



Weighing Chemicals

The preparation of media requires careful weighing of all components. Even if a commercially prepared medium is used, care must be taken in preparing it and any stock solutions that are required.

Because of the diversity of laboratory balances in use, it is impossible to review the details of their operation. The manufacturer's instructions should be consulted before using any balance. The types of balances most often encountered in the laboratory include top-loading single-pan balance, triple-beam balance, double-pan torsion balance, analytical single-pan balance, and top-loading electronic balance. The last type has become quite popular in recent years due to its accuracy, ease of use, and durability. With certain models of top-loading electronic balances, milligram accuracy is possible. Such accuracy previously required the use of analytical balances.

Several common precautions must be observed to obtain accurate weights. First, the balance should be located on a hard, stable, level surface, which is free of vibrations and excessive air drafts. The balance or weigh area should always be kept clean. Most importantly, the balance should *never* be overloaded (see manufacturer's specification). It is advisable to use a lightweight weighing container or paper rather than placing the material to be weighted directly on the pan surface.

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