicates.						
	Standard	mg/ml	Ave Abs.	Abs. 1	Abs. 2	Abs. 3	Abs. 4	Abs. 5
Active	A - Reference	0.000						
Active	B - Standard 1	125.0						
Active	C - Standard 2	250.0						
Active	D - Standard 3	500.0						
Active	E - Standard 4	750.0						
Active	F - Standard 5	1000						
Active	G - Standard 6	1500						
Active	H - Standard 7	2000						

Figure 2. The NanoDrop 8000 software allows the use of a predefined standard curve or the user may build a new curve

## Performance data

BSA ( $\mu\text{g/mL}$ )	A595 (n=5)	St Dev	%CV
0	.037	0.001	NA
125	.049	0.001	3.09
250	.061	0.003	4.97
500	.068	0.002	2.29
750	.084	0.002	2.29
1000	.095	0.003	3.21
1500	.114	0.006	5.31
2000	0.13	.005	3.97

Table 1. Typical performance data for the micro Bradford protein assay using a BSA Standard Curve

## Typical Bradford sample spectrum

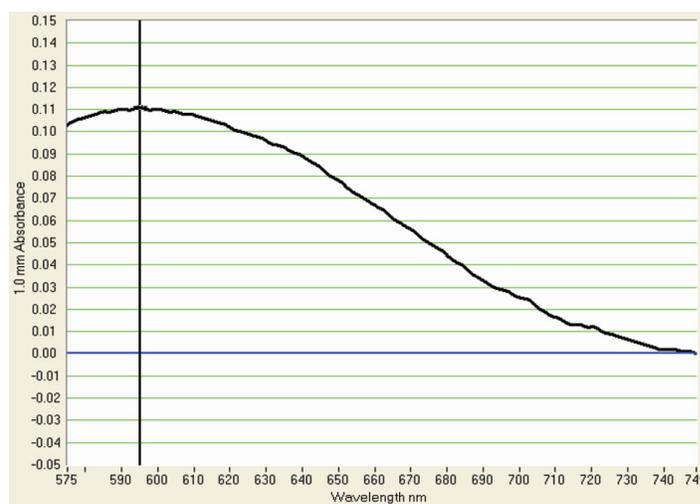


Figure 3. Example spectrum of Bradford reagent-Protein sample

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