

The Bubbling Pumpkin Cauldron

Time: About 10 minutes • Mess: Some bubbling and possible spills; use a tray.

Quick setup

Work together at a stable, covered table, with a grown-up alongside throughout. Check labels for age guidance and ingredient sensitivities; use only the listed materials. Keep food separate and materials away from mouths and eyes. Children who still taste materials can choose colors and watch while you handle the supplies. Wash hands afterward.

What You Need

- A stable, open plastic container holding about 1 cup
- A tray with raised edges
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- ¼ cup ordinary food-grade white vinegar, about 5% acidity
- Measuring spoons and a small pouring cup
- Optional: a drop of food coloring
- Optional: one drop of ordinary liquid dish soap
- Properly fitting splash goggles for child and adult

An orange container can become your pumpkin cauldron. There is no need to carve a real pumpkin.

Your child's part

Choose a potion color, spoon in the pre-measured baking soda, and predict what will happen.

The grown-up's part

Measure the ingredients, prepare the colored vinegar, and handle the pouring. Set the container securely inside the tray.

SAFETY WARNING • Before you mix

Keep the container open throughout. Never put this reaction in a capped bottle or sealed container. Keep hands out of the mixture and avoid leaning over it.

Try It Together

- 1 Get ready.** Put on your goggles. Let your child add the baking soda to the container.
- 2 Add the optional soap.** Add the optional drop of dish soap if you want to see more foam.
- 3 Let the grown-up pour.** A grown-up slowly pours in the vinegar, keeping everyone's faces back from the container.
- 4 Watch and listen.** Watch the bubbles appear. Can you hear the fizzing too?

Cleanup

Once the fizzing stops, a grown-up can rinse the small mixture down the sink with running water, then wash the container, spoons, and tray. Wipe up spills promptly.