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Smart-seq3 Protocol V.1

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Human Cell Atlas Metho...



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<https://dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.7dnhi5e>

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Protocol status: Working

We use this protocol and it's working

Created: September 16, 2019

Last Modified: February 13, 2020

Protocol Integer ID: 27790

Guidelines

If you are pro, and want to change the volumes indicated in the protocol, make sure that the reaction concentrations stay similar. Also ensure that the spillover concentrations into the next reaction also stay similar. Failing to do so can lead to decreased performance of the protocol. In terms of the tagmentation reaction make sure to keep the ratio of cDNA input to Nextera TN5 amount, if you contemplate to miniaturize this reaction.

The current protocols is based on the TN5 from Nextera Xt kit. However Illumina TDE1, works as well.

For determining PCR cycles, a good general guideline is to add 1-2 cycles more than using Smart-seq2. However as always, this is good to empirically test first, before running important samples.

For troubleshooting: feel free to leave comments or message directly.

List of oligos:

	Oligo	Vendor	Purification	Working concentration	Sequence	
	Smartseq3_OligodT30VN	IDT	HPLC	100uM	/5Biosg/ACGAGCATCAGCAGCATACGATTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTTVN	
	Smartseq3_N8_TS O	IDT	RNase-Free HPLC	100uM	/5Biosg/AGAGACAGATTGCGCAATGNNNNNNNNNrGrGrG	
	Fwd_PCR_primer	IDT	HPLC	100uM	TCGTCGGCAGCGTCAGATGTGTATAAGAGACAGATTGCGCAA*T*G	
	Rev_PCR_primer	IDT	HPLC	100uM	ACGAGCATCAGCAGCATAC*G*A	

* phosphorothioate bonds



Materials

MATERIALS

- ☒ Triton X-100 **Merck MilliporeSigma (Sigma-Aldrich) Catalog #T8787-50ML**
- ☒ Agilent High Sensitivity DNA Kit **Agilent Technologies Catalog #5067-4626**
- ☒ Nextera XT DNA Library Preparation Kit **Illumina, Inc. Catalog #FC-131-1096**
- ☒ QIAquick Gel Extraction Kit **Qiagen Catalog #28704**
- ☒ DNA LoBind Tubes, 1.5 mL **Eppendorf Catalog #0030108051**
- ☒ Recombinant RNase Inhibitor **Takara Bio Inc. Catalog #2313A**
- ☒ Dithiothreitol (DTT) **Thermo Fisher Scientific Catalog #707265ML**
- ☒ dNTP Set 100 mM Solutions **Thermo Fisher Scientific Catalog #R0182**
- ☒ UltraPure[®] DNase/RNase-Free Distilled Water **Thermo Fisher Catalog #10977035**
- ☒ EDTA (0.5 M), pH 8.0, RNase-free **Thermo Fisher Catalog #AM9260G**
- ☒ SDS, 10% Solution, RNase-free **Thermo Fisher Catalog #AM9822**
- ☒ Maxima H Minus Reverse Transcriptase (200 U/μL) **Thermo Fisher Catalog #EP0751**
- ☒ Poly Ethylene Glycol (PEG) 8000 **Merck MilliporeSigma (Sigma-Aldrich) Catalog #89510-250G-F**
- ☒ Sodium Chloride (5M) **Invitrogen - Thermo Fisher Catalog #AM9760G**
- ☒ Magnesium Chloride (1M Solution) **Invitrogen - Thermo Fisher Catalog #AM9530G**
- ☒ GTP (Tris buffered solution 100mM) **Thermo Scientific Catalog #R1461**
- ☒ Trizma-base **Merck MilliporeSigma (Sigma-Aldrich) Catalog #T6791-100G**
- ☒ KAPA HiFi Hotstart PCR kit **Roche Catalog #KK2502**
- ☒ Phusion High-Fidelity DNA Polymerase (2 U/μL) **Thermo Scientific Catalog # F530L**
- ☒ Sera-Mag Speed Beads **GE Healthcare Catalog #65152105050250**
- ☒ Sodium Azide **Merck MilliporeSigma (Sigma-Aldrich) Catalog #S2002-100G**
- ☒ IGEPAL[®] CA-630 **Merck MilliporeSigma (Sigma-Aldrich) Catalog #I8896**
- ☒ Armadillo PCR Plate 96-well clear semi-skirted white wells **Thermo Scientific Catalog #AB3596**
- ☒ Armadillo PCR Plate 384-well **Thermo Scientific Catalog # AB2384B**
- ☒ QuantiFluor[®] dsDNA System **Promega Catalog #E2670**
- ☒ E-Gel[™] EX Agarose Gels 2% **Thermo Scientific Catalog #G402002**
- ☒ 2-propanol **Merck MilliporeSigma (Sigma-Aldrich) Catalog #I9516**
- ☒ NN-Dimethylformamide **Merck MilliporeSigma (Sigma-Aldrich) Catalog #D4551**

Before starting

- 1 This protocol should be carried out in a clean environment. Use ethanol, RNaseZAP, DNA-OFF, or similar to prepare work bench before start.



