A GAL family of upstream activating sequences in yeast: roles in both induction and repression of transcription

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Binding sites for the GAL4-positive regulatory protein have been identified upstream of six galactose-inducible genes of Saccharomyces cerevisiae on the basis of (i) protection in DNAse I footprints, (ii) loss of protection when excess GALA-binding oligonucleotide is added and (iii) homology with a 23-bp dyad-symmetric consensus sequence. Many of the binding sites have been shown to function as upstream activating sequences. The number of binding sites upstream of the various genes ranges from one to four, but a feature is conserved: in cases of multiple sites there is a pair with highest binding affinity located at dyad-dyad distances of 82-87 bp. We suggest that a pair of sites facilitates repression by the GAL80-negative regulatory protein, on the basis of (i) a correlation of a pair of sites (or only one) with full (or only partial) repression and (ii) the introduction of a second site abolishing transcription occurring with one.

Key words: GAL4/GAL80/upstream activating sequence/DNase I footprint/yeast

Introduction

Upstream activating sequences (UASs) are regulatory elements in yeast capable of inducing transcription at variable distances up to several hundred base pairs from a promoter (Guarente, 1984). Current interest in UASs is centered around their mechanism of action at a distance and possible relationship to enhancers in higher organisms. The physiological significance of UASs lies in their role in the coordinate regulation of genes that may be widely dispersed in the genome and transcribed to different extents.

An especially well characterized example of a UAS, located between the GAL1 and GAL10 genes of Saccharomyces cerevisiae, is responsible for the induction of both genes from < 0.1 to > 50 transcripts/cell upon addition of galactose to the growth medium (St. John and Davis, 1981; Guarente et al., 1982; Johnston and Davis, 1984). Induction in galactose and the lack of transcription in its absence depend on protein products of the GAL4 and GAL80 genes (Douglas and Hawthorne, 1972; Matsumoto et al., 1980; Oshima, 1982), presumably through interaction of the proteins with the UAS and with one another. An activity has been partially purified from extracts of a GALA overproducer that binds specifically to GAL1 – 10 UAS DNA (Bram and Kornberg, 1985). A GAL4 protein – UAS DNA complex is formed, as shown by its precipitation by antibodies against a GAL4-URA3 fusion polypeptide (Buchman and Kornberg, in preparation). DNase I footprints reveal two 30-bp sites of GALA binding ~55 bp apart in the UAS. A similar footprint is obtained with a region of DNA upstream of the GAL7 gene, whose regulation is identical to that of the GAL1 and GAL10 genes. The

binding sites in the two footprints are closely homologous in sequence but the spacers between the sites are not. Others have presented evidence for *GALA* binding at these and additional sites in vivo (Giniger et al., 1985). Single sites and also the entire *GAL7*-flanking region have been inserted upstream of other promoters and shown to activate their transcription (Lorch and Kornberg, 1985; Giniger et al., 1985). Thus *GALA* binding is indicative of UAS function in vivo.

Why do both the GAL1-10 and GAL7 UASs contain multiple GAL4-binding sites with a conserved spacing? We have approached this question by investigating the pattern of sites upstream of the GAL2, GAL80 and MEL1 genes, which are also inducible by galactose in a GAL4-dependent manner (Kew and Douglas, 1976; Moreno et al., 1979; Shimada et al., 1984). GAL80 and MEL1 differ from other members of the GAL family of genes in being transcribed to an appreciable extent in the absence of galactose and induced only 5- and 50-fold, respectively, in its presence (Post-Beittenmiller et al., 1984; Shimada et al., 1984). We report here that UASs associated with GAL genes share sequences involved in GAL4 binding but vary in structure according to the pattern of transcription of the particular genes they regulate.

