

How this Inoculation Stuff Works

1. One set of fresh stock cultures will be provided in a labeled green half-rack for each group of four students at the beginning of each lab period.
2. The media needed for each lab session will be placed on the side counter before class. Extra media or media needed for unknowns will be on the bookshelf near the back of the room or in the cooler, usually on the bottom shelves.
3. Remember to label all unlabeled media with a black Sharpie[®] when you get it; many different types of media look alike, and you will only be able to keep the tubes and plates unconfused if you label them. Avoid obscuring the media with your writing to the greatest extent possible.
4. Remember to label all inoculated media with the following information at minimum:
 - a) your name or initials
 - b) the genus and species of the organism or the number of your unknown
 - c) your instructor's name
 - d) the date
5. After you have inoculated plated media, **tape the plates together before placing them upside-down on the tray**. This will allow two things:
 - a) You will be able to identify your own cultures again during the following lab period.
 - b) Plates will stay closed, neither becoming contaminated nor causing contamination.
6. NEVER place tape on tubed media.
7. After you label and inoculate your cultures, place them on your instructor's red (37°C) or green (30°C) tray in the back of the room, depending on which temperature is best for the organism and for the test. Your instructor will tell you which temperature to use. **DO NOT** place items on the blue tray if you want your organisms to grow. At the end of the lab session, your instructor will place each tray in the appropriate incubator.
8. When class is over, each group must put all their stock culture tubes with the caps facing outward in the white plastic baskets in the biohazard disposal area. Place all equipment, supplies, and waste in the appropriate places. Clean the table with disinfectant.
9. Put the empty green stock culture racks on the side counter by the slide warmer.
10. Cultures are generally incubated for 24-48 hours.
 - a) Cultures inoculated on Monday will remain in the incubator until class on Wednesday.
 - b) On Fridays, the lab technician will transfer to the cooler cultures from Wednesday.
11. You are responsible for placing your used cultures (tubes or plates) in the **appropriate** container in the biohazard disposal area when you are finished with them.
12. After disposal, the lab technician will sterilize all biohazardous waste by steam heat. This is done using an autoclave, which heats the waste to a temperature of 250°F at 15 psi (15 lbs. of pressure per square inch) for 15 minutes. This is also how media is sterilized.

If you have questions about anything, if the waste bins are full, if the media has all been used, or if you need anything else, please ask your instructor or the lab technician. We are happy to help.