

# Tips for Taking Data

Once you have come up with a question and written down the steps for your experiment, you get to do the experiment. However, if you do the experiment and don't write down what happened, you may have an answer to the question for yourself, but you won't have proof for anyone else.

It's a good idea to try everything more than once (three is a good number), to see if the same kind of thing happens every time.

## Data-Taking Checklist:

- I did all my tests three or more times.
- Every time I experimented, I wrote down
  - what I changed
  - what I left the same
  - what I measured and/or observed happening
- Remember that these can include both words and numbers!
- I made a table for recording my observations.
- I made all my measurements the same way.

## How do I make a table?

A table has two parts to fill out: the things you know before you start, and the things you find out when you're investigating.

Here's an example of a chart for the experiment to test how far a soccer ball goes when it's filled up to different pressures:

Air pressure (in PSI)	Trial 1 distance (in feet)	Trial 2 distance (in feet)	Trial 3 Distance (in feet)
2			
4			
6			
8			

Some investigations involve counting and grouping things. Here is an example of a table for figuring out how often galaxies have spiral arms:

Galaxies that have spiral arms 5	Galaxies that don't have spiral arms 25
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