Results

Single GAL4-binding sites upstream of the GAL80 and MEL1 genes

Plasmid DNAs containing the *GAL80* and *MEL1* genes were endlabeled in the vicinity of the transcription initiation sites (Figure 1A and B) and *GAL4* binding was revealed by partial DNase I digestion and gel electrophoresis. *GAL4* protein was supplied by a nuclear extract (~10-fold enriched in UAS-specific binding activity over a whole cell extract), giving DNase I footprints (Figure 2) of comparable quality to those obtained (Bram and

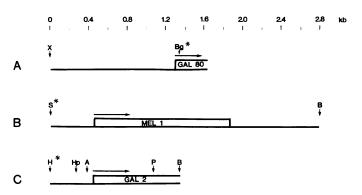


Fig. 1. Restriction enzyme sites for DNase I footprint and nitrocellulose filter-binding experiments. Boxed regions begin at transcription initiation sites of the *GAL80* (Nogi and Fukasawa, 1984) and *GAL2* (Figure 6) genes, and at a site I0 bp upstream of the translation initiation site of the *MEL1* gene (Liljeström, 1985). Restriction enzyme sites are abbreviated: A, *AccI*; B, *BamHI*; Bg, *BgIII*; H, *HindIII*; Hp, *HpaI*; P, *PvuII*; S, *SaII*; X, *XmnI*. Asterisks indicate sites of labeling in footprint and filter-binding experiments.

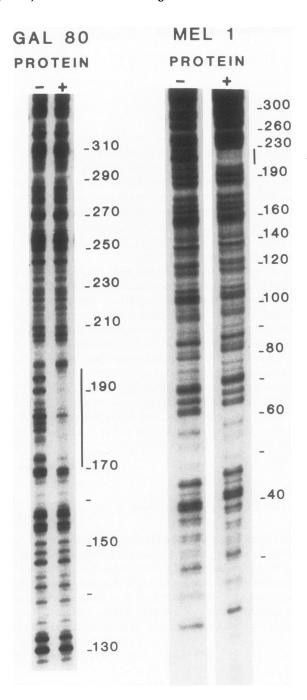


Fig. 2. DNase I footprints of GAL4 protein on GAL80- and MEL1-flanking regions. XmnI - BgIII and SaII - BamHI fragments, labeled as indicated in Figure 1, were incubated with (+) or without (-) nuclear extract (20 μ g protein), treated with DNase I, and analyzed by gel electrophoresis as described (Bram and Kornberg, 1985). DNA lengths in nucleotides indicated to the right of each gel are based on the pattern of $\phi X174$ HaeIII fragments run in the same gel.

Kornberg, 1985) with a phosphocellulose fraction (12-fold enriched). The footprints showed single regions of protection about 30 bp in length, 95 and 230 bp upstream of the GAL80 and MEL1 genes, respectively. These regions are homologous in sequence to GAL4-binding sites found previously in the GAL1-10 and GAL7 UASs (see below).

A pair of GAL4-binding sites upstream of the GAL2 gene The location of GAL2 sequences within a 1.35-kb genomic clone was unknown so we tested various restriction fragments for GAL4

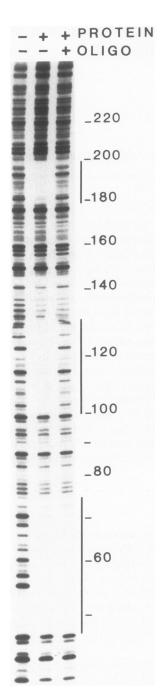


Fig. 3. DNase I footprint of *GAL4* protein in *GAL2*-flanking region. The *Hind*III—*Acc*I fragment shown in Figure 1 was treated with nuclear extract as in Figure 2 in the presence (+) and absence (-) of 10 ng (150-fold molar excess) of the *GAL4*-binding oligonucleotide (Bram and Kornberg, 1985). DNA lengths were determined as in Figure 2.