Work quickly and preferably on  On ice .

Prepare master-mixes right before use.

Use multichannel pipettes, liquid dispensers etc. to dispense the master-mixes. Avoid pipetting up and down, to minimize the loss of material.


Prepare lysis plates

- 2 Prepare **lysis buffer mix**



Reagent	Reaction conc.	uL per. reaction	96 well plate	384 well plate
Guanidine Hydrochloride (8000mM ; Optional)	0mM - 50mM	0.00	-	-
Poly-ethylene Glycol (50% solution)	5%	0.40	44	164
Triton X-100 (10% solution)	0.1%	0.03	3.3	12.3
ERCC spike-ins (Optional)	-	-	-	-
RNase Inhibitor (40u/uL)	0.5u/uL	0.04	4.1	15.4
OligodT30VN (100uM)	0.5uM	0.02	2.2	8.2
dNTPs (25mM/each)	0.5mM/each	0.08	8.8	32.8
Nuclease Free Water		2.43	267.6	997.3
Total		3 uL	330 uL	1230 uL

The lysis master-mix contains PEG! Ensure that PEG is fully mixed into solution, by either pipetting up and down until the liquid is clear, or start with vortexing the required master-mix volume of water and PEG together before adding the remaining reagents.


Add  3 μ L lysis buffer to each well of a 96/384 well plate.

Quick centrifugation to collect the lysis buffer before storage until use.






Sample collection

- 3 Sort single cells into  3 μL lysis in either 96 or 384 wells.

Seal with appropriate seals (-80 C to >100 C) and centrifuge the finished sorted plate immediately after, and transfer it to a  -80 °C freezer or dry-ice.

Cell lysis


- 4 Remove the plate of sorted cells from the -80 freezer and incubate in a thermocycler with heated lid at  72 °C for  00:10:00 , followed by a  4 °C hold (keeping the storage seal sheet on the plate, unless damaged or loose).

Reverse Transcription

- 5 While the plate is incubating as per **step 4**, prepare the following **Reverse transcription master-mix**.

Reagent	Reaction conc.	μL per reaction	96 well plate	384 well plate
Tris-HCl pH 8.3 (1M)	20mM	0.1	11	41
NaCl (1M)	30mM	0.12	13.2	49.2
MgCl ₂ (100 mM)	2.5mM	0.01	1.1	4.1
GTP (100 mM)	1mM	0.04	4.4	16.4
DTT (100 mM)	8mM	0.32	35.2	131.2
RNAse Inhibitor (40u/ μL)	0.5u/ μL	0.05	5.5	20.5

TSO (100uM)	2uM	0.08	8.8	32.8
Maxi ma H- minus RT enzy me (200 U/uL)	2u/uL	0.04	4.4	16.4
Nucle ase Free Water		0.24	26.4	98.4
Total		1uL	110uL	410uL

Add  1 μ L RT mix to each well of a 96/384 well plate.

Replace the storage seal with a PCR seal. Ensure that the plate is properly sealed, to avoid evaporation.

Do a quick centrifugation to collect reaction at the bottom, before incubating the plate in a thermocycler at;

42 °C	90 min	1x
50 °C	2 min	10x
42 °C	2 min	
85 °C	5 min	1x

Preamplification PCR


6

Start preparing the **PCR mix**, when the incubation of the reverse transcription reaction is near completion, by combining the following components.

! Note that the KAPA DNA polymerase has a 3-5' exonuclease activity that is not HotStart. Therefore add polymerase just before using the master-mix.

