

Launch Your Own Astronauts

12

In the same way that a hurricane can blow you off your feet, you can make a flying chamber for your own band of brave adventurers.



What to do: For fun, using the markers, make a face on each of the balls. You could even identify your astronauts by writing their names on the balls. Next, plug in the hair dryer, turn it to the high setting, and point it straight up. Place one of your homemade astronauts in the dryer's airstream and let go.

What happens: The astronaut is launched toward the ceiling, but stops and bounces around in the airflow partway up.

Why: The airstream from the dryer pushes the astronaut upwards, against the force of gravity, until the upward and downward pushes are equal and the astronaut just floats.

The high pressure in the still air surrounding the airstream keeps the astronaut in the center of the visible flying chamber.

What next: Try letting two or more astronauts fly at the same time. You may be able to do this if the blow dryer's airstream is wide enough (or if you have an attachment called a diffuser that spreads out the airflow). If not, your astronauts will probably "bounce" off each other—into unknown galaxies.

YOU WILL NEED:

Ping-Pong balls
blow dryer
permanent markers
(optional)

