

STEM

Activity Guide How to make a crystal sun catcher

Background:

Epsom salt is another name for a chemical called magnesium sulfate, which can be dissolved into water. By rapidly cooling the solution, crystals will grow faster since there is less room for the dissolved salt in the cooler, denser solution

Picture demonstrations:



Materials Needed:

- Epsom salt
- Clear recycled plastic lids – use any clear lid or piece of plastic, the clearer the better
- Water
- Empty jar
- Bowl or glass measuring cup
- Fork
- Microwave (optional)
- Tray
- String
- Exacto/Pin

Instructions:

1. Add 1 cup of Epsom salt to glass jar
2. Add 1 cup of water to a bowl and microwave for 45 seconds or use very hot tap water and pour into the jar with the salt quickly while the water is warm.
3. Stir the salt and water for 1-2 minutes to dissolve the salt.
4. Place the plastic lids on a flat-bottomed tray in a sunny location
5. Pour off some excess liquid from your jar into the plastic lids, use just enough to cover the bottom. Do NOT overfill.
6. Leave in the sunny location and depending on how much liquid has been added it will take a few hours or a day to start crystalizing.
7. Poke a small hole in the edge of the lid and thread a piece of string through the hole. Tie a knot and hang your suncatcher up!

Challenge: How to Take this to the next level:

If you want to add color to your sun catcher you can add food coloring to the hot water before adding it to the salt and mixing it together.