binding in a nitrocellullose filter binding assay and identified one for finer mapping in footprint experiments. Restriction fragments were labeled and treated with nuclear extract in the presence and absence of excess unlabeled oligonucleotide containing a *GALA*-binding sequence (Bram and Kornberg, 1985). Mixtures were passed through nitrocellulose, and filter binding that was abolished by oligonucleotide was judged *GALA*-specific. A *HindIII*-*AccI* fragment (Figure 1C) showed 10% specific binding, while a *PvuII*-*BamHI* fragment showed none. Footprints with DNA labeled at the *HindIII* site revealed three 30-bp regions of protein binding, two located 55 bp apart and the third at a

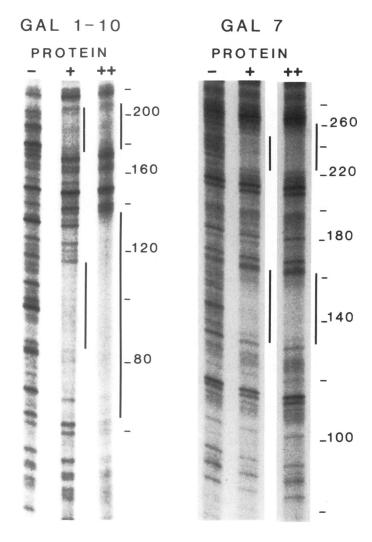


Fig. 4. DNase I footprints of *GALA* protein on *GAL1-10* and *GAL7*-flanking regions. Plasmid DNAs were labeled and treated as described (Bram and Kornberg, 1985) with 5 μ g (+) or 15 μ g (++) of protein from peak phosphocellulose fractions. DNA lengths were determined as in Figure 2.

distance of 25 bp (Figure 3). The first two regions could be attributed to GAL4 binding and the third to another factor, because: (i) binding of the first two regions was abolished by the oligonucleotide mentioned above, while binding of the third region was unaffected (Figure 3); (ii) binding of the first two regions could not be detected with a nuclear extract from a GALA deletion mutant, while binding of the third region was still found (data not shown); and (iii) the sequences of the first two regions are homologous with other GAL4-binding sites, while the sequence of the third region is unrelated (see below). Transcription mapping of the GAL2 gene (see below) showed that the first two regions extend from 300 to 410 bp upstream of the transcription initiation site, and the third region lies further upstream. Insertion of the first two regions in front of a heterologous promoter activates its transcription, showing that these GAL2-associated sequences function as a UAS (Bram and Kornberg, in preparation).

Multiple GAL4-binding sites in the GAL1-10 and GAL7 UASs Previous footprint experiments on GAL4 binding to the GAL1-10 UAS revealed an enlargement of the protected region nearest the GAL10 gene when higher levels of protein were used (Bram and

CAATTTCTTT TTCTATTAGT AGCTAAAAAT GGGTCACGTG ATCTATATTC GAAAGGGCGCGGTG GTGCTCAGG AAGGCCACGG CGGTCTTTCG TCCGTGCGGA GATATCTGCG CCGTTCAGGG GTCCCATGTGC CTTGGACGAT ATTAAGGCAG AAGGCAGTAT CGGGGCGGAT CACTCCGAAC CGACATTAGG TAAGCCCTTC CCATCTCAAG ATGGGAGCA AATGGCATTA TACTCCTGCT AGAAAGTTAA CTGTGCACAT ATTCTTAAAT TATACAACGT TCTGGAGAGC TACTGTTCAA

Fig. 5. DNA sequence of GAL2-flanking region. The 360-bp HindIII-AccI fragment from pG2P was subcloned in M13mp8 and M13mp9 and the sequences of the two strands were determined as described (Sanger et al., 1977). The sequence of all but ~20 bp at each end is shown. The bars indicate regions of homology to the consensus GALA-binding sequence. The arrows indicate the dyad-symmetric sequence that shows homology to a conserved region of yeast centromeres and binds a novel factor.

