



PLASTIC BAG KITE

Make your own kite at home with plastic bags!

YOU WILL NEED

- Plastic bags
- Wooden food skewers
- Scissors
- String



WHAT YOU DO

Step 1

Make a cross with two wooden skewers, with one of the skewers about a quarter of the way from the end of the other skewer, and then cut a plastic bag into a diamond shape to fit the cross.



This activity must be done under the supervision of an adult to ensure safety when handling scissors. Also, never fly a kite when there are pylons or cables overhead, as this is potentially very dangerous.

Step 2

Tie the ends of the diamond-shaped plastic sheet to the ends of the wooden skewers with string.

Step 3

At the bottom of your diamond-shaped kite tie a long length of string, about 8 times the length of the kite, and cut another plastic bag into small rectangle shapes. The rectangles should be about as long as half the width of the kite; tie these strips onto the tail at regular intervals (with about a rectangle-length for each interval).



Step 4

Take another long length of string and tie one end to where the wooden skewers cross, hold the other end and you're ready to fly your kite!

THE SCIENCE BEHIND IT



There are two important things when it comes to flying a kite, which are gravity and lift.

All matter in the universe has gravity, from tiny atoms that we cannot see, to stars that are millions of times bigger than planet Earth. The sun's gravity holds the Earth in orbit, and the Earth's gravity holds the moon in orbit. However, gravity is still very weak; for example, when you pick up something like a glass of water, the entire planet Earth is trying to pull it back to the ground with its gravity, but you are stronger! Gravity being weak is why things don't float around you, because even though your body has gravity it isn't strong enough to hold anything.

The second important thing for kites is lift. Lift is what happens when wind blows something and it flies upwards, for example when you blow on a dandelion and the seeds fly away, but after a while gravity pulls the dandelion seeds back to the ground. So that's why it needs to be windy to fly a kite - the wind will blow against the kite and lift it upwards by fighting against gravity, and the tail on your kite drags in the wind to keep the kite facing the direction of the wind.

So if the wind is strong enough to lift your kite against gravity, then have fun flying your kite! A good rule of thumb is that if the wind is strong enough to blow a flag, then it is strong enough to lift your kite. However, if gravity wins and you can't get your kite off the ground then try again some other time!

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