

Spinning Tops

People have been spinning tops for a very long time—examples have been found in archaeological sites!



This 150-year-old homemade wooden top is from the museum collection.

Bottle-Cap Top

Supplies: plastic bottle caps (the thinner, the better), thumbtack, toothpicks, scissors, glue, paper, markers

1. Use a bottle cap to trace several circles onto some paper. Set the paper aside.
2. CAREFULLY punch a hole in the center of a bottle cap with your thumbtack.
3. Push a toothpick into the hole until its tip sticks out. Glue the toothpick in place if needed. Cut the toothpick in half.
4. To add patterns and optical illusions, draw designs on the paper circles.
5. Cut out the circles you traced earlier, then punch holes in their centers and place them, one at a time, on top of the cap. Spin!



Tagboard top

Supplies: tagboard, paper, pencil, jar lid (about 2 inches across is perfect), scissors, glue, thumbtack, toothpicks, markers

1. Use the lid to trace several circles on the tagboard and pieces of paper; then, cut them out. Set the paper circles aside.
2. Glue two of the tagboard circles together, back-to-back, and let them dry.
3. CAREFULLY use your thumbtack to punch a hole in the center of the tagboard.
4. Push a toothpick into the hole until its tip sticks out. Glue toothpick in place if needed. Cut the toothpick in half.
5. To add patterns and optical illusions, draw designs on the paper circles.
6. Punch holes in the centers of the paper circles and place them, one at a time, on top of the tagboard circles. Spin!