

Grow your own Hanging Crystals

You will need:

- Two glass jars
- Hot water
- Bicarbonate of soda
- Two paper clips
- String or wool
- Small plate

1. Pour hot water into the two jars and stir in bicarbonate of soda until no more will dissolve (about 6 teaspoons). When a layer forms at the bottom of the jars, this means no more will dissolve.
2. Tie a paper clip to each end of the piece of wool or string and place each end in each jar so it hangs between.
3. Put a small plate underneath the wool between the jars.
4. Leave the jars for a week. Crystals will begin to form along the wool - hanging down like stalactites. You may even get crystal stalagmites forming on the plate!

THE SCIENCE

You've created a super-saturated solution. Hot water can hold more dissolved bicarb than cold water because the molecules are further apart. When the water cools, the bicarb can no longer 'fit' in the water and 'clings' to the wool. As the water evaporates, crystals form. These crystal strings get longer as more water drips down.



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