



# KAPA HiFi HotStart PCR Kit

KR0369 – v11.19

This Technical Data Sheet provides product information and a detailed protocol for the KAPA HiFi HotStart PCR Kit.

This document applies to the following kits:  
07958862001, 07958889001 and 07958897001.

## Contents

Product Description . . . . .	2
Product Applications . . . . .	2
Product Specifications . . . . .	2
Important Parameters . . . . .	3
Standard PCR Protocol . . . . .	4
Appendix A - Troubleshooting . . . . .	5
Restrictions and Liabilities . . . . .	6
Note to Purchaser: Limited Product Warranty . . . . .	6
Note to Purchaser: Limited License . . . . .	6

Kapa/Roche Kit Codes and Components		
<b>KK2500</b> 07958862001 (20 U)	KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase (1 U/μL) KAPA HiFi Fidelity Buffer (5X) KAPA HiFi GC Buffer (5X) MgCl <sub>2</sub> (25 mM) KAPA dNTP Mix (10 mM each)	20 μL 1.5 mL 1.5 mL 1.6 mL 40 μL
<b>KK2501</b> 07958889001 (100 U)	KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase (1 U/μL) KAPA HiFi Fidelity Buffer (5X) KAPA HiFi GC Buffer (5X) MgCl <sub>2</sub> (25 mM) KAPA dNTP Mix (10 mM each)	100 μL 1.5 mL 1.5 mL 1.6 mL 160 μL
<b>KK2502</b> 07958897001 (250 U)	KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase (1 U/μL) KAPA HiFi Fidelity Buffer (5X) KAPA HiFi GC Buffer (5X) MgCl <sub>2</sub> (25 mM) KAPA dNTP Mix (10 mM each)	250 μL 1.5 mL 1.5 mL 1.6 mL 300 μL

Quick Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase is extensively used in next-generation sequencing (NGS) library amplification. If you are using this product in library construction protocols, you may find KAPA HiFi HotStart Library Amplification Kits more convenient. These kits contain the KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase in a ReadyMix formulation, with or without KAPA Library Amplification Primer Mix for the amplification of Illumina® libraries. Please refer to the KAPA HiFi HotStart Library Amplification Kit Technical Data Sheet (KR0408) for details and a standard library amplification protocol.</li> <li>• KAPA HiFi HotStart PCR Kits contain the engineered KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase; developed for fast and versatile high-fidelity PCR.</li> <li>• The error rate of KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase (as determined by 454 sequencing) is 1 error per 3.6 x 10<sup>6</sup> nucleotides incorporated.</li> <li>• Amplify targets up to 15 kb from genomic DNA or 20 kb from less complex targets.</li> <li>• KAPA HiFi buffers contain 2 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub> at 1X.</li> <li>• Use the KAPA HiFi Fidelity Buffer for routine high-fidelity PCR, and the KAPA HiFi GC Buffer for GC-rich and other difficult targets.</li> <li>• Denature at 98°C for 20 sec per cycle.</li> <li>• Optimal annealing temperatures are typically higher than in other PCR buffer systems. Use an annealing temperature gradient to determine the optimal annealing temperature.</li> <li>• To ensure the highest fidelity, use high quality DNA and the lowest possible number of cycles.</li> </ul>

## Product Description

KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase is a B-family DNA polymerase, engineered to have increased affinity for DNA, without the need for accessory proteins or DNA binding domains. The intrinsic high processivity of the enzyme results in significant improvement in yield, speed and sensitivity when compared to wild-type B-family DNA polymerases. In addition, the ability to amplify long fragments, as well as GC- and AT-rich targets, is significantly improved. The enzyme is combined with a proprietary antibody that inactivates the enzyme until the first denaturation step. This prevents nonspecific amplification during reaction setup, increases sensitivity, and improves reaction efficiency.

KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase is supplied with two uniquely-formulated PCR buffers for optimal performance. Both buffers contain MgCl<sub>2</sub> at a 1X concentration of 2 mM. The KAPA HiFi Fidelity Buffer is recommended for routine high-fidelity PCR, whereas the KAPA HiFi GC Buffer is recommended for the amplification of GC-rich and other difficult targets. Additives in the KAPA HiFi GC Buffer result in a two-fold decrease in fidelity when compared with the KAPA HiFi Fidelity Buffer.

