

# Make Water Flow Up With Capillary Action

Can water flow up? This simple experiment will teach your child about the different ways liquids can move. Introduce them to the concept of capillarity, a physical process by which a liquid spreads or shrinks when it comes in contact with a particular solid surface. This may seem like complicated science, but it's just a matter of coffee filters and water!

## What You Need:

- Plastic container or dish
- Water
- Food coloring (dark colors will work best)
- Coffee filter



## What You Do:

1. Before you start, discuss water and gravity with your child. What is gravity? Can water flow up or just down?
2. Tear or cut the coffee filter into strips.
3. Fill a small container or dish with water and a generous amount of dark-colored food coloring.
4. Give your child a strip of coffee filter and instruct him to dip just the bottom edge of it into the water.
5. Tell him to hold the filter strip with the wet edge hanging down, watch, and wait.
6. Pretty soon, the color will begin to creep up the coffee filter! Ask your child:
  - What direction(s) is the color moving?
  - How is it going up? Is something pushing or pulling it? (Tiny drops of water are attracted to the porous surface of the coffee filter. It's like the water is pulling itself up!)

Now that your child has encountered capillary action at home with you, he may notice it elsewhere! Encourage your little expert to point out water that moves the way it did on the coffee filter and to describe what he sees.

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