

Vacutainer Order of Draw & Mixing Guide

This table shows the correct order of draw for vacutainer tubes used in UK practice, including the number of inversions required for adequate mixing.

	Order	Colour	Common Tests	Mix (Inversions)
	1	Blue (Citrate)	Coagulation Testing, PT, INR, APTT, D-Dimer etc.	3–4 times
	2	Red (Serum)	LDH, Ionised Ca, Drugs (Phenytoin, Theophylline, Methotrexate, Lithium), Vitamin D, Parathyroid Hormone, Osmolality, Bone Markers, Endocrine Testing (excluding Thyroid)	5-6 times
	3	Gold (SST)	TSH, FT4, T3, Cortisol, Digoxin, GH, ADNA, Gastrin, B12, Folate, Ferritin, PSA, CEA, AFP, HCG, CA125, CA19.9, CA15.3, Immunoglobulins (IgG, IgA, IgM, IgE), Electrophoresis, B2 Microglobulin, Caeruloplasmin, Infectious Mono, CRP, Thyroid Ab, Liver Ab, Rheumatology, Coeliac Ab	5 times
	4	Green	UE, LFT, Cardiac Enzymes, Ca, Mg, Phosphate, Uric Acid, Total Protein, Amylase, Lipids, Bone Profile, Troponin, Iron Status, ACE	8–10 times
	5	Purple (EDTA)	FBC, HbA1c, ESR, blood films	8–10 times
	6	Pink	Group & save, crossmatch	8–10 times
	7	Grey	Glucose, lactate	8–10 times
	8	Dark Blue	Copper, zinc, heavy metals	8–10 times