

DIY Heatless Lava Lamp



FUN FACT

Lava lamps were invented in 1948 and were originally called "Astro Lamps." The lava lamp made its television debut in the US in the 1960s on a show called "Doctor Who." Sales skyrocketed after this TV appearance!

MATERIALS

- 2-liter bottle
- Vegetable oil
- Water
- Effervescent tablets
- Food coloring
- Funnel

DIFFICULTY



DENSITY

Density is a measurement of the matter an object has within a given volume. Objects with more matter in a given volume have a higher density. Objects with less matter in the same amount of volume have a lower density. Density is found by dividing the mass of an object by its volume.

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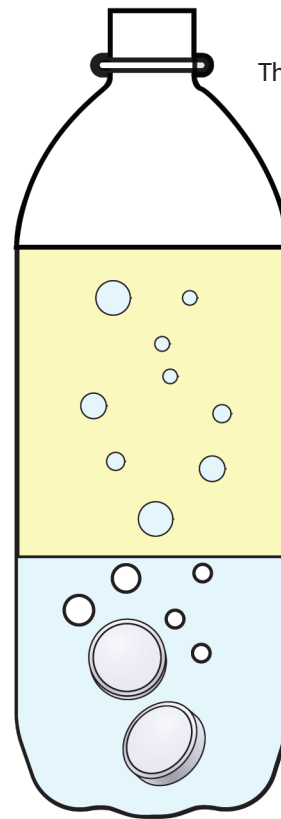
What runs but never walks?

*Answer on the next page

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EXPERIMENT

- Step 1:** Gather your materials.
- Step 2:** Clean and rinse your empty 2-liter bottle.
- Step 3:** Pour 3 cups of water into your bottle.
- Step 4:** Add food coloring to the water.
- Step 5:** Gently pour vegetable oil into the bottle and observe how the water and oil interact.
- Step 6:** After allowing the water and oil to settle, drop pieces of the effervescent tablets into the bottle.
- Step 7:** Observe what happens!



*Joke Answer -
The water from your faucet!

WHY IT WORKS

The oil and water stay separate because they have different densities. The oil floats on the water because it's less dense than water. When the effervescent tablet sinks to the bottom, it mixes with the water and starts a chemical reaction that produces carbon dioxide, a gas that rises through the oil. When these bubbles rise, they pull some of the colored water up and through the oil. The gas eventually escapes at the top, but the water falls back down through the oil because it is more dense!

EXTEND YOUR LEARNING

- What happens if you add more pieces of effervescent tablet, or change the amount of water in the bottle?
- Try shining a light, like a flashlight, through the bottle. What can you see differently?
- Is there a limit to the number of times you can repeat the experiment?

WORKFORCE CONNECTION

Paint chemists are scientists who study the properties and use of paint. Most paints are made of the same basic ingredients: pigments, binders, liquids, and additives. How these ingredients interact due to their densities plays an important part in determining the way that paint performs. Paint chemists study things like how well a paint can cover a surface or how long a paint may be able to last outside in the weather.