

## Try this: Fun button

The first experiment demonstrates that centrifugal force can be greater than the force of gravity. The second shows the law of inertia: A body in motion tends to stay in motion.

### Can a button lift a stone?

**You'll need:** A string 24" long, a spool, a button, a small stone.

- 1 Thread the string through the spool so that about 2/3 of the string is above the spool.
- 2 Tie the button to the top end of the string and the stone to the other.
- 3 With one hand hold the spool above your head and, with the other hand, hold the string just above the stone.
- 4 Start whirling the spool around as fast as possible. Gradually let go of the string below the spool.



### What happens:

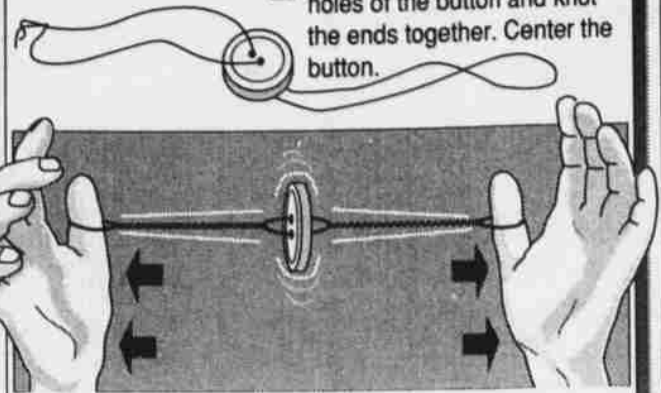
The heavy stone seems to be lifted up by the light button. When you whirl the button fast enough, centrifugal force, the force created by the whirling motion, is greater than the force of gravity on the stone. And so the stone moves up against the pull of gravity.

SOURCE: Simple Science Experiments with Everyday Materials, Sterling Publishing Co.

### Button makes a string sing

**You'll need:** 18" to 24" of strong, thin string or thread, a large 2-hole button.

- 1 Thread the string through the holes of the button and knot the ends together. Center the button.



- 2 Loop the string on each side of the button on your thumbs. Swing the button around a number of times, either toward or away from you, but always in the same direction.
- 3 Once the string is "wound up," separate your hands, pulling the string taut. Then bring your hands together, releasing it. Alternate pulling and releasing.

**What happens:** The button spins very fast until it twists the string in the opposite direction. If you spin fast enough, you'll hear a whirring sound from the vibration of the air around the string.

### Youngest players

In major league baseball

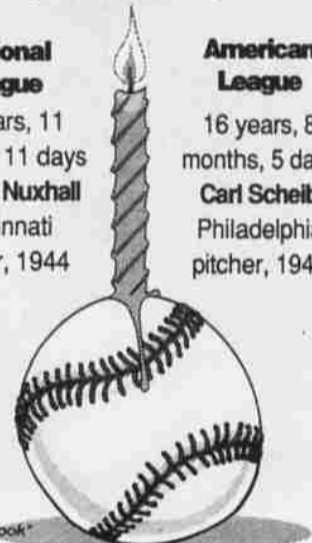
#### National League

15 years, 11 months, 11 days  
**Joseph Nuxhall**  
Cincinnati  
pitcher, 1944

#### American League

16 years, 8 months, 5 days  
**Carl Scheib**  
Philadelphia  
pitcher, 1943

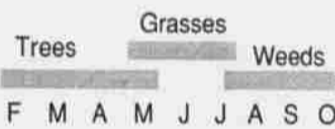
SOURCE: "The Complete Baseball Record Book"



### Sneezing season

14 million people in the U.S. suffer from seasonal allergies, called hay fever, caused by breathing in pollen.

#### Pollen months



#### Symptoms

Pollen enters eyes, nose and lungs; causes runny eyes and nose, sneezing, congestion, swelling

