

Why do leaves change colour?

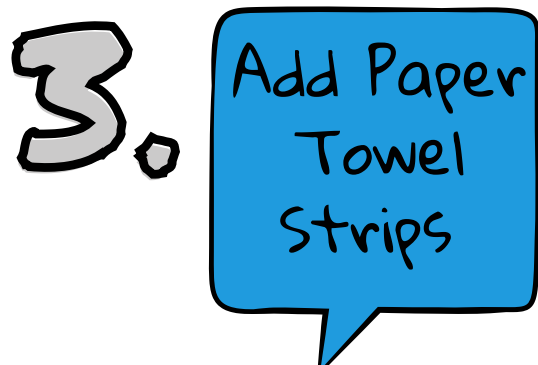
Chromatography Experiment

This activity uses leaves of all different colours to identify the different colours of chemical present in leaves.



Head outside and gather up as many different types and colours of leaves as possible. Remember your leaves should be from deciduous trees!

Tear your leaves into tiny pieces. You can use a blender or a knife if you have access to one and an adult to supervise. Add the leaves to a jar and top up with surgical spirits.



Cut a paper towel into strips and add to the jar with the leaf solution. Fold part of the strip over the rim of the jar to stop it falling in.



Observe the strips of paper towel. Did the pigments separate? What colours can you see? Are some parts lighter and some parts darker? Refer back to this [chemical chart](#) to talk about your findings and research what chemical are in leaves.



This activity requires adult supervision and is recommended for KS3 and above.