



Pure cultures for MALDI-TOF and VITEK 2 identification

How to prepare and send fresh, pure microbial isolates for identification by MALDI-TOF MS or VITEK 2, with or without antimicrobial susceptibility testing (AST).

1. What to send

- One **fresh, pure, single-isolate culture** per sample (an overnight plate or slant is best).
- No visible contamination or mixed colonies; re-streak from a single colony if unsure.
- Each plate or tube clearly labelled with your sample ID.

2. Recommended media

Organism	Media
Gram-positive bacteria	TSAB, CBA, TSA
Gram-negative bacteria	TSA, CBA, MAC, TSAB

3. Packing and transport

- Seal plates with Parafilm and pack them upright in a box; send tubes in a zip bag.
- Keep cultures fresh and protect them from heat; send as soon as possible after growth.
- Follow biosafety rules for pathogens and tell us if an isolate may be hazardous.

4. What you receive

- **MALDI-TOF MS:** organism name with confidence score.
- **VITEK 2 identification:** organism name and biochemical profile.
- **VITEK 2 + AST:** also MIC values and susceptible / intermediate / resistant interpretation for the antibiotics on the card.

Results depend on culture purity and the reference database. Species-level names are reported when the database supports them.