Reagent	React ion conc.	uL per.	96 well plate	384 well plate
---------	-----------------------	------------	---------------------	----------------------

		reacti on		
Kapa HiFi HotStart buffer (5X)	1X	2.0	220	820
dNTPs (25mM/each)	0.3mM/each	0.12	13.2	49.2
MgCl ₂ (100mM)	0.5mM	0.05	5.5	20.5
Fwd Primer (100uM)	0.1uM	0.01	1.1	4.1
Rev Primer (100uM)	0.1uM	0.01	1.1	4.1
Polymerase (1U/uL)	0.02U/uL	0.2	22	82
Nuclease Free Water		3.61	379.1	1480.1
Total		6uL	660uL	2460uL

Add  6 μ L PCR mix to each well of a 96/384 well plate.

Quick centrifugation to collect reaction at the bottom, before running the following PCR program in a thermocycler.

Step	Temp eratu re	Time	Cycle s
Initial denaturation	98 °C	3 min	1x
Denaturation	98 °C	20 sec	18-25x
Annealing	65°C	30 sec	
Elongation	72 °C	4 min	
Final Elongation	72 °C	5 min	1x
Hold	4 °C	Hold	

The PCR cycle number depends on the input, and is very cell-type specific. See the Guidelines & warnings for help determining PCR cycles needed.



cDNA purification (preferable but optional)

- 7 Before purification prepare **22% PEG Clean-up Beads** used for cleaning up the preamplified cDNA. These beads perform similar to Ampure XP beads. Beads are prepared as per mcSCRB-seq protocol

CITATION


Johannes Bagnoli, Christoph Ziegenhain, Aleksandar Janjic, Lucas Esteban Wange, Beate Vieth, Swati Parekh, Johanna Geuder, Ines Hellmann, Wolfgang Enard. mcSCRB-seq protocol. Nature Communications.

LINK

[dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.p9kdr4w](https://doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.p9kdr4w)


Reagent	Amount
PEG 8000	11 g
NaCl, 5M	10 mL
Tris-HCL, 1M, pH 8.0	500 μ L
EDTA, 0.5M	100 μ L
IGEP AL, 10% solution	50 μ L
Sodium Azide, 10% solution	250 μ L
Ultra Pure Water	up to 49 mL
Total	49 mL




Add all ingredients into a  50 mL falcon tube, but do not add the total amount of water until after PEG is completely solubilized.

Incubate at  40 °C and vortex regularly until PEG is completely dissolved.


Resuspend bead stock carefully (Sera-Mag Speed Beads).

Pipette  1000 μ L of bead suspension into a 1.5 mL tube.










Place on magnet stand Remove supernatant.

Add  1000 μ L 10 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.0, 1 mM EDTA (TE), and resuspend beads. Place on magnet stand.

Remove supernatant. Repeat wash one more time.









Add  900 μ L 10 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.0, 1 mM EDTA (TE), and resuspend beads.

Add to PEG solution above and mix well.

- 8 1. To purify cDNA add **0.6:1** ratio of 22% PEG beads to sample, and mix by gently pipetting up and down.
2. Incubate at  Room temperature for  00:08:00 .
3. Place on magnet and allow beads to settle. Roughly  00:05:00 .
4. Discard supernatant, and wash once with  20 μ L /  100 μ L of **freshly prepared 80% Ethanol** for 384 / 96 well plates respectively.
5. Remove Ethanol and let the beads air dry for  00:02:00 -  00:05:00
6. Elute cDNA in  12 μ L UltraPure Water, resuspend beads and incubate for  00:05:00 .

DNA concentration measurement and normalization (Optional, but recommended)



