



Mirror - What is a mirror?

Fact

- A mirror is really anything highly polished enough to reflect your image back to you perfectly.
- The mirrors we use in our home and our cars are made of glass with a special backing.
- On the back of the mirror there is tinning solution, which works like glue. On top of that goes a silver solution and on top of the silver goes a copper solution and the copper solution protects the silver. Then a heavy coat of paint to protect them all.
- The silver is very reflective – it reflects your image back to you through the glass.
- When you look into a mirror the light hits you and bounces off into the mirror. The mirror reflects light so it bounces the light back into your eyes so you can see your image.

Do you know

- The first glass mirrors were invented over 300 years ago.
- Before that people used to look at their reflection in pools of water and polished metal.
- Ambulances sometimes use mirror writing so that drivers can see the word 'Ambulance' the right way around when they look in their driving mirrors.

Experiments you can do

Try writing a word and see if you can write it so you can see it correctly in the mirror image.

What words look the same written normally and reflected from the mirror? Try and tot, toot. Can you discover any others?

You could practise writing words backwards so you can make secret messages for your family and friends. They can decode your message by holding it up to the mirror to see the words the right way around.

Other Investigations

How many mirrors do you have around your house? You've probably got at least one in the bathroom. How about in the bedrooms? How many mirrors do you have in and on your family car?

Now look for highly polished things that reflect your image like a mirror. Maybe you have a metal electric jug – don't go near it when it's hot but have a look for your reflection when it's cold. Ask to have a look at any polished silver and check out your reflection in a polished silver spoon – what's going on there?!!