

Lolly Stick Catapults



You will need

- Lollypop Sticks
- Elastic Bands
- Glue (high-tack type)
- Bottle Caps
- Pom-poms

Before you begin

Why not get another member of your family to help.

Have a go

1. Stack six lolly sticks on top of each other. Secure each end of the stack with an elastic band. It's really important that the elastic bands are tight enough to hold the bundle together.
2. Put one of the remaining sticks on top of the other. Secure one end of the sticks with an elastic band.
3. Open the free end of the two lolly sticks, so the whole thing looks like a beak.
4. Push the bundle of six sticks inside the beak shape as far as it can go. It should look a bit like a wonky cross, where one of the lines is held open.
5. Wind an elastic band around the point where the two bundles meet – the middle of the wonky cross shape.
6. Hold the catapult flat on the table. The arm of the catapult should twang freely. Test how well the catapult is working by trying to twang a pom-pom from the end of the arm. It might take a bit of practice!
7. Adjust the elastic bands until the catapult has the maximum amount of spring.
8. Use sticky tack to attach a bottle lid to the end of the catapult arm. This will act as a handy bucket to hold the pom-poms ready to be launched.

Additional Information

Catapults can be used to hurl objects across a distance. People have used catapults for thousands of years.

They can be small enough to hold in your hand, or a huge machine on wheels!

In the past, catapults were often built out of wood tied together with rope – that is pioneering.

The elastic bands in this activity represent the ropes people use in bigger pioneering projects.

Reflection

This could be your first ever pioneering project or you could have made something similar before – either way:

- Which part of the construction did you find the trickiest?
- Was it easier to have someone help you make the catapult?
- How far can you make the pom-pom missiles fly?
- Can you change either the catapult design or the missiles to make improvements to your catapult?



Safety

Glue and solvents – make sure you use glue in a well-ventilated room and be aware of medical conditions which could be affected by glue or solvent use and make adjustments as needed. Make sure you aim your catapult at a suitable target – check with an adult before you launch any missiles.



All Activities are taken from the Scout Association's Great IN Doors programme.