

# DO TRY THIS AT HOME

Issue #38

Featuring: Marvin and Milo

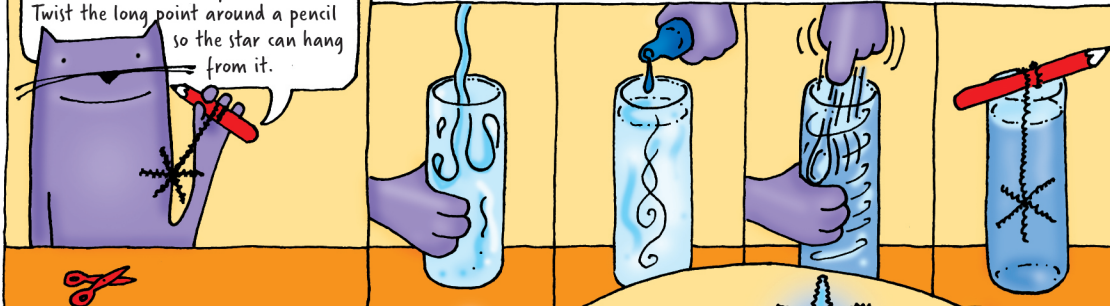
Well Milo, that's the Christmas decorating done... but there's something missing... Ahh, I know!

**What you need:** • Large glass of hot water • Pencil • Two pipe cleaners • Epsom salts • Blue food colouring • Spoon

Vic Le Billon

Cut one pipe cleaner in half. Twist the two halves around the second pipe cleaner to make a six pointed star. Twist the long point around a pencil so the star can hang from it.

Fill a glass with enough hot water so that the star will be completely covered when it's hanging from the pencil. Add some colouring to the water. Stirring, add Epsom salts to the water until no more will dissolve...



... and wait overnight.

The rough surfaces of the pipe cleaners act as a nucleation site, encouraging the salt molecules to come out of solution and form crystals. They grow over time as more and more salt molecules attach to the crystal surfaces.

Festive greetings to everybody from the Institute of Physics!

Download more Marvin and Milo activities at [iop.org/marvinandmilo](http://iop.org/marvinandmilo)