Kornberg, 1985). We find the 30-bp protected region is extended by 20 bp in both directions when the amount of protein is increased 3-fold (Figure 4). Similar results are obtained with the protected region nearest the GAL7 gene in the GAL7 UAS. This region is extended by 10 bp in the direction of the GAL7 gene when more protein is used (Figure 4). The additional protected sequences in both UASs are homologous with other GAL4-binding sequences (see below). In brief, both GAL1-10 and GAL7 UASs contain a pair of high-affinity GAL4-binding sites, one of which is flanked by low-affinity sites.

Sequences of GALA-binding sites

The sequence of the *GALA*-binding region upstream of the *GAL2* gene was determined (Figure 5) and combined with published sequences of the other *GAL* and *MEL1* upstream regions to derive a consensus *GALA*-binding sequence. Two forms of the consensus sequence are presented (Table I), one showing the most common nucleotide(s) at each position, and the second modified to make the sequence dyad-symmetric. The modifications were not extensive, suggesting that the dyad symmetry is significant. The 11 individual *GALA*-binding sequences compiled here show 15–20 correct matches with the symmetrized consensus sequence of 23 bp. There is good agreement with a symmetrized consensus sequence of 17 bp reported by Giniger *et al.* (1985) while this work was in progress.

The identification of a dyad axis allows a more precise determination of the distance between GALA-binding sites. Thus, the pairs of high affinity sites in the GAL1-10, GAL2 and GAL7 UASs, separated by spacer regions of ~ 55 bp, are located at dyad-dyad distances of 82, 83 and 87 bp, respectively.

Transcriptional regulation by the GAL2 UAS and by a synthetic GAL4-binding site

Seeking a purpose for the conserved spacing of two high-affinity GALA-binding sites in the GAL1-10, GAL2 and GAL7 UASs, we noticed a correlation with regulatory behavior: the GAL1, GAL7 and GAL10 genes are fully repressed in cells grown in glycerol or ethanol in the absence of galactose (conditions of repression by GAL80 protein), whereas the GAL80 and MEL1 genes, apparently controlled by single GAL4-binding sites, are expressed at 2-20% of their fully induced levels (Post-Beittenmiller $et\ al.$, 1984; Shimada $et\ al.$, 1984). This suggested that two GAL4-binding sites are required for complete repression by GAL80 protein in glycerol or ethanol.

We were prompted to measure the extent of repression with the GAL2 UAS and with a synthetic GAL4-binding site, previous-

Table I. GAL14-binding sequences

Binding site	Correct matches																						
	Sequence														Per 23 bp								
GAL10 (proximal-low affinity 1)	G 1	ΓА	С	G	G	Α	Т	Т	Α	G	Α	Α	G	С	С	G	C	C	G	Α	G	C	17
GAL10 (proximal-high affinity 2)	\mathbf{G}	A G	C	G	G	G	T	G	Α	C	Α	G	C	C	C	T	C	C	G	Α	Α	G	18
GAL10 (proximal-low affinity 3)	C (G A	Α	G	G	Α	Α	G	Ą	C	T	C	T	C	C	T	C	C	G	T	G	C	19
GAL1 (proximal)	C (СТ	C	G	C	G	C	C	Ġ	C	Α	C	T	G	C	T	C	C	G	Α	Α	C	19
GAL7 (distal)	C 7	ΓТ	C	G	G	Α	G	C	Α	C	T	G	T	T	G	Α	G	C	G	Α	Α	G	20
GAL7 (proximal)	G	СТ	C	G	G	Α	C	Α	Α	C	T	G	T	T	G	Α	C	C	G	T	G	Α	19
GAL7 (proximal-low affinity)	C A	4 A	C	T	G	T	T	G	Α	C	C	G	T	G	Α	T	C	C	G	Α	Α	G	17
MEL1	A 7	ΓТ	C	G	G	C	C	Α	T	Α	T	G	T	C	T	T	C	C	G	Α	Α	Α	16
GAL2 (proximal)	T A	A T	C	G	G	G	G	C	G	G	Α	T	C	Α	C	T	C	C	G	Α	Α	C	15
GAL2 (distal)	C A	A C	C	G	G	C	G	G	T	C	T	T	T	C	G	T	C	C	G	T	G	C	18
GAL80	T A	4 C	C	G	G	C	G	C	Α	C	T	C	T	C	G	C	C	C	G	Α	Α	C	17
Consensus	C A	A T	С	G	G	A	G	G	Α	С	T	G	Т	С	G	T	С	C	G	Α	Α	С	
	G T	ΓΑ				G	C	C			Α	C			C								
Symmetrized consensus	G T	ΓТ	С	G	G	Α	G	G	Α	С	T	G	Т	C	C	Т	C	С	G	Α	Α	C	
	C (C A					C	C			Α				G					T	G	G	

