

The Lava Lamp

You will need:

- Adult help
- Cooking oil
- Salt
- Water
- Alka Seltzer tablet or any fizzing tablets
- A plastic or glass clear tumbler or small glass (best are 125ml or 150ml tumblers!)

Let's make it!

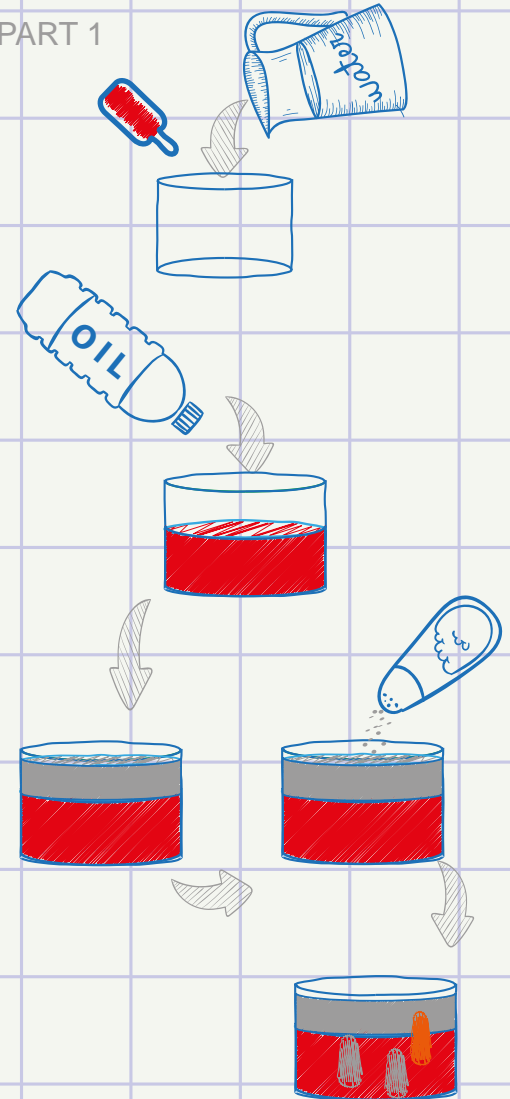
I am now giving you two experiments in one! First things first. Fill the tumbler about 3/4 full of water. Add about 5 drops of food coloring – red looks great but you can use any colour. Slowly pour the vegetable oil into the glass. See how the oil floats on top – cool huh? Now the fun part: Put a pinch of salt on top of the oil in random places (if your salt is very fine try to put a couple of pinches on the top of each other to break the oil's surface tension) Can you see blobs of lava move up and down in your glass?! If you liked that, add another teaspoon of salt to keep the effect going. But the fun doesn't stop here! Crush your Alka Seltzer tablet into small (but not powder) pieces. Go ahead and put one or two pieces into your lava. Now this is a real lava lamp!

How?

As you notice the oil floats on top of the water because it is lighter than the water. In the first part of the experiment, I asked you to sprinkle salt over the oil, since the salt is heavier than oil, it sinks down into the water and takes some oil with it, but then the salt dissolves and goes back up into the oil! In the second part, we added a fizzy tablet. When you added the tablet piece, it sank to the bottom and started dissolving and creating a gas. As the gas bubbles rose, they took some of the coloured water with them. When the blob of water reached the top, the gas escaped and down went the water!

By the way, you can make a bigger version of the second part of our experiment ie: use a one litre plastic bottle. Check out our Lava Lamp Light!

PART 1



PART 2

