

**Pressure****Simple hovercraft****The effect of reduced friction****You will need...**

- ✓ Balloon
- ✓ CD
- ✓ Empty thread spool
- ✓ Glue

**Background:**

A hovercraft uses a cushion of air to reduce friction.

**Follow these steps:**

1. Use the glue to stick the CD to the bottom of the spool.
2. Inflate the balloon.
3. Stretch the mouth of the inflated balloon over the top of the spool.
4. Put the assembly on the table and observe.

**So what happened?**

Air from the balloon escapes through the hole in the centre of the CD. This provides a cushion of air under the CD and reduces friction with the surface. The 'hovercraft' can then move easily across the table.

**What next?**

1. What is the effect of using a bigger balloon or placing it on different surfaces?
2. Find out more about different designs and uses of hovercraft.