The consensus sequence lists nucleotide(s) occurring in six or more of the 11 binding sequences (two nucleotides are shown if the first occurs less than six times). The symmetrized consensus sequence differs from the consensus by omission of the most common nucleotide at position 2 and by inclusion of the second most common nucleotide or reordering of the first and second most common nucleotides at positions 1, 7, 13, 15, 16, 21, 22 and 23. The numbers above the sequences give the correct matches to the symmetrized consensus sequence out of a possible eleven at each position. The numbers to the right of the sequences give the correct matches to the symmetrized consensus sequence of each binding sequence. Sequences are from Johnston and Davis (1984) (GAL1, GAL10), Nogi and Fukasawa (1983) (GAL7), Liljeström (1985) (MEL1), Figure 5 (GAL2) and Nogi and Fukasawa (1984) (GAL80).

Table II. Transcriptional regulation of the *GAL2* gene and of a *GAL-HIS* fusion gene under control of synthetic *GAL4*-binding sites

Gene/	UAS	RNA level (%); when grown on:								
plasmid		GAL	GLY	DEX						
GAL2	GAL2	100	< 0.2	< 0.2						
p10GH	1 oligo	100	3.8	< 0.4						
p10 ² GH	2 oligos	97	< 0.4	< 0.4						

GAL2 transcripts were determined by S1 mapping of total RNA from S. cerevisiae strain 5C (a ura 3-52 his 3Δ200) grown in YP medium (1% yeast extract, 2% bactopeptone) plus 2% galactose (GAL), 3% glycerol and 2% lactate (GLY) or 2% dextrose (DEX). GAL-HIS fusion transcripts were detected by S1 mapping of poly(A)-containing RNA from strain 5C harboring plasmids with a GAL-HIS fusion gene under control of one (p10GH) or two (p102GH) GAL4-binding oligonucleotides, grown in minimal medium (0.67% yeast nitrogen base) plus 2% galactose, or 3% glycerol and 2% lactate. Total RNA was prepared by the glass bead method (Carlson and Botstein, 1982). Poly(A)-containing RNA was isolated by two cycles of adsorption and elution from oligo(dT)-cellulose, and represented 2-4% of the total RNA. S1 mapping was performed as described (Berk and Sharp, 1977) with 25 μ g of total RNA and 15 ng of pG2P DNA (cleaved with *Bam*HI and 5' end-labeled with T4 polynucleotide kinase and $[\gamma^{-32}P]ATP$), or with 0.7 μg (p1-1OGH) or 9 μg (p10GH, p10²GH) of poly(A)-containing RNA and 5 ng of plasmid DNA (cleaved with Bg/II and 5' end-labeled). Quantitation was by densitometry, with RNA levels expressed as percentages of those found upon growth in galactose.

ly unstudied in this regard. Transcription was revealed by S1 mapping and, in the case of the GAL2 gene, was undetectable in the absence of galactose and was induced >500-fold in its presence (Table II). The case of a synthetic GAL4-binding site was investigated with the GAL4-binding oligonucleotide mentioned above. When inserted upstream of a GAL-HIS fusion gene in a centromeric plasmid, this oligonucleotide-activated gene expression (Lorch and Kornberg, 1985) and transcription persisted in the absence of galactose at $\sim 4\%$ of the fully induced level (Table II). Thus the GAL2 UAS, with a pair of GAL4-binding sites, gave full repression, while a single synthetic site allowed some escape from repression extending the correlation noted from

published studies of other GAL and MEL genes.

