

base pairing

The specific association between two complementary strands of *nucleic acids* that results from the formation of hydrogen bonds between the base components of the *nucleotides* of each strand: A=T and G=C in *DNA*, A=U and G=C (and sometimes G=U) in *RNA* (the lines indicate the number of hydrogen bonds). Single-stranded nucleic acid molecules can adopt a partially double-stranded structure through intrastrand base pairing.

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