



MUTANT CRYSTALS

Equipment required

120 ml of tap water

120 ml of salt table salt

One small pan

String Pencil or popsicle stick

Food coloring dye

A helpful adult

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat a pan of water just until it begins to bubble. Stir in as much salt as you can. Take the pan off the heat source. Pour in about $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of salt and stir until the water is clear.

If you don't see any salt grains in the water, stir in another spoonful. Keep stirring in salt until you see salt grains that won't dissolve when stirred.

Slowly pour the hot water into a clean jar or another clear. Stop before the salt grains fall into the jar. If there are undissolved salt grains in the jar, the crystals might grow around those grains instead of your string.

Add a couple of drops of food coloring to change the color of the crystals. This might make crystals smaller or lumpier but not by much.

Tie a string around a pencil or lolly stick. The pencil or lolly stick should be long enough to lie across the top of the jar. Cut the string to the correct size to dangle in the water. Only a portion of the string underneath the water will grow crystals. Cut it short enough to avoid touching the bottom of the jar or the crystal will be lumpy and small.

Balance the pencil on top of the glass jar. The string should hang inside the jar and extend into the water. If the pencil won't stay still, tape it against the jar. Try not to have the string touch the side of the jar as it will make smaller and lumpier crystals grow against the side.. Move the jar to a safe place where it will be undisturbed.

- To grow a lumpy mass of crystals, keep the jar in the sun or a fan. These crystals might stop growing at a small size.
- To grow a single, large crystal, keep the jar in a cool shaded place.