Transcriptional regulation by two synthetic GALA-binding sites Is repression in glycerol or ethanol with the GAL1-10, GAL2and GAL7 UASs attributable to a pair of GAL4-binding sites or to some other feature, such as spacer or flanking sequences? We addressed this question by inserting a second synthetic GALA-binding site upstream of the GAL-HIS gene in the plasmid described above. A 68-bp spacer from a globin cDNA clone was incorporated between the two GALA-binding sites, resulting in a dyad-dyad distance of 93 bp. Insertion of the second site abolished transcription in the absence of galactose but had little effect on transcription in its presence (Table II). Apparently, two GALA-binding sites are sufficient for complete repression by GAL80 protein, with no requirement for additional sequences. The possibility of a fortuitous effect of the globin spacer sequence remains, however, to be excluded. It further remains to examine the dependence of repression on spacer length.

Discussion

The GAL4-binding regions identified here (Figure 6) may be regarded as UASs on the basis of functional studies: the regions upstream of the GAL1, GAL2, GAL7 and GAL10 genes have been shown to activate transcription from heterologous promoters (Guarente et al., 1982; Johnston and Davis, 1984; Lorch and Kornberg, 1985; Bram and Kornberg, in preparation); the single GAL4-binding sites upstream of the GAL80 and MEL1 genes have not been tested in this way, but single synthetic sites were shown to activate transcription in studies published while our work was in progress (Giniger et al., 1985; Lorch and Kornberg, 1985).

The requirement for a pair of GAL4-binding sites for complete repression by GAL80 protein may be explained in many ways. For example, a GAL80 molecule or oligomer may bind simultaneously at two sites (or to a pair of GAL4 molecules at these sites), raising the affinity of the GAL80-DNA (or GAL80-GAL4-DNA) interaction. Alternatively, binding of GAL80 protein at one site may prevent GAL4 action at an adja-

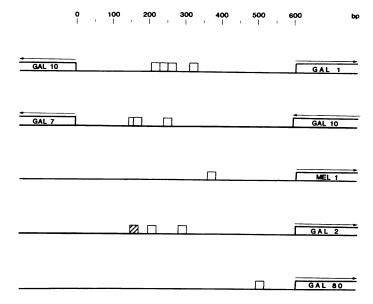


Fig. 6. *GAL* family of UASs. Stippled boxes represent *GALA*-binding sites. The diagnonally lined box represents a region of homology to yeast centromeres that binds a novel factor. Open boxes are as in Figure 1.

cent site, increasing the probability of repression. Pairs of protein binding sites in enhancers may function by similar mechanisms. The long terminal repeated sequences of mouse mammary tumor virus (Schneidereit *et al.*, 1983) and the region upstream of the chicken lysozyme gene (Renkawitz *et al.*, 1984) contain pairs of binding sites for the glucocorticoid receptor, with distances between the sites of 55 and 120 bp, respectively. The SV40 enhancer resides in direct repeats of a 72-bp sequence and represents a locus of repression as well as enhancement of transcription (Borrelli *et al.*, 1984).

In contrast with the importance of multiple GALA-binding sites in repression, there is little effect on induction. Thus the MEL1 gene, with a single site, is transcribed at a fully induced level comparable with that of the GAL1, GAL7 and GAL10 genes (Post-Beittenmiller et al., 1984). Moreover, the introduction of a second synthetic site upstream of a GAL-HIS fusion gene gave no increase in transcription over that obtained with one (Table II). Finally, two UASs give little more transcription than one (Lorch and Kornberg, 1985). In the light of these observations, additional low-affinity GAL4-binding sites in the GAL1-10 and GAL7 UASs serve no obvious purpose. The low- and high-affinity sites in the GAL7 UAS overlap by 16 bp, with a dyad—dyad distance of 7 bp, apparently compatible with GAL4 binding at both sites (Figure 4) but possibly an impediment to concerted action at these sites.

