

Challenge Your Friends

It's fun to be able to do something that nobody else can do. Usually, there's some kind of trick involved. Here are two challenges that are bound to amaze your friends.

Make a potato wobble

Even if you have the I.Q. of a genius, you'll enjoy this wobbly potato. Just in case you think the activity is mindless, try to figure out why it wobbles and doesn't fall over!

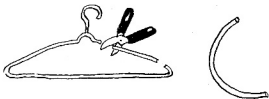
You'll need:

- 4 matchsticks
- 2 potatoes
- wire cutters
- a wire coat hanger

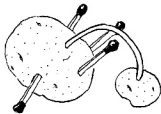
1. Stick the matchsticks into one potato to resemble arms and legs. Try to stand the potato up. Impossible?



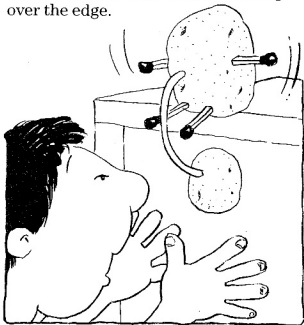
2. Cut the coat hanger so that you have a piece of wire 12 cm (5 inches) long. Bend it so that it looks like the wire below.



3. Stick one end of the coat hanger piece into the "belly" of your potato person.
4. Stick the other end of the coat hanger piece into the other potato.



5. Put your potato person on the edge of a shelf so that the whole potato hangs over the edge.



6. Watch it wobble.

Why does your potato wobble but not topple? You've just discovered its centre of gravity. To find out more, do the "question of balance" challenge on the next page.