Tumble's Trinket Shop

The Tube With Two Jobs

A family investigation with Tumble the Trash Panda



Tumble holds a tube to his eye. "I spy a striped tail!" The tail waves back. He lays the tube on the counter. A folded paper message pokes out the other end. "A delivery for me?" What else could one tube do?

Look inside the picture

Find the tube in Tumble's paws. Point to the end you would look through. What might you spy on his shelves?

Sketch two jobs for one tube, or show them with your hands.

My first job

My second job

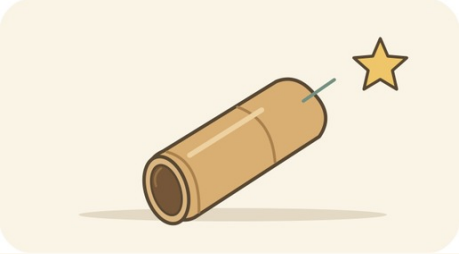
Turn the page to try it together ›

The Tube With Two Jobs

Can one shape do two different jobs?

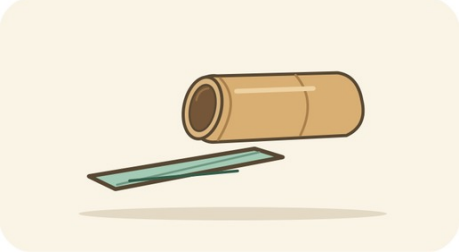
Gather A short cardboard tube and a reused sheet longer than the tube

5–10 minutes • About ages 2–8 with a grown-up



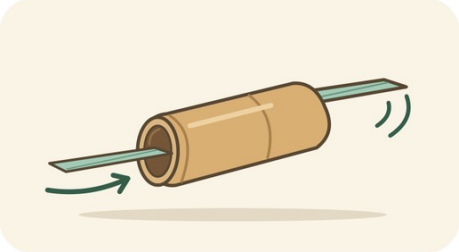
1 Spy through the tube

Hold the tube in front of one eye. Find something in the room. Give your partner one clue and let them guess.



2 Make a tunnel

Lay the same tube on its side. Fold the paper in half lengthwise. Fold again until its end fits through the opening.



3 Send the paper through

Hold the tube still. Slide the folded paper in one end until it peeks out the other. Wiggle the paper to send your partner a signal.

When you're done

Unfold the sheet and smooth it for drawing. Put the tube back in your making basket for its next job.

Another way to play

Choose by pointing, or ask a partner to hold the tube while you feed the paper through.

One more wonder

What else could this tube become if you stood it on one end?