KAPA HiFi HotStart PCR Kits are designed for routine, high-fidelity PCR of a wide range of targets and fragment sizes. They offer error rates approximately 100 times lower than wild-type *Taq* DNA polymerase, and higher success rates and yields than achievable with wild-type B-family (proofreading) DNA polymerases. In addition, KAPA HiFi requires significantly shorter cycling times than wild-type B-family DNA polymerases.

KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase has 5'→3' polymerase and 3'→5' exonuclease (proofreading) activity, but no 5'→3' exonuclease activity. The strong 3'→5' exonuclease activity results in extremely high accuracy during DNA amplification. The error rate of KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase (determined by 454 sequencing) is 1 error per 3.6 × 10<sup>6</sup> nucleotides incorporated. This fidelity is approximately 100 times higher than that of wild-type *Taq* DNA polymerase, and up to 10 times higher than that of other B-family DNA polymerases and polymerase blends.

DNA fragments generated with KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase may be used for routine downstream analysis and applications, including restriction enzyme digestion, cloning and sequencing. PCR products generated with KAPA HiFi HotStart PCR Kits are blunt-ended, but may be 3'-dA-tailed for cloning into TA-cloning vectors (see **Important Parameters: TA-cloning**).

## Product Applications

The KAPA HiFi HotStart PCR Kit is ideally suited for:

- NGS library amplification
- Amplification of DNA fragments for Sanger sequencing (direct sequencing or sequencing of cloned PCR products)
- Amplification of DNA fragments to be cloned for protein expression or genomic characterization
- Site-directed mutagenesis.

For more information on these and other high-fidelity PCR applications, please refer to KAPA HiFi Application Notes available from [www.sequencing.roche.com](http://www.sequencing.roche.com).

## Product Specifications

### Shipping and Storage

KAPA HiFi HotStart PCR Kits are shipped on dry ice or ice packs, depending on the country of destination. Upon arrival, store kit components at -15°C to -25°C in a constant-temperature freezer. When stored under these conditions and handled correctly, full activity of the kit is retained until the expiry date indicated on the kit label.

### Handling

KAPA HiFi buffers and enzymes contain isostabilizers and may not freeze solidly, even when stored at -15°C to -25°C. This will not affect the shelf-life of the product. Nevertheless, always ensure that the product has been fully thawed and mixed before use. Reagents may be stored at 2°C to 8°C for short-term use (up to 1 month). Return to -15°C to -25°C for long-term storage. Provided that all components have been handled carefully and not contaminated, the kit is not expected to be compromised if left (unintentionally) at room temperature for a short period of time (up to 3 days). Long-term storage at room temperature and 2°C to 8°C is not recommended. Please note that reagents stored at temperatures above -15°C to -25°C are more prone to degradation when contaminated during use, and therefore storage at such temperatures is at the user's own risk.

### Quality Control

KAPA HiFi HotStart PCR Kits are subjected to stringent quality control tests, are free of contaminating exo- and endonuclease activity, and meet strict requirements with respect to DNA contamination levels. Each batch of KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase is confirmed to contain <2% contaminating protein (Agilent Protein 230 Assay). Please contact Technical Support at [sequencing.roche.com/support](http://sequencing.roche.com/support) for more information.

## Important Parameters

### Annealing temperature

Due to the high salt concentration KAPA HiFi buffers, the optimal annealing temperature for a given primer set is usually higher when compared to a different buffer system. When using the KAPA HiFi HotStart PCR Kit with a specific primer pair for the first time, determine the optimal annealing temperature with an annealing temperature gradient PCR. We recommend a gradient from 60 – 72°C, although some assays may require even higher annealing temperatures. For assays with optimal annealing temperatures of 68°C or higher, two-step cycling may be performed at the optimal annealing temperature. Optimal annealing temperatures below 60°C are rare, but may be required when using primers with a high AT-content.

If a gradient PCR is not feasible, use an annealing temperature of 65°C as a first approach, and adjust the annealing temperature based on the results obtained:

- If a low yield of only the specific product is obtained, lower the annealing temperature in 1 – 2°C increments.
- If nonspecific products are formed in addition to the specific product, increase the annealing temperature in 1 – 2°C increments.
- If no product is formed (specific or nonspecific), reduce the annealing temperature by 5°C. MgCl<sub>2</sub> concentration may have to be increased.
- If only nonspecific products are formed (in a ladder-like pattern), increase the annealing temperature by 5°C or try recommendations for GC-rich PCR (see **Important Parameters: GC-rich PCR**).