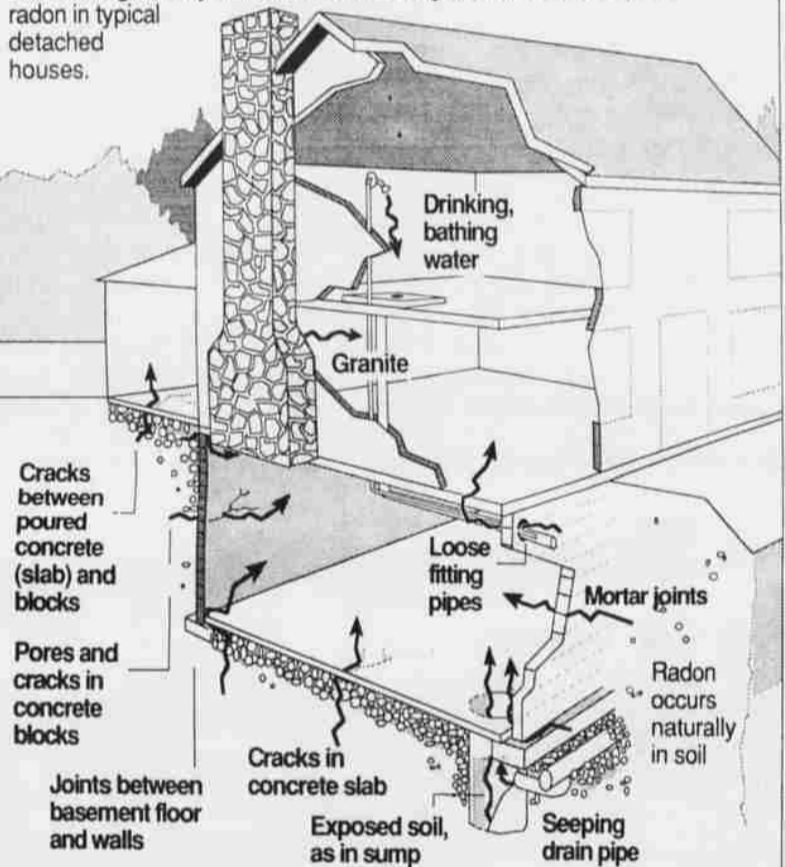


#### How to cope

- Keep windows closed
- Avoid exercise at peak pollen hours: 5 a.m. - 10 a.m.
- Stay inside when pollen is worst: humid or windy days
- Use air conditioning; change filters often
- Cover air conditioning vents with cheesecloth to trap pollen
- Keep car window up when driving
- Shower, wash hair nightly to remove pollen
- Dry clothes indoors
- Avoid lawn-mowing or wear face protection
- Vacation in pollen-free areas such as the beach

### How radon can enter a house

Major entry routes for cancer-causing radon gas into a typical home. The soil is generally believed to be the largest contributor of indoor radon in typical detached houses.



#### How radon gets in

The major cause of radon entering a building is the small difference between inside and outside air pressure.

It works the same way a fire draws air up a chimney. A heated house draws cool air from the basement or ground floor where the pressure is low and sends it to the upper floors where the pressure is higher.

#### Where it comes from

Radon is an odorless, colorless radioactive gas that is made by the natural decay of radium and uranium found in rocks and soil.

Radon breaks down into harmful elements that attach to dust particles and can enter the lungs. There the elements decay in minutes, releasing alpha radiation. This radiation can cause cell damage possibly leading to cancer.

### Most years played

In major-league baseball



#### American League

25 years (2,826 games)  
**Edward T. Collins**  
Philadelphia, Chicago,  
1906-30

#### National League

24 years (3,562 games)  
**Pete Rose**  
Cincinnati, Philadelphia,  
Montreal, 1963-86



SOURCE: "The Complete Baseball Record Book"

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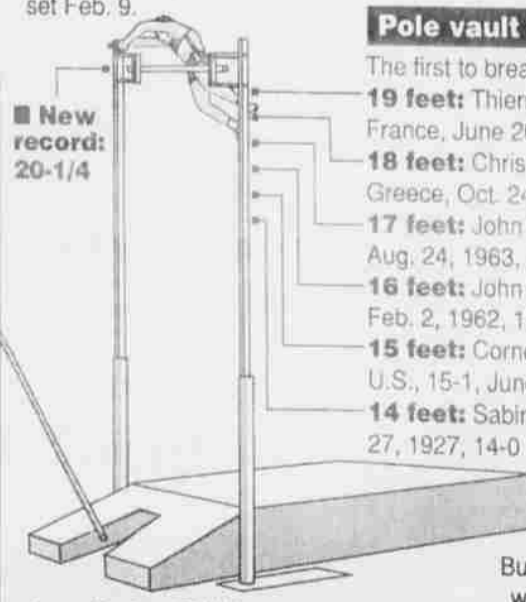
### Vaulting to a record

Soviet pole vaulter Sergei Bubka broke the 20-foot barrier March 15, vaulting 20 feet, 1/4-inch at an indoor meet at San Sebastian, Spain. He surpassed his indoor record of 19 feet, 11-1/4 inches, set Feb. 9.

#### Pole vault milestones

The first to break:

- 19 feet: Thierry Vigneron, France, June 20, 1981, 19-1/4
- 18 feet: Chris Papanicolaou, Greece, Oct. 24, 1970, 18-1/4
- 17 feet: John Pennel, U.S., Aug. 24, 1963, 17-3/4
- 16 feet: John Uelses, U.S., Feb. 2, 1962, 16-3/4
- 15 feet: Cornelius Warmerdam, U.S., 15-1, June 29, 1940
- 14 feet: Sabin Carr, U.S., May 27, 1927, 14-0



All barriers broken were outdoors, except Bubka's and Uelses', which were indoors.

Source: Track and Field News