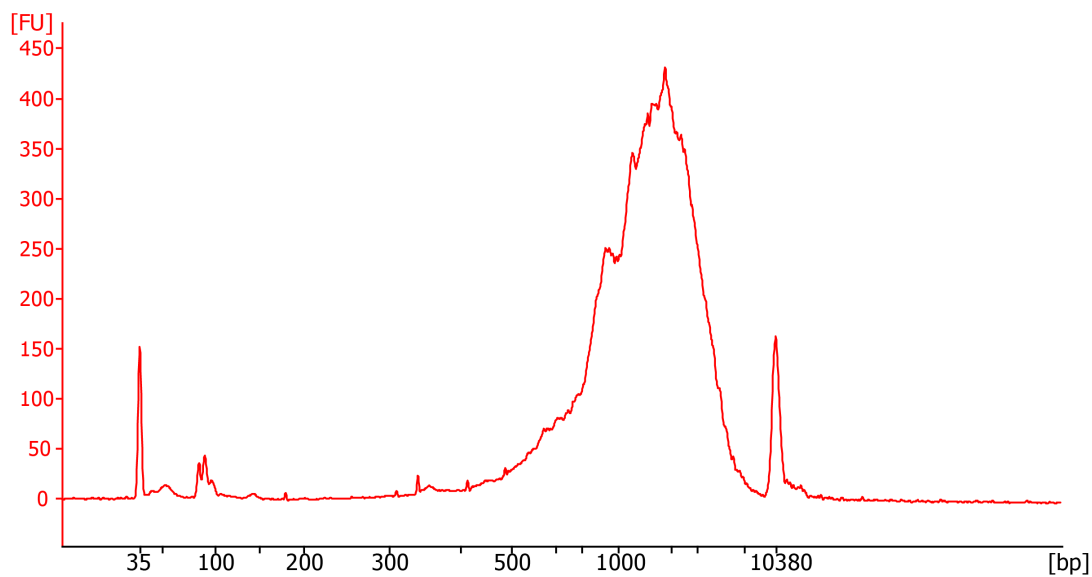
- 9
 1. Prepare 1X TE buffer by either diluting the 20X TE buffer from the QuantiFluor® dsDNA kit or by preparing a solution of 10mM Tris-HCl, 0.1mM EDTA, pH 8.
 2. Dilute the QuantiFluor® dsDNA Dye 1:400 in 1X TE buffer and mix.
 3. Prepare dsDNA standards for plate read-out, according to manufacturers protocol.
 4. Dispense  49 µL /  99 µL per well of the ready Quantiflour dye mix into black, flat-bottom 384/96 well plates, respectively.
 5. Add Standards to a separate plate.
 6. Add  1 µL of cDNA to each well. Incubate assay for  00:05:00 at  Room temperature
 7. Use a plate reader, to measure fluorescence (504nm Excitation/ 531nm Emission)
 8. Calculate cDNA concentration.
 9. Calculate water needed to dilute  1 µL cDNA to  200 pg/µL .
- 10
 1. Prepare **normalization plate** by adding the calculated water volumes to each well.
 2. Add  1 µL of cDNA to each well.

Quality Control check (Optional)

- 11 Check the cDNA library content and quality on a Agilent Bioanalyzer, using High Sensitivity DNA Analysis chips.



Expected result



Tagmentation

12

Safety information

Dimethylformamide (DMF) should be handled in a fume hood and according to local safety regulations.

Reagent	Amount (uL)	Concentration in 4X	
Tris-HCl pH 7.5 (1M)	40	40mM	
MgCl ₂ (100 mM)	20	20mM	





Dimethylformamide (DMF)	200	20%	
Ultra Pure Water	740		
Total	1000 uL		


2. Prepare **Tagmentation mix**.

Reagent	Reaction conc.	uL per reaction	96 well plate	384 well plate
Tagmentation buffer (4x)	1X	0.5	55	205
Amplicon Tagmentation Mix (Tn5)		0.05	5.5	20.5
Ultra Pure water		0.45	49.5	184.5
Total		1uL	110uL	410uL

3. Dispense  1 μ L of Tagmentation mix to a new 96 or 384 well plate.

4. Add  1 μ L of **normalized 200pg/uL cDNA (step 10)** to the plate containing tagmentation mix.

5. Apply a quick spin-down of the plate before incubation in a thermocycler at  55 °C for  00:10:00 .

6. To strip off the Tn5 from the DNA, add  0.5 μL of 0.2% SDS to each well.

Centrifuge quickly and incubate for  00:05:00 .

7. Concerning Nextera Index primers: We highly suggest to design or order custom Nextera Index primers. This ensures higher flexibility while also being much cheaper in the long run! The following protocol is designed as such. If using Nextera index primers purchased from Illumina, dilute all primers 5x with UltraPure water, and proceed to use similar volume as follows.

8. Add  1.5 μL **Nextera Index primers** to each well as follows

Reagent	Reaction conc.	μL per. reaction		
Custom S50X index primer (0.5 μM)	0.1 μM	0.75		
Custom N70X index primer (0.5 μM)	0.1 μM	0.75		

9. Prepare **Tagmentation PCR mix.**

Reagent	Reaction conc.	μL per. reaction	96 well plate	384 well plate
Phusion HF buffer (5X)	1X	1.4	154	574
dNTPs (25mM/each)	0.2mM/each	0.06	6.2	23



Phusion HF (2U/ μ L)	0.01U/ μ L	0.04	3.9	14.4
H ₂ O		1.51	166	618.7
Total		3uL	330uL	1230uL


10. Add  3 μ L of **Tagmentation PCR mix** to each well, centrifuge quickly and incubate in a thermocycler using the following PCR program.

