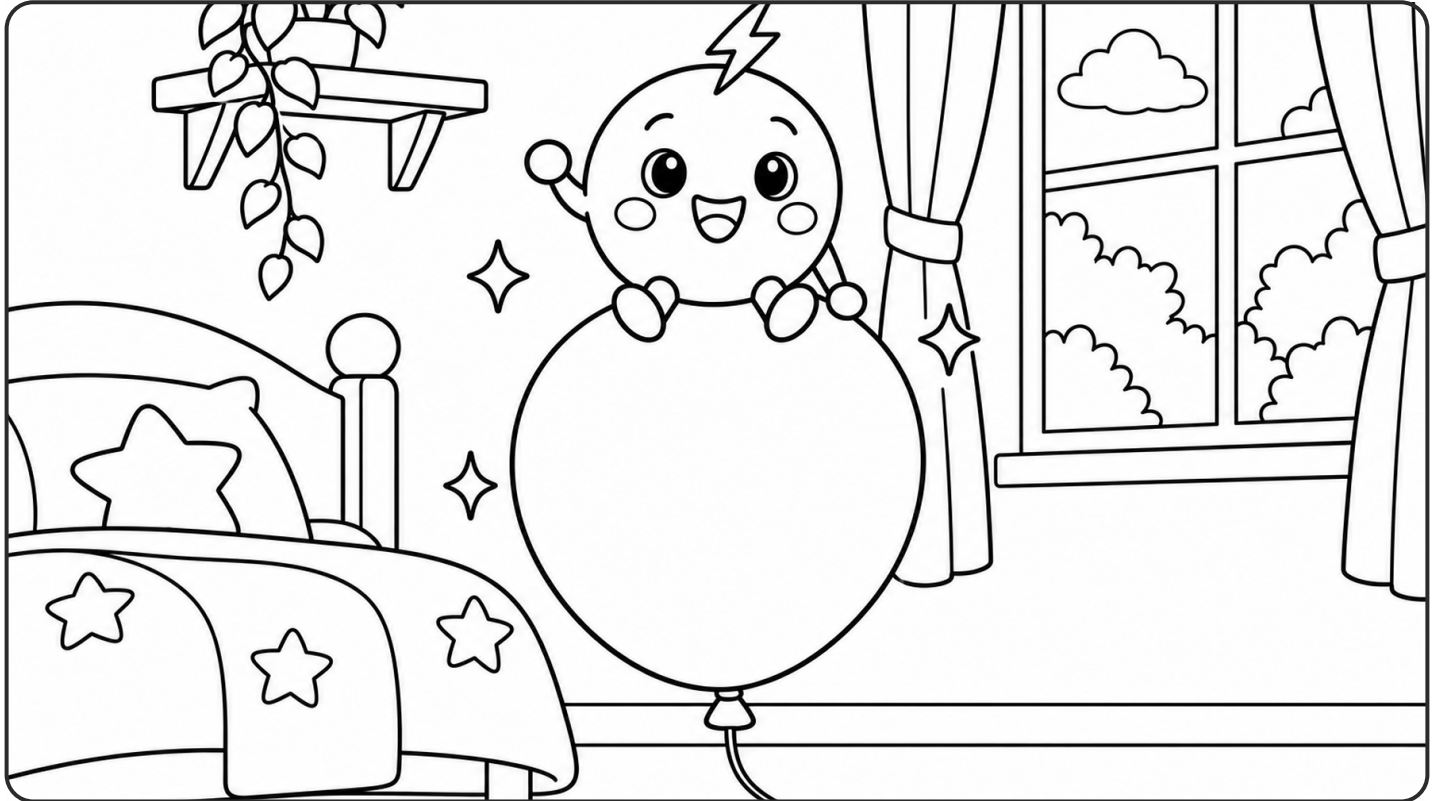


Why does a balloon stick to my hair when I rub it?



You rub a balloon on your head, and then you lift it up. Your hair stands up and sticks to the balloon! Why does that happen?



Why?

1. Everything is made of tiny, tiny bits.

Your hair, the balloon, even the air. Around those tiny bits zoom even tinier things, called electrons. Most of the time, things have just the right number of electrons. Everything is even, and nothing happens.

2. Rubbing makes electrons jump from your hair to the balloon.

Rub, rub, rub! More and more electrons hop over. Now the balloon has extra electrons, and your hair has lost some. Things are not even anymore.

3. Extra and missing pull together. The same push apart.

So your hair reaches up for the balloon. It wants its electrons back! And every hair on your head has lost electrons, so the hairs push each other away. That is why they stand up and spread out.

Try it! Jumping tissue bits

You need: a balloon, a tissue, a table, and a grown-up

1. Tear a tissue into tiny bits and put them on a table.
2. Rub a balloon on your hair, then hold it just above the bits. They jump up to the balloon!
3. Then press the balloon against a wall, and let go. Does it stay?

What happened? Rubbing moved electrons from your hair onto the balloon. That is static electricity at work!

Video + more questions:
whywhywhykids.com/static



scan with a grown-up