

Design a Parachute!

Step One: Get inspired!

A parachute is used to slow down an object that is descending (or moving downward). Parachutes are used in lots of different ways. People use parachutes when they skydive. Engineers have even used parachutes to land a rover on Mars! Since parachutes can be used for a variety of different tasks, they can come in different shapes and sizes. To learn more, with an adult permission watch [Playtime with Parachutes: Physics for Kids](#)

Based on the video, what makes parachutes work?

Step Two: Choose your Materials

Some material ideas for your parachute are:

- String -paper -fabric -plastic cup -plastic bag -rubber bands

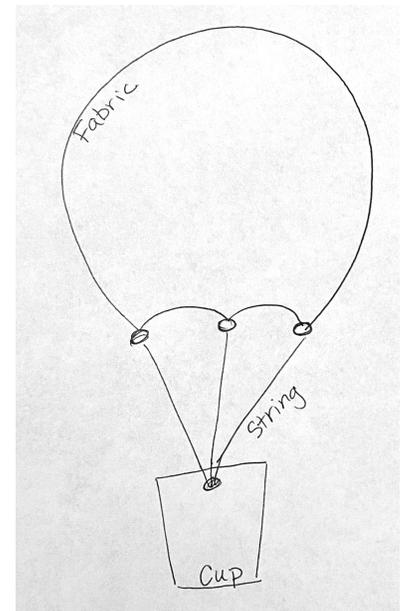
You might also want to have scissors and tape to help you work with your materials.

Step Three: Designing your Parachute

Start by drawing a picture of your parachute design!
This will help you think through your ideas.

Remember to keep the materials you found in mind as you draw your designs. Here are some questions to think about as well:

- Which material will be used to slow your object down?
- How will your materials connect to one another?
- What type(s) of object(s) could this parachute be used for?



Step Four: Building your Parachute.

Next, using your materials, start building your parachute! Even if your parachute does not work right away, keep trying! (Here's a fun [Sesame Street video](#) on the power of "yet")

If you need help...

- Collaborate! Work with someone else.
- Think about more or different materials you can use.
- Take a short break and give yourself time to think of new ideas!

Now it is time to test your parachute! What can you use to test whether your parachute works? With an adult helper, select an object (e.g., a small plastic toy or ball) that you can use with your parachute. Remember not to use anything fragile!

Reflection Questions:

Was your parachute able to slow down your object? How could you tell?
How could you make your parachute work even better to slow down the object?

If you liked this challenge, click the link below to learn more!

(Activity) [PBS Kids Soft Landing](#)
(Watch) [Crash Course Kids: Engineering Compilation](#)

Step 5: Sharing your Parachute on Instagram or email.

We want to see your parachute! With permission from your parent, or guardian, share a picture of your parachute for our instagram page. By direct messaging or emailing an image of your challenge, you are giving us written consent to redistribute the image on our official instagram page and [webpage](#).

- **Instagram:** @sciencecircuswhittier
- **Email:** sciencecircuswhittier@gmail.com

