

Chromatography

Chromatography is used by scientists to separate mixtures to see what they are made of. We can use chromatography to see what colours are in the ink inside our pens. Although the lid on your pen might be black or blue or pink the ink inside is actually made up of lots of different colours.

You will need:

- Filter paper, coffee filters or kitchen roll
- Coloured pens (black pens are good to try)
- Water
- Pencil
- A glass
- Tape



Step 1

Cut your filter paper (or alternative) into strips. They should be about three quarters the size of your glass.

Step 2

Colour a dot of ink about 2cm from the bottom of your filter paper. Tape the filter paper to the pencil.

Step 3

Fill the glass with water until a quarter full. Balance the pencil over the top of the glass. The filter paper should just reach the water but the coloured in dot shouldn't be under the water.

Step 4

Watch as the water travels up the paper. You should see the colours separating. What colours can you see?

**Try out different pens to see what colours they are made of.
Is all black ink made of the same colours?**