

# Stalactites!



## Stalactite vs Stalagmite: what's the difference?

**Stalactites** hold on tight (from the ceiling)

**Stalagmites** push up with all their might!

When water full of dissolved calcium carbonate drips off a cave roof, it leaves behind a small amount of the salt. Over time, so much calcium carbonate builds up that it creates a stalactite hanging down. Stalagmites grow upwards from the floor of the cave where the drips land over and over again!

## Create your own stalactite

### What you will need:

1. Warm water
2. Salt
3. String or wool (make sure it is absorbent and will soak up the water)
4. Two paperclips (optional but they help)
5. Two glasses, jars or cups
6. A small plate or jar lid

### What to do:

- Set up your experiment like the photo to the left, using the paperclips to attach the string to the rim of each of the glasses.
- Mix salt into the water and keep adding and stirring until no more dissolves (warm water helps the salt to dissolve better).
- Pour the salty water into both cups, making sure that the ends of the string are in the water.
- The salty water will move along the string until it drips off in the middle, leaving behind some of the salt.
- Try dipping the whole length of string into the salt water to help it along.
- Over the course of about a week, a stalactite should form, and maybe even a stalagmite on the plate below!

