

Museum of Craft and Design

ILLUMIN-LAVA LAMP



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Are you interested in color, light, and experiments? Learn how to play with density, buoyancy, and color while making an animated, festive decoration!

RECOMMENDED AGE/SKILL LEVEL:

Recommended for ages 3 and up with adult supervision.

MATERIALS

- Clear glass or plastic jar or bottle with lid
- Vegetable oil
- *Alka-Seltzer* tablets
- Food Coloring
- Water
- Flashlight (hand held or from a cell phone)



INSTRUCTIONS

- Fill your container with water and vegetable oil.
 - Pour the water in first.
 - The ratio should be about 3 parts oil to 1 part water.
- Wait for water and oil to separate based on their [density](#).
 - *Can you guess which is heavier?*
 - *Which will sink below the other?*
- Once the water and oil have separated (about 10 minutes), put in a few drops (4-8 depending on the size of your container) of food coloring and allow for it to settle in the water.

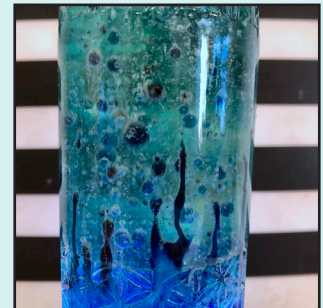
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TIP: The more food coloring you add to the mixture, the slower it will move when it bubbles.

- Once the food coloring has settled, take an Alka-Seltzer tablet and drop it in the container.
- Watch as it starts to move the coloring around!
- Feel free to add food coloring drops while it is bubbling.



- When fizzing ends, add another tablet and repeat.
- If you have more containers, try making a second lamp with another color!
- For added glow, hold your flashlight under/around the container while it bubbles.



- Dimmed overhead lights will improve the effect!
- After you are done lava lamp-ing for the day, you may choose to close the container with its lid, then drop a new tablet in at a later date.

NOTE: Do not close the lid while the lamp is actively bubbling.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CONNECT SOCIALLY AND LEARN MORE

Facebook & Instagram: @MuseumofCraftandDesign

Twitter @SF_MCD

Share your project! Post and tag #MCDatHome

Related materials: [How Lava Lamps Work](#) video from NatGeo