Step	Temperature	Time	Cycles
Gap-filling	72 °C	3 min	1x
Initial denaturation	98 °C	3 min	1x
Denaturation	98 °C	10 sec	12x
Annealing	55 °C	30 sec	
Elongation	72 °C	30 sec	
Final Elongation	72 °C	5 min	1x
Hold	4 °C	Hold	


Library clean-up


13 For the final library clean-up, pool all the Tagmented cDNA (step 12) sample wells in a 1.5mL or 5mL eppendorf tube.



1. Add **0.6:1 22% PEG beads to final volume of the pooled tagmentation cDNA**. Mix gently by pipetting and incubate for  00:08:00 at  Room temperature

2. Place on magnet and allow beads to settle. Roughly  00:05:00 .




4. Discard supernatant, and wash twice with \geq  1000 μL **freshly prepared 80% Ethanol.**

5. Remove Ethanol and let the beads air dry for at least  00:05:00

6. Elute cDNA in  40 μL UltraPure Water, resuspend beads and incubate for  00:05:00 .

(Optional) Size selection via Gel-cutting and extraction

14 To further select for longer tagmented fragments, an optional step including a size selection step can be included.

1. Load  20 μL of the eluted tagmented library from step 13 into a **2% Agarose E-Gel EX** together with 50bp DNA ladder.

2. Run gel for  00:12:00

3. After finished run, open the gel casing and cut the gel between **550bp - 2kb** using a clean scalpel or blade.

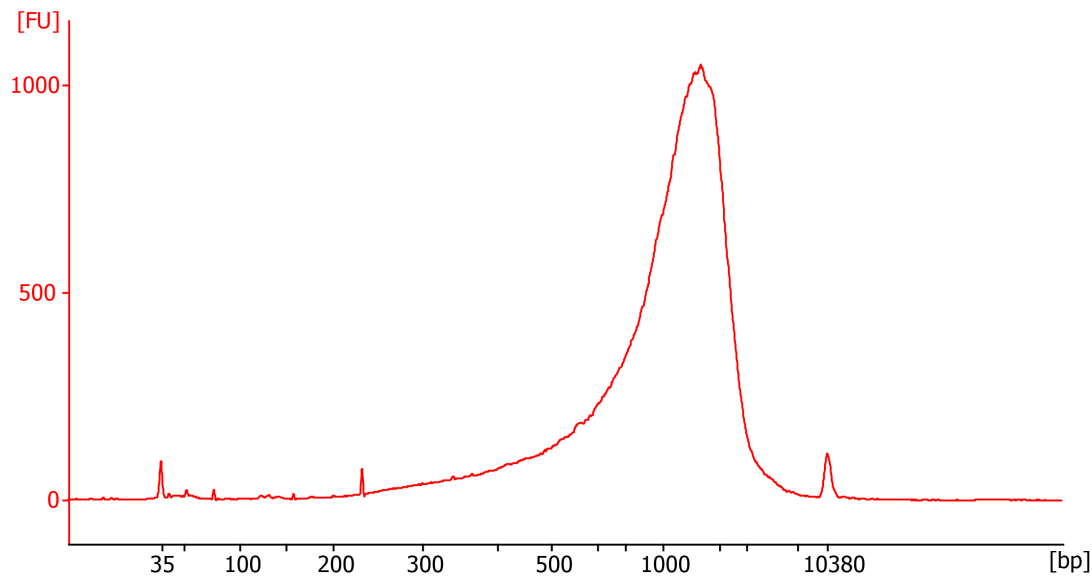
4. Purify the excised gel slice using Qiagen QIAquick Gel extraction kit according to manufacturers protocol.

Final Library Quantification

15

Run the final library on a Agilent Bioanalyzer (High Sensitivity DNA), to inspect the quality and median base-pair length of your library.

Expected result



Example of a finished HEK library

Use Qubit fluorometer or similar to quantify the library.

Calculate the final library concentration, using above metrics.

Sequencing

- 16 The sequencing ready library should be sequenced on any Illumina compatible sequencer, either Single-end or Paired-end, depending on the question and need.

For final library whether gel cut/size selected or not, the expected median base-pair should be around or above 1kb. In our experience NovaSeq/HiSeq sequencers are more tolerant towards wider or longer size fragment distributions, than the NextSeq. Because of this consider increasing the loading concentration a bit to ensure proper cluster density. However "your mileage may vary". Empirical investigation or a pilot run is always advised, if possible.

