Forces



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Forces Are All Around

Your lungs use force to pull air when you breathe in. They push air when you breathe out. You use muscle force to turn your head. But what is force?

A force is a push, a pull, or a turn. Every force has an equal and opposite force. When you sit, you put force on a chair. This force is your weight. The chair pushes back with equal force. Its force is the strength of the materials from which it is made.

Forces are always with you!



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What Forces Do

A force can make something move. A push or a pull can open a door. As you eat, you pull the fork up to your mouth. A push can bring the fork back to your plate.

A force can make something stop moving, too. A golf ball will roll along the ground. But it won't roll forever. Why? The ground exerts a force against the ball. This stops the ball.

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What if there was no force? Once the ball started moving, it would just roll and roll and roll.



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You cannot see forces. Yet they are always at work. A force can make a moving thing go faster. If you are coloring and move your hand faster, the crayon speeds up. A force can slow something down. When you want to stop a swing, you drag your feet on the ground. A force can make something change direction, too. If you are playing soccer, you kick the ball. This makes the ball go in a different direction.



All of these kids are using forces.

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Let's Do Science!

What forces can you find? See for yourself!

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What to Get

- balloon
- large pail
- water

