



How to...



UP AND AWAY
In 1903, brothers Orville and Wilbur Wright invented the first airplane. Its first flight lasted 12 seconds.

Fly a kite high in the sky

This activity is perfect for a spring day at the beach or park.

There are many different types of kites, but one thing is true for all of them: They're always exciting to fly! Kite flying is very popular—more than 50 million kites are sold in the US every year. It's also an ancient practice. People are believed to have flown kites going back more than 3,000 years. This is a particularly great time to learn how to fly a kite, since April is National Kite Month. Here's how to get in on the action.

Choose a kite

If you're a beginner, consider choosing a classic delta (triangle-shaped) or eddy (diamond-shaped) kite. They both have a simple structure that is easier to handle. Larger kites are also often easier to fly than smaller ones. Lighter ones, made with nylon and plastic, tend to be simpler to handle than heavier kites. A kite with a tail (the long part that hangs off the end) will help keep a kite steady in the wind.

Find a spot

Once you've chosen a kite, scope out a good spot for flying it. Fields, beaches, and parks tend to work well. It's important to fly the kite in a large open space

without big trees or power lines so it won't get stuck. It's also better if there aren't too many people around.

Check the wind

A smooth, steady wind without a lot of big gusts is ideal for kite flying. Step outside and feel for the wind. If you notice a breeze on your face, there's probably enough wind to fly a kite. Other good signs: You can see a flag consistently blowing in the wind or leaves rustling.



Animal kites are popular.

Launch the kite

Stand in the center of the open space you've chosen for kite flying, with your back to the wind, meaning you don't feel the breeze on your face. Have a helper face the wind and hold the kite up over their head while you back up and unravel about 100 feet of the kite's string. Next, have your helper let go of the kite while you either quickly roll in the kite's line or jog in the other direction. This should push the kite into the air.

Fly it high

Once your kite is in the air, slowly release more of your line so it can go higher. As long as the string is taut (meaning it's pulled tight), you can keep letting out more string. If the line slackens (dips down and feels loose), you should reel in your string to keep the kite up. Once you're ready to bring your kite down, reel the string back in until the kite is low enough to grab.

How kites are used around the world

Kite flying is an important part of many different cultures. Here are four examples.

Guatemala

Every year during the fall, a giant kite festival is held in Sacatepéquez, Guatemala. Participants fly huge kites that can be more than 40 feet in diameter.



Indonesia

In this country, people have used kites for fishing for thousands of years.

A kite (made out of a large leaf long ago) is flown over the water. Bait and a net are attached to the kite to lure in and catch fish.

Japan

The annual Hamamatsu Festival in Japan celebrates babies born during the past year. One of the main events is kite flying.



Vietnam

In the Tonkin region of this nation, people traditionally

attached wooden flutes to their kites. When a kite rises into the sky, air funnels through the flute and makes music.

Kids flying kites

If you try this activity, send us a photo of yourself flying or holding a kite and tell us about your experience. We might publish it! Send it to hello@theweekjunior.com.