

Sink or Float

Physics Matters - Department of Physics - McGill University

Have you ever wondered why boats can float on water even though they weigh so much? In this experiment, we want to explore how this happens! We are going to look at why certain objects sink while others float in order to understand why boats can float on water even though they weigh so much. To do so, we are gonna use some of our everyday objects like the eggs we eat for breakfast or erasers we use in school.

Before the start of the experiment, please collect the following items:

- Rocks of various sizes including a small rock about the size of an egg
- An actual egg (uncooked)
- Eraser
- Candle
- Ball of aluminum foil that is about the same size as the egg
- Bowl of water
- Coin
- Any other objects that you are curious about whether they will sink or float!

Additionally, try your hardest to make a “boat” out of aluminum foil. If you have time, try to make both a large boat and a small boat. We will use these to help us figure out what makes a good boat, and how these boats float!