

2026

