

Balloon Jousting

Celebrate Maryland Day by playing a version of the state's official sport!

Collect:

- String
- 2 Straws
- Balloons (at least 2)
- Skewers
- Tape
- Jousting opponent



Set up the arena

1. Slide two straws onto a long piece of string.
2. Tie one end of the string to something stable at one side of the room, and tie the other end to something about 20 feet away. Make sure the string is tight and relatively level.

Mount your horses!

3. Slide the straws to the opposite sides of the string.
4. Tape a skewer to one of the straws. This will be your jousting lance, so make sure to angle it so that it will hit the opposing balloon.
5. Blow up a balloon and pinch the neck so that no air can escape.
6. Tape the balloon to the straw.
Tip: This part can be difficult, so you might need to tear off some tape strips ahead of time to make it easier.
7. Hold on to your balloon until your opponent gets a balloon and lance ready on the other side of the room.
8. Pull each balloon to the opposite side of the string.
9. On the count of three, release the ends of both balloons and see if you can get your opponent's balloon to pop!
10. If it doesn't work the first time, try adjusting the angle of the skewer, the amount of air in the balloon, or the length of the lance.
11. Keep on jousting by taping new balloons to the straws! Can you make armor for your balloon to protect it? What other versions of the game can you come up with?

What happened?

The balloon is propelled forward by the air stored up inside of it. As the air is released, the balloon is pushed forward by the force of the air. This makes the balloon move in the opposite direction of the air.