

Flying with... Drago

How to build a balloon hovercraft

A hovercraft is an odd-looking vehicle but is unique as it they can glide over any flat surface by riding on cushions of air.

What You Need:

- One compact disc
(don't use anyone's favourite music CD)
- One pop-top cap from a water bottle or dish soap bottle
- One balloon
- Hot glue gun (you will need an adult for this)
- An adult helper

What You Do:

1. Ask an adult to use the hot glue gun to carefully glue the bottle cap over the centre hole of the CD and let it set, make sure the edges are fully sealed.
2. Push the pop-top cap closed. Blow up the balloon, then hold it so that no air escapes, but don't tie it off.
3. Stretch the mouth of the balloon over the bottle cap (you may need an assistant to help you do this so that you don't lose any air from the balloon). It should look like Drago's.
4. Set the hovercraft on a hard, smooth table and open the pop-top; then give it a gentle nudge and see what happens!

Experiment ideas:

- Test to see if your hovercraft works differently if you open the cap only part way instead of all the way.
- Try different sizes of balloons. Does the hovercraft run longer on a larger balloon?
- Hovercrafts work best on smooth surfaces so the air can spread evenly, but experiment with yours on several different surfaces to see how it behaves. Does it work on the pavement outside or a carpet?
- Why not decorate your CD hovercraft to make it stand out, then you can race them with your friends and family.