Primary Data processing



- 17 After sequencing has completed successfully, binary base-call files (BCL) need to be converted to fastq.
For this, bcl2fastq should be used in the latest version (bcl2fastq v2.20).

Software

bcl2fastq

NAME

Illumina

DEVELOPER

At this stage, demultiplexing into per-cell fastq files is not necessary - a sample sheet is thus not needed.

Be sure to adjust the base mask to represent your sequencing layout and the length of your barcode reads.

Remove the option `--no-lane-splitting` if the same cell barcodes have been reused for different libraries on different lanes of the flow cell.

You may restrict the number of cores used with the following options:

`--loading-threads`

`--processing-threads`

`--writing-threads`

Command

bcl2fastq: 2×150bp dual-index

```
bcl2fastq --use-bases-mask Y150N,I8,I8,Y150N --no-lane-splitting --  
create-fastq-for-index-reads -R  
/mnt/storage1/NextSeqNAS/191011_NB502120_0154_AHVG7JBGXB
```

`-R` denotes the runfolder and you may redirect the fastq output to a different folder with the `-o` option.

- 18 After generating fastq files, the zUMIs pipeline should be used to process Smart-seq3 data to ensure correct handling of UMI reads and internal reads.



CITATION

Parekh S, Ziegenhain C, Vieth B, Enard W, Hellmann I (2018). zUMIs - A fast and flexible pipeline to process RNA sequencing data with UMIs.. GigaScience.

LINK

<https://doi.org/10.1093/gigascience/giy059>

Software

zUMIs

NAME

Linux

OS

<https://github.com/sdparekh/zUMIs>

SOURCE LINK

We recommend the newest version v2.5.6 at the time of this protocol.

All options are set in a configuration file following the YAML format. Here is a best practice example:

Command

Smartseq3.yaml

```
project: Smartseq3
sequence_files:
  file1:
    name: /smartseq3/fastq/Undetermined_S0_R1_001.fastq.gz
    base_definition:
      - cDNA(23-150)
      - UMI(12-19)
    find_pattern: ATTGCGCAATG
  file2:
    name: /smartseq3/fastq/Undetermined_S0_R2_001.fastq.gz
    base_definition:
      - cDNA(1-150)
  file3:
    name: /smartseq3/fastq/Undetermined_S0_I1_001.fastq.gz
    base_definition:
      - BC(1-8)
  file4:
    name: /smartseq3/fastq/Undetermined_S0_I2_001.fastq.gz
    base_definition:
      - BC(1-8)
reference:
  STAR_index: /resources/genomes/Mouse/STAR5idx_noGTF/
  GTF_file: /resources/genomes/Mouse/Mus_musculus.GRCm38.91.gtf
  additional_STAR_params: '--clip3pAdapterSeq CTGTCTCTTATACACATCT'
  additional_files:
    - /resources/genomes/spikes/ERCC92.fa
out_dir: /smartseq3/zUMIs/
num_threads: 20
mem_limit: 50
filter_cutoffs:
  BC_filter:
    num_bases: 3
    phred: 20
  UMI_filter:
    num_bases: 2
    phred: 20
barcodes:
  barcode_num: ~
  barcode_file: /smartseq3/expected_barcodes.txt
automatic: no
```



```
BarcodeBinning: 1
nReadsperCell: 100
demultiplex: no
counting_opts:
  introns: yes
  downsampling: '0'
  strand: 0
Ham_Dist: 1
write_ham: no
velocityto: no
primaryHit: yes
twoPass: yes
make_stats: yes
which_Stage: Filtering
samtools_exec: samtools
pigz_exec: pigz
STAR_exec: STAR
Rscript_exec: Rscript
```

Be sure to use full paths to all files and folders. For further descriptions of the individual options visit the [zUMIs GitHub repository wiki](#)

Now, simply start zUMIs with the following command:

Command

Invoke zUMIs

```
zUMIs-master.sh -y Smartseq3.yaml
```



Citations

Step 18

Parekh S, Ziegenhain C, Vieth B, Enard W, Hellmann I. zUMIs - A fast and flexible pipeline to process RNA sequencing data with UMIs.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/gigascience/giy059>

Step 7

Johannes Bagnoli, Christoph Ziegenhain, Aleksandar Janjic, Lucas Esteban Wange, Beate Vieth, Swati Parekh, Johanna Geuder, Ines Hellmann, Wolfgang Enard. mcSCRB-seq protocol

[dx.doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.p9kdr4w](https://doi.org/10.17504/protocols.io.p9kdr4w)