

# Aligning Short Reads with BWA-SW

When you select the *Tools > Align to reference > Align short reads* item in the main menu, the *Align Sequencing Reads* dialog appears. Set value of the *Align short reads method* parameter to *BWA-SW*. The dialog looks as follows:

**Align Sequencing Reads**

Alignment method: BWA-SW

Reference sequence:

Result file name:

Library: Single-end ☒ SAM output

Short reads

Path	Type	Order
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Add Remove

**Base Options**

Index algorithm (-a): bwtsw

Score for a match (-a): 1

Mismatch penalty (-b): 3

Gap open penalty (-q): 5

Gap extension penalty (-r): 2

Band width (-w): 50

Number of threads (-t): 8

Size of chunk of reads (-s): 1000000

Score threshold (divided by match score) (-T): 30

Z-best (-z): 1

Number of seeds to start rev alignment (-N): 5

Mask level (-c): 0.50

☐ Prefer hard clipping in SAM output (-H)

**NOTE: bwa-sw performs alignment of long sequencing reads (Sanger or 454). It accepts reads only in FASTA or FASTQ format. Reads should be compiled into single file.**

Start Cancel Help

There are the following parameters:

*Reference sequence* — DNA sequence to align short reads to. This parameter is required.

*Result file name* — file in SAM format to write the result of the alignment into. This parameter is required.

*SAM output* — always save the output file in the SAM format (the option is disabled for *BWA*).

*Short reads* — each added short read is a small DNA sequence file. At least one read should be added.

You can also configure other parameters.

*Index algorithm (-a)* — algorithm for constructing BWA-SW index.

It implements three different algorithms:

- *is* — designed for short reads up to ~200bp with low error rate (<3%). It does gapped global alignment w.r.t. reads, supports paired-end reads, and is one of the fastest short read alignment algorithms to date while also visiting suboptimal hits.
- *bwtsw* — is designed for long reads with more errors. It performs heuristic Smith-Waterman-like alignment to find high-scoring local hits. Algorithm implemented in [BWA-SW](#). On low-error short queries, *BWA-SW* is slower and less accurate than the *is* algorithm, but on long reads, it is better.
- *div* — does not work for long genomes.

*Score for a match (-a)* — score of a match.

*Mismatch penalty (-b)* — mismatch penalty.

*Gap open penalty (-q)* — gap open penalty.

*Gap extension penalty (-r)* — Gap extension penalty. The penalty for a contiguous gap of size k is  $q+k*r$ .

*Band width (-w)* - Band width in the banded alignment.

*Number of threads (-t)* - Number of threads in the multi-threading mode.

*Size of chunk of reads (-s)* - Maximum SA interval size for initiating a seed. Higher -s increases accuracy at the cost of speed.

*Score threshold (divided by much score) (-T)* - minimum score threshold.

*Z-best (-z)* - Z-best heuristics. Higher -z increases accuracy at the cost of speed.

*Number of seeds to start rev alignment (-N)* - Minimum number of seeds supporting the resultant alignment to skip reverse alignment.

*Mask level (-c)* - Coefficient for threshold adjustment according to query length. Given an l-long query, the threshold for a hit to be retained is  $a*\max\{T, c*\log(l)\}$ .

*Prefer hard clipping in SAM output (-H)* - use hard clipping in the SAM output. This option may dramatically reduce the redundancy of output when mapping long contig or BAC sequences.

Select the required parameters and press the *Start* button.