



Awe and Wonder

Plastic Bag Parachutes



You will need:



A square of plastic bag material



A plastic person



String



A hole punch



Scissors



Method:

1. Cut off across the corners of the square, creating an octagon shape.
2. Hole punch in the middle of each side.
3. Put a piece of string through each of the 8 holes and tie.
4. Gather the 8 pieces of string together and tie to your plastic person.
5. Cut out a small circle from the centre of your parachute to let air pass through gently.
6. Get up somewhere high, on top of a climbing frame or up some stairs.
7. Hold the centre of your parachute, with the person underneath. Let go and watch how they travel to the ground.
8. Does the parachute open? Does the person travel fast or slow? Does the person go straight down or to one side? Does it spin? What could you do differently?

The Science Bit

When you release the parachute the weight pulls down on the strings and opens up a large surface area of material that slows down the person. The larger the surface area the more air resistance and the slower the parachute will drop.