



Move a Soda Can Without Touching It Activity



Ready to get started with this activity? To keep track of your progress, check off the instructions for each step below as they are completed. Make sure to check the box of the last step when you're done to receive congratulations for your completed activity!

Consider this: When you run the balloon across your hair, invisible electrons (with a negative charge) build up on the surface of the balloon. This is called static electricity, which means “non-moving electricity.” The electrons have the power to pull very light objects, with a positive charge, toward them. Let's try this out!

1. Gather Your Materials

- An empty soda can
- A balloon full of air
- A head full of hair



2. Place the Can

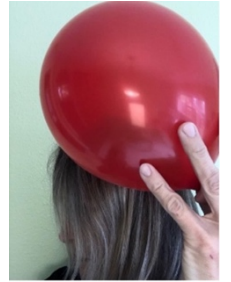
- Place the soda can on a flat smooth surface, like a table or the floor.





3. Use Your Head

- Rub the blown up balloon back and forth through your hair really fast!



4. Hold the Balloon Close to the Can

- Hold the balloon close to the can without actually touching the can. The can will start to roll towards the balloon without you even touching it!



5. Balloon and Pieces of Paper

- You can also tear up small pieces of light paper (1.4 inch in size).
- Rub the balloon on your head again.
- Bring the balloon close to the paper pieces and see what happens!



6. Things to Think About

- Does the size of the balloon change the power to pull the can?
- Does the size of the can change how quickly it moves?
- Does the material of the can, change how it moves?
- Does the length of the person's hair affect the power of the static electricity?
- Do different thicknesses of paper change the outcome of step 4?

Why does it work?

When you run the comb through your hair, invisible electrons (with a negative charge) build up on the surface of the comb. This is called static electricity, which means “non-moving electricity.” The electrons have the power to pull very light objects with a positive charge, toward them.