



# MAKE YOUR OWN COLOURED FLOWERS!

Did you know that you can turn a white flower any colour you like using food colouring?

## YOU WILL NEED

- A white flower (carnations and daisies work best)
- Scissors
- A glass of water
- Food colouring



## WHAT YOU DO

### Step 1

Use the pair of scissors to make a slanted cut at the base of the flower's stem, because a flat cut can sit against the bottom of the glass making it difficult for the flower to draw water. Making the slanted cut under water makes it less likely that air bubbles will enter the stem and block the flow of water.

### Step 2

Add a generous volume of food colouring to the glass of water (any colour you like), making sure that the water is deeply coloured.

The food colouring should be visible in the flower petals within a few hours!



This experiment must be done under the **supervision of an adult** to ensure safety when using scissors.



### Step 3

If you slit the stem up the middle and put each half in a different glass with different colour food colouring, you can make multi-coloured flowers! What colour do you think the flower will be if you use yellow colouring in one glass and blue in the other?

### THE SCIENCE BEHIND IT

All plants need water to live, because they use it together with sunlight and carbon dioxide to make sugar and oxygen. The plants then use the sugar as food to grow and release oxygen into the air for people and animals to breathe. This process is called photosynthesis and looks like this:



Plants get water by sucking it up with their roots, and when they do this it is called transpiration. When water evaporates from the leaves of a plant (or the petals of your flower) more water is pulled up the stem of the plant through a tube called the xylem. When you drink water through a straw you have to suck the water up the straw, because the water will not go up the straw by itself. Sucking on the straw creates negative pressure, and the same thing is happening when water evaporates from the petals. The negative pressure is enough to overcome gravity and allows water in the glass to move upwards through the stem of the plant, or up your straw into your mouth.

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