

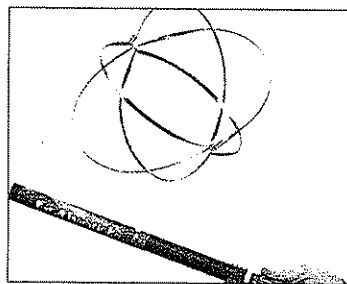
# Electricity stick is double the fun

The FunFlyStick is a hand-held static-electricity generator that allows you to levitate thin strips of Mylar film that are fashioned into various shapes. These shapes are repelled by the charged rod and you are guaranteed lots of fun chasing them to keep them in the air. Holding the charged end of the device is quite safe and, while the shapes are fragile, a refill pack consisting of three spheres, a butterfly and an hourglass is available. This would make a fascinating addition to any lesson on electrostatics and may be a useful substitute for a temperamental Van de Graaff generator.

## Bernard Taylor

The FunFlyStick is an up-to-date, portable and reliable version of a charged rod, which can produce surprising levitation in light conducting materials. Put that way it sounds fairly dull, however, this inexpensive piece of apparatus is sure to impress. It has already won several awards, including toy of the year from *Creative Child* magazine.

The rod is electrically charged using AA batteries in the handle and very light, shaped pieces



of aluminized Mylar can be dropped towards the rod. The redistribution of charge in the aluminized Mylar causes it to be repelled and to 'float' upwards. Its shape allows repulsion within itself so the pieces are set into a sphere shape, hourglass shape and butterfly shape.

With the knowledge that the flying Mylar is charged, various simple experiments can be carried out, including attraction to positively charged bodies and

earthed bodies, and repulsion from similar charged bodies.

Comparable experiments have, of course, been done before using charged rods and Styrofoam (for example, visit [www.exo.net/~pauld/activities/flying\\_tinsel.html](http://www.exo.net/~pauld/activities/flying_tinsel.html)). However, this relatively inexpensive rod is reliable and will intrigue both young and old. If you buy two you can even enjoy a game of slow motion badminton.

## David Featonby

*Editor's note: it is unheard of for Physics Education to receive two unsolicited reviews about one product. The fact that we did for the FunFlyStick just goes to show how highly it was rated and is why both reviews are included here.*

### WE RECOMMEND

#### FunFlyStick

Unitech Toys Inc

**Rating:** ★★★★★ Excellent

**Price:** £19.99/\$26.95

**Details:** : Available from [www.teachersource.com/ElectricityAndMagnetism/Electricity/FunFlyStick.aspx](http://www.teachersource.com/ElectricityAndMagnetism/Electricity/FunFlyStick.aspx) and from [www.grand-illusions.com/acatalog/FunFlyStick.html](http://www.grand-illusions.com/acatalog/FunFlyStick.html).