

Pouring Agar Plates

Introduction

Use the following instructions to properly prepare agar plates.

Safety Precautions

Although all bacteria sold by Flinn Scientific are non-pathogenic bacterium, there is always the potential for contamination by pathogens when dealing with microorganisms. Wear goggles and gloves when handling microbes, and always use sterile or aseptic techniques. Tape all Petri dishes shut and do not open the Petri dish lids after they have been inoculated with bacteria. Sterilize all work areas and surfaces after handling the bacteria, as instructed by your teacher, and wash your hands thoroughly with antibacterial soap before leaving the laboratory.

Materials

Nutrient agar (or similar), prepared

Parafilm® (optional)

Bunsen burner

Water bath or microwave

Petri dish

Procedure

1. Loosen but do not remove the bottle cap of the prepared agar.
2. Place the bottle of agar in a water bath or microwave until it has liquefied. *Caution:* Do not use a microwave to melt agar if the agar has a metal cap.
3. Remove the cap and pass the neck of the bottle through the flame of a Bunsen burner to sterilize it.
4. Open the lid of the petri dish as little as possible holding it up at an angle (see Figure 1).
5. Pour agar into the bottom of the petri dish until it is about 1/8" thick.
6. Immediately close the lid of the petri dish.
7. Pass the neck of the agar bottle through the flame and recap.
8. Allow plates to sit for at least 20 minutes so the agar can set. Wrap the dish with Parafilm if desired.
9. If prepared plates are not used immediately store them upside down in the refrigerator. *Note:* Plates are stored upside down to prevent condensation from dripping on the agar.

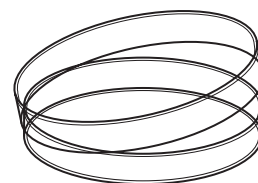


Figure 1.

Disposal

Please consult your current *Flinn Scientific Catalog/Reference Manual* for general guidelines and specific procedures, and review all federal, state and local regulations that may apply, before proceeding. If plates have not been inoculated they may be disposed of according to Flinn Suggested Disposal Method #26a. If the plates have been inoculated they may be disposed of according to Flinn Suggested Biological Waste Disposal Method Type I.

Materials required for this activity are available from Flinn Scientific, Inc.

Catalog No.	Description
N0077	Nutrient Agar, 3 bottles
AP8170	Petri Dish, Disposable, Polystyrene, Sterile
AP9251	Water Bath, Laboratory, 1.6 L
AP7300	Water Bath, 0.5 L
AP1500	Parafilm M®, 2" × 250'

Consult your *Flinn Scientific Catalog/Reference Manual* for current prices.