

LAVA LAMP

You'll need

A clear plastic or glass bottle or jar

Vegetable oil

Water

Effervescent tablet (a vitamin tablet or alka seltzer work well)



Instructions

Fill the bottle about a quarter full with water. Top up to near the top with vegetable oil.

The oil and water will separate into two layers.

Once the oil and water have separated, add a few drops of food colouring. The colour will mix with the water.

Drop half an effervescent tablet into the container and watch the bubbles.

Add more effervescent tablet little by little to keep the bubbles rising and falling.

Why does it work?

Alka seltzer is made of citric acid and sodium bicarbonate. As the tablet dissolves the citric acid and sodium bicarbonate mix to form carbon dioxide gas and sodium citrate. It is the bubbles of carbon dioxide that carry the coloured water into the oil giving a lava lamp effect.

Science Sparks™

Adult supervision required. You are responsible for your own safety.

www.sciencesparks.com

