Life™
SCIENCE FOR ALL

Frozen Shapes

Winter is here, bringing with it ice and snow. There's so much fun to have with snow! We can make snow angels, have epic snowball fights and build snow-sculptures. Snowflakes are the tiny, beautiful building blocks of snow. Just like our fingerprints, no two snowflakes are the same. Let's explore the shapes of snowflakes, by making our own!

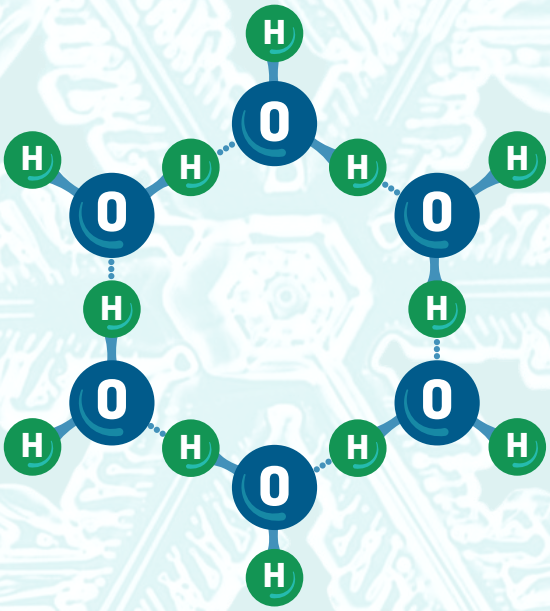
FUN FACT

The largest snowflake ever recorded was over 38cm wide!

A snowflake's journey

Just as our own lives have shaped us, a snowflake's journey affects its shape.

A snowflake begins as a simple speck of dust inside a cloud. Water vapor sticks to the dust, and freezes forming an ice crystal. Water molecules fit together most efficiently in a hexagon. This is why snowflakes always have six points! When the snowflake falls, tiny ice crystals attach to the points, and branches grow. Lots of things affect how the snowflake grows, including how cold or wet it is. Usually a snowflake is small enough that each of its branches will experience the same weather and grow in a similar way, making snowflakes almost symmetrical. All snowflakes are one-of-a-kind, shaped by their unique journeys to the ground. They are fleeting beauties, briefly captured before they melt.



INVESTIGATE

When it next snows, try catching a snowflake on a dark piece of clothing, and take a closer look. What features can you see? If you catch more than one, how do they compare?

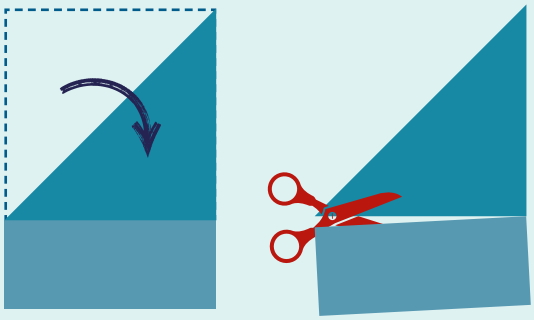
Make your own snowflake

SAFETY: Make sure you have an adult present when using scissors.

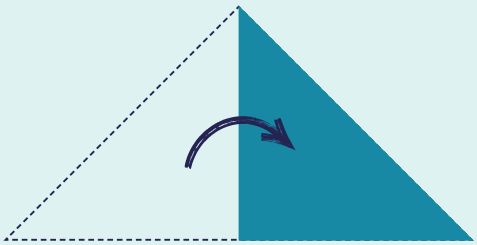
You will need:

- Paper
- Pen
- Scissors

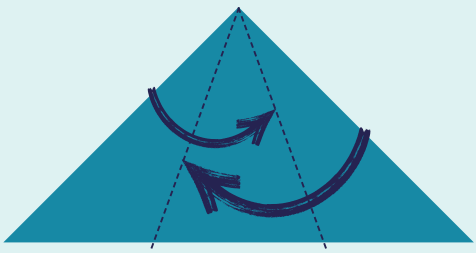
1.



2.



3.



4.

5.

Get creative - draw your own design here!

6.

7.

HUMAN SNOWFLAKE

Snowflakes aren't just made of ice - they can be made of people too! Skydivers can hold hands in the sky to form a big, falling snowflake. Since people aren't shaped like water molecules, these snowflakes don't always have six points.

Life™
SCIENCE FOR ALL

We would love to see your marvellous creations. Share your snowflakes and tag us on social media using @ScienceAtLife.