Although the number of GAL4-binding sites has little bearing on expression, their location may be important. Moving a UAS too far from or too close to a promoter may diminish transcription. For example, deletions that bring the GAL1-10 UAS within 120 bp of an RNA start site on one side ($\Delta 24$ and $\Delta 31$ in West et~al., 1984) reduce transcription from this site without affecting that from the site on the other side. This may explain why the GAL80 gene, with a single GAL4-binding site located 95 bp upstream (Figure 6), is expressed at a much lower level than the MEL1 gene, with a single site 230 bp upstream.

A most surprising aspect of the results presented here is the occurrence of a binding site for a novel factor ustream of the *GAL2* UAS (Figure 6). The sequence of this site is dyad-symmetric at 18/24 residues, compared with an average of only

10/22 residues for GAL4-binding sites. The sequence is homologous to a conserved region of yeast centromeres and competes for binding with centromeres (Bram and Kornberg, in preparation). The location of the sequence adjacent to the GAL2 UAS and the abundance of the novel factor (comparable with that of GAL4 protein in an overproducer) suggest a general role related to transcription. One possibility would be a barrier function, preventing transcription of an upstream gene from extending through a UAS, or preventing a UAS from acting on an upstream gene.

Materials and methods

Plasmids

The *GAL80*, *MEL1* and *GAL2* genes, on pRYGAL80-50, pSc483 and pTUG6, were gifts from Drs R. Yocum (Biotechnica International), D. Vollrath (Stanford University) and R. Schekman (University of California, Berkeley), respectively. The subclone, pG2P, was constructed by insertion of a 1.35-kb HindIII - BamHI fragment of pTUG6 DNA, containing the 5' half of the GAL2 gene, into pSP65 (Melton *et al.*, 1984). A yeast centromeric plasmid carrying the synthetic GAL4-binding oligonucleotide (p10GH) upstream of the GAL1 promoter and HIS3 gene (Lorch and Kornberg, 1985) was a gift from Dr Y. Lorch. For the insertion of a second GAL4-binding oligonucleotide, a 68-bp EcoRI - BamHI fragment containing residues 293 – 361 of a rabbit β -globin cDNA clone (Efstratiadis *et al.*, 1977) was ligated with the oligonucleotide, and a 118-bp product consisting of the β -globin fragment with an oligonucleotide on each end was isolated by polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis. The 118-bp product was ligated with a 1.65-kb GAL - HIS fragment and a 7.33-kb YCp50 fragment as described (Lorch and Kornberg, 1985) to give p10²GH.

Protein fractions

Crude extract, nuclear extract and phosphocellulose column fractions were prepared from *S. cerevisiae* strain Sf657-2D (a *pep4-3 his4-580 ura3-52 gal2*⁻ *leu2-3*, –112) carrying the *GAL4* gene on a high copy number plasmid (Bram and Kornberg, 1985). Nuclear extract was concentrated by precipitation with 70% saturated ammonium sulfate in buffer A(50). The precipitate was washed with 60% and then 50% saturated ammonium sulfate in buffer A(50), and the 50% wash, containing all the *GAL4* binding activity, was dialyzed for use in binding experiments as described (Bram and Kornberg, 1985).

Nitrocellulose filter-binding, DNase I footprints

For filter-binding experiments, pG2P was cleaved with HindIII and BamHI and labeled with the large fragment of DNA polymerase I and $[\alpha^{-32}P]$ dATP in the presence of unlabeled dGTP, dCTP and TTP. The 1.35-kb fragment containing the GAL2 gene was isolated by agarose gel electrophoresis, digested with AccI or PvIII, and again subjected to electrophoresis in agarose. The resulting fragments were used in binding reactions with crude extract (1 μ g of protein). Details of nitrocellulose filter-binding and DNase I footprint experiments were as described (Bram and Kornberg, 1985).

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