**NOTE:** The optimal annealing temperature for a specific amplicon is typically 5 – 6°C lower in the KAPA HiFi GC Buffer than in the KAPA HiFi Fidelity Buffer.

### MgCl<sub>2</sub> concentration

KAPA HiFi buffers contain a final (1X) MgCl<sub>2</sub> concentration of 2 mM, which is sufficient for most applications. Applications which are likely to require higher MgCl<sub>2</sub> concentrations include long PCR (>10 kb) and AT-rich PCR, as well as amplification using primers with a low GC content (<40%).

### GC-rich PCR

Use KAPA HiFi GC Buffer for GC rich fragments. Alternatively, evaluate the KAPA HiFi Fidelity Buffer + 5% DMSO. Should neither of these result in successful amplification, perform reactions in both the KAPA HiFi Fidelity and GC Buffers, adding either 1X KAPA Enhancer 1 (supplied with KAPA2G Robust PCR Kits) or 1 M betaine to determine whether this improves yield and/or specificity.

### Primer and Template DNA quality

Another critical factor for successful PCR with KAPA HiFi HotStart is primer design and quality. Primers should be carefully designed to eliminate the possibility of primer-dimer formation and nonspecific annealing as far as possible, and should have a GC content of 40 – 60%. Primers with GC-content >60% may require higher denaturation temperatures and/or longer denaturation times, while primers with GC content <40% may require annealing temperatures <60°C, and/or increased MgCl<sub>2</sub> and primer concentrations. Furthermore, primer sets should be designed to have similar theoretical melting temperatures, particularly for the 3 – 5 nucleotides at the 3'-terminal of the primer.

**NOTE:** Always dilute and store primers in a buffered solution (e.g. 10 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.0 – 8.5) instead of PCR-grade water to limit degradation and maintain primer quality.

High-quality template DNA is essential for high-fidelity amplification. Degraded, damaged, or sheared template DNA is particularly problematic when amplifying longer fragments (>1 kb). To limit degradation and maintain template quality, always dilute and store DNA in a buffered solution (e.g. 10 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.0 – 8.5) instead of PCR-grade water.

Amplification from low-complexity templates, such as plasmid DNA, generally requires minimal optimization. Applications based on low target copy numbers (e.g. when amplifying single-copy genes from genomic templates, or when using cDNA as template) are generally more challenging. For plasmid DNA, 1 – 10 ng template per 25 µL reaction is sufficient, whereas up to 100 ng complex genomic DNA or cDNA may be required.

### TA-cloning

DNA fragments generated with the KAPA HiFi HotStart PCR Kit may be used directly for blunt-end cloning, or cloning using restriction endonucleases. For TA-cloning of KAPA HiFi HotStart PCR products, first purify the PCR product to remove the KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase, as residual proofreading activity will remove any dA-overhangs added during the A-tailing reaction. Perform A-tailing by combining the purified PCR product, 1X Taq buffer (with 1.5 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>), 0.2 mM dATP and 1 U of Taq DNA polymerase and incubating for 5 min at 72°C.

### NGS library amplification

NGS library amplification differs from other high-fidelity PCR applications in three noteworthy ways: (i) unlike genomic DNA or plasmids, templates are comprised of highly heterogeneous populations of linear DNA or cDNA fragments; (ii) the input copy number is orders of magnitude higher than in “conventional” PCR applications, and (iii) the aim is not to amplify a single amplicon with high specificity, but to amplify a complex collection of library fragments with minimal bias. For important parameters relating to NGS library amplification with KAPA HiFi kits, please refer to the KAPA HiFi HotStart Library Amplification Kit Technical Data Sheet (KR0408).

## Standard PCR Protocol

**IMPORTANT!** The KAPA HiFi HotStart PCR Kit contains an engineered B-family (proofreading) DNA polymerase and uniquely-formulated buffers, and requires specialized reaction conditions. If these conditions are not adhered to, reaction failure is likely. Refer to **Important Parameters** for more information.

