

## Lab Notebook Guidelines

**Take good notes. If you didn't write it down, or I can't find it, it didn't happen. Good records are key to saving time and money, and they move to publication faster!**

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- Without a lab-dedicated iPad or desktop, you cannot ditch paper, but you can integrate with an *electronic lab notebook* (Benchling is a decent cloud option).
- Use a *bound*, paper notebook. Pencil is waterproof, but *pen* is the preference here.
- Because the lab notebook *belongs at your bench* (not your desk) and is handled with gloved hands, it is recommended to digitize (photo/pdf) relevant pages for easy reference.

### **Formatting**

1. **Table of contents**, requires a few blank pages at the beginning. Fill it in every few months with general or specific entries that highlight groups of related experiments and important results.
  - i. Specific entries: Lysis curve Mu gp22 K6R with gp25.....24  
Lysis curve Mu gp22 K7R with gp25.....25  
Lysis curve Mu gp22 K9R with gp25.....26
  - ii. General entry: Lysis curves Mu gp22 mutants.....24-35
2. **Page numbers**
3. **Date every page**: YYMMDD
4. **Index** includes recipes, reagent catalog/company lists, and references (ladder images or strain lists). You can refer to those pages while working and in shorthand elsewhere.

### **Contents**

1. **Chronological or blocked entries**
  2. **Details** – lots of them
    - a. Concentrations (volumes also need stock concentration and final volume)
    - b. Incubation times
    - c. Temperatures
    - d. Strain backgrounds (full lab strain numbers are acceptable alternative)
    - e. Printed images/graphs of raw data
    - f. people/sources of material
    - g. relevant literature citation for method/inspiration
  3. **Updated regularly**, when the details are fresh in your mind
  4. **References**
    - a. other pages (continued *from* page, continued *on* page, protocol X, *etc.*)
    - b. names/locations of associated digital data files with results
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“They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself.”

— Andy Warhol