

indicates that a gene is a Wnt target gene in a particular context

Approach	Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>Computational searches for TCF binding sites</p> <p>Position-weight matrices constructed based on validated lists of TCF binding sites can be used to screen <i>cis</i>-regulatory DNA for additional sites (e.g. 109). The efficiency of this approach can be improved by adding multiple sequences bound by TFs (e.g. helper sites in invertebrates; see 69). The functional relevance of binding sites can be verified with reporter assays.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quickly identifies potentially regulated genes • The identification of binding sites also establishes candidates for mutagenesis to rigorously test their functionality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most effective when the search space is restricted to short stretches of DNA (<20 kb) rather than the whole genome • Not all consensus TCF sites will be functional • TCFs and other TFs have degenerate binding sites that could be functional, which could be missed if the calling criteria are too stringent
<p>Transcriptome analyses of Wnt-regulated genes</p> <p>Microarrays or RNA sequencing can be used to identify genes whose expression changes in Wnt-on and Wnt-off conditions in cell culture (e.g. 74) or embryos (e.g. 30)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies the full array of genes regulated by Wnt pathway activation • Many genetic and biochemical reagents are available to manipulate the Wnt pathway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not distinguish between direct and indirect targets of Wnt signaling • <i>In vivo</i> analyses in animal tissues are limited by the specificity of the genetic drivers used for the manipulations
<p>Chromatin immunoprecipitation sequencing (ChIP-seq) analyses of TCF or β-catenin genomic occupancy</p> <p>ChIP-seq with TCFs and β-catenin with or without Wnt activation can identify candidate Wnt-regulated enhancers. This approach can be combined with ChIP-seq for other TFs (e.g. 76) or with transcriptome analyses to assign genes to regulatory DNA sequences (e.g. 30).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biochemically establishes the presence of Wnt effectors at <i>cis</i>-regulatory elements • Provides evidence of direct regulation by the Wnt pathway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many TCF/β-catenin binding sites have no detectable function • Quality of the antibody used plays a major role • While this approach can identify putative Wnt-dependent <i>cis</i>-regulatory elements, identifying which gene the element regulates can be difficult, especially for long-range enhancers