### Step 1: Prepare the PCR master mix

- 1.1 KAPA HiFi HotStart reactions **MUST** be set up on ice since the high proofreading activity of the enzyme will result in rapid primer degradation at room temperature.
- 1.2 Ensure that all reagents are properly thawed and mixed.
- 1.3 Prepare a PCR master mix containing the appropriate volume of all reaction components common to all or a subset of reactions to be performed.
- 1.4 Calculate the required volumes of each component based on the following table:

Component	25 $\mu$ L reaction <sup>1</sup>	Final conc.
PCR-grade water	Up to 25 $\mu$ L	N/A
5X KAPA HiFi Buffer (Fidelity or GC) <sup>2</sup>	5.0 $\mu$ L	1X
10 mM KAPA dNTP Mix	0.75 $\mu$ L	0.3 mM each
10 $\mu$ M Forward Primer	0.75 $\mu$ L	0.3 $\mu$ M
10 $\mu$ M Reverse Primer	0.75 $\mu$ L	0.3 $\mu$ M
Template DNA <sup>3</sup>	As required	As required
1 U/ $\mu$ L KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase	0.5 $\mu$ L	0.5 U

<sup>1</sup> Reaction volumes may be adjusted between 10 – 50  $\mu$ L. For volumes other than 25  $\mu$ L, scale reagents down proportionally. Reaction volumes >50  $\mu$ L are not recommended.

<sup>2</sup> KAPA HiFi Buffers contain 2 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub> (1X). Additional MgCl<sub>2</sub> may be added separately. Use the GC Buffer only if the Fidelity Buffer gives poor results.

<sup>3</sup> Use <100 ng genomic DNA (10 – 100 ng) and <1 ng less complex DNA (0.1 – 1 ng) per 25  $\mu$ L reaction as first approach.

### Step 2: Set up individual reactions

- 2.1 Transfer the appropriate volumes of PCR master mix, template and primer to individual PCR tubes or wells of a PCR plate.
- 2.2 Cap or seal individual reactions, mix and centrifuge briefly.

### Step 3: Run the PCR

3.1 Perform PCR with the following cycling protocol:

Step	Temperature	Duration	Cycles
Initial denaturation <sup>1</sup>	95°C	3 min	1
Denaturation <sup>2</sup>	98°C	20 sec	15 – 35 <sup>6</sup>
Annealing <sup>3,4</sup>	60 – 75°C	15 sec	
Extension <sup>5</sup>	72°C	15 – 60 sec/kb	
Final extension	72°C	1 min/kb	1

<sup>1</sup> Initial denaturation for 3 min at 95°C is sufficient for most applications. Use 5 min at 95°C for GC-rich targets (>70% GC content).

<sup>2</sup> KAPA HiFi Buffers have a higher salt concentration than conventional PCR buffers, which affects DNA melting. To ensure that complex and GC-rich targets are completely denatured, use a temperature of 98°C for denaturation during cycling.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to DNA melting, the high-salt buffers also affect primer annealing. The optimal annealing temperature for a specific primer set is likely to be different (higher) than when used in a conventional PCR buffer. An annealing temperature gradient PCR is recommended to determine the optimal annealing temperature with KAPA HiFi HotStart. If gradient PCR is not feasible, anneal at 65°C as a first approach.

<sup>4</sup> Two-step cycling protocols with a combined annealing/extension temperature in the range of 68 – 75°C and a combined annealing/extension time of 30 sec/kb may be used.

<sup>5</sup> Use 15 sec extension per cycle for targets  $\leq$ 1 kb, and 30 – 60 sec/kb for longer fragments, or to improve yields.

<sup>6</sup> For highest fidelity, use  $\leq$ 25 cycles. In cases where very low template concentrations or low reaction efficiency results in low yields, 30 – 35 cycles may be performed to produce sufficient product for downstream applications.

