



Mission: How are materials organized on an atomic level?

Age: 8+
Materials: \$8

Time: 20 min
(Set-up: 5 min | Activity: 10 min | Clean-up: 5 min)

What you need:

Materials•

- 1 cup small round candies, all one color (or small ball bearings)
- 1/4 cup large round candies, all one color (or larger ball bearings)

Equipment•

- Large kitchen bowl

What to do:

1. Pour enough of the small candies into the bowl to cover the bottom with one layer of candy. Each small candy represents one small atom. Do you see any patterns?
2. Gently shake the bowl from side to side and watch how the “atoms” move. Keep shaking until all of the atoms line up in straight lines. Do any of the rows go all the way from one side of the bowl to the other? What happens at the edges?
3. Add the larger candies—approximately 1/4 the number of small candies. Each large candy represents one large atom. Use your hands to mix up the balls and distribute the larger ones throughout. Again, gently shake the mixture back and forth and watch what happens to the atoms. Can you get them to line up again? What happens if you add even more of the larger balls?



Clean-up:

You can munch on your candy or reuse the ball bearings for another purpose.