Appendix A - Troubleshooting

Symptoms	Key parameters	Solutions
No amplification or low yield	Cycling protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the recommended 3 – 5 min initial denaturation at 95°C, and perform cycle denaturation for 20 sec at 98°C.</li> <li>Increase the extension time to a maximum of 1 min/kb.</li> <li>Increase the number of cycles.</li> </ul>
	Annealing temperature is too high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce the annealing temperature by 5°C, or try the GC Buffer.</li> <li>Optimize the annealing temperature by gradient PCR.</li> </ul>
	Template DNA quantity and quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excess template DNA chelates Mg<sup>2+</sup>. Either reduce the template concentration to &lt;100 ng, or increase MgCl<sub>2</sub>.</li> <li>Check template DNA quality. Store and dilute in a buffered solution, not water.</li> </ul>
	Primer concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some primers anneal more efficiently than others. Increase the primer concentration, or optimize MgCl<sub>2</sub> to improve primer binding. Store and dilute primers in a buffered solution, not water.</li> </ul>
	MgCl <sub>2</sub> concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optimize MgCl<sub>2</sub> concentration. AT-rich PCR typically requires more MgCl<sub>2</sub>.</li> </ul>
	dNTP quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>dNTP quality is critical. Use only KAPA dNTPs supplied with the kit.</li> </ul>
Nonspecific amplification or smearing	Template DNA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use &lt;100 ng of DNA per reaction, or reduce the number of cycles.</li> <li>Check template DNA quality.</li> </ul>
	Cycling protocol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excessive annealing and/or extension times will result in nonspecific amplification, typically of bands larger than the target band. Reduce the annealing and extension times to a minimum of 10 sec each.</li> <li>Reduce the number of cycles.</li> </ul>
	Annealing temperature is too low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A sub-optimal annealing temperature will result in nonspecific amplicons that are typically smaller than the target band. See <b>Important Parameters: Annealing Temperature</b>.</li> </ul>
	Target GC content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the GC Buffer, or add 5% DMSO to Fidelity Buffer.</li> <li>Add 1X KAPA Enhancer 1 or 1 M betaine to reactions with Fidelity and/or GC Buffer to facilitate melting of GC-rich templates.</li> </ul>
	Enzyme concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not exceed 0.5 U of KAPA HiFi HotStart DNA Polymerase per 25 µL reaction. This results in smearing and nonspecific amplification.</li> </ul>
	Primer concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some primers anneal more efficiently than others. Decrease the primer concentration. Store and dilute primers in a buffered solution, not water.</li> </ul>

## Restrictions and Liabilities

This technical data sheet is provided “as is” and Kapa Biosystems assumes no responsibility for any typographical, technical, or other inaccuracies. The document is subject to change, without notice, in future editions.

To the maximum extent permitted by applicable law, Kapa Biosystems disclaims all warranties, either express or implied, with regard to this technical data sheet and any information contained herein, including but not limited to the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose. Kapa Biosystems shall not be liable for errors or for incidental or consequential damages in connection with the furnishing, use, or performance of this document or of any information contained herein.

This document might contain references to third party sources of information, hardware or software, products, or services and/or third party web sites (collectively the “Third-Party Information”). Kapa Biosystems does not control, and is not responsible for, any Third-Party Information. The inclusion of Third-Party Information in this document does not imply endorsement by Kapa Biosystems of the Third-Party Information or the third party in any way.

Kapa Biosystems is not responsible nor will be liable in any way for your use of any software or equipment that is not supplied by Kapa Biosystems in connection with your use of Kapa Biosystems products.

Kapa Biosystems does not in any way guarantee or represent that you will obtain satisfactory results from using Kapa Biosystems products as described herein. The only warranties provided to you are included in the Limited Warranty enclosed with this document. You assume all risk in connection with your use of Kapa Biosystems products.

## Note to Purchaser: Limited Product Warranty

Any product that does not meet the performance standards stated in the product specification sheet will be replaced at no charge. This warranty limits our liability to the replacement of the product. No other warranties of any kind, express or implied, including without limitation, implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, are provided by Kapa Biosystems. Kapa Biosystems shall have no liability for any direct, indirect, consequential or incidental damages arising out of the use, the results of use or the inability to use any product.

## Note to Purchaser: Limited License

KAPA HiFi HotStart PCR Kits are developed, designed and sold exclusively for research purposes. Neither the product, nor any individual component, has been tested for use in diagnostics or for drug development, nor is it suitable for administration to humans or animals. Please refer to the SDS, which is available on request.

Certain applications of this product are covered by patents issued to parties other than Kapa Biosystems and applicable in certain countries. Purchase of this product does not include a license to perform any such applications. Users of this product may therefore be required to obtain a patent license depending upon the particular application and country in which the product is used.



**Manufacturing, R & D**  
**Cape Town, South Africa**  
Tel: +27 21 448 8200  
Fax: +27 21 448 6503

**Technical Support**  
[www.sequencing.roche.com/support](http://www.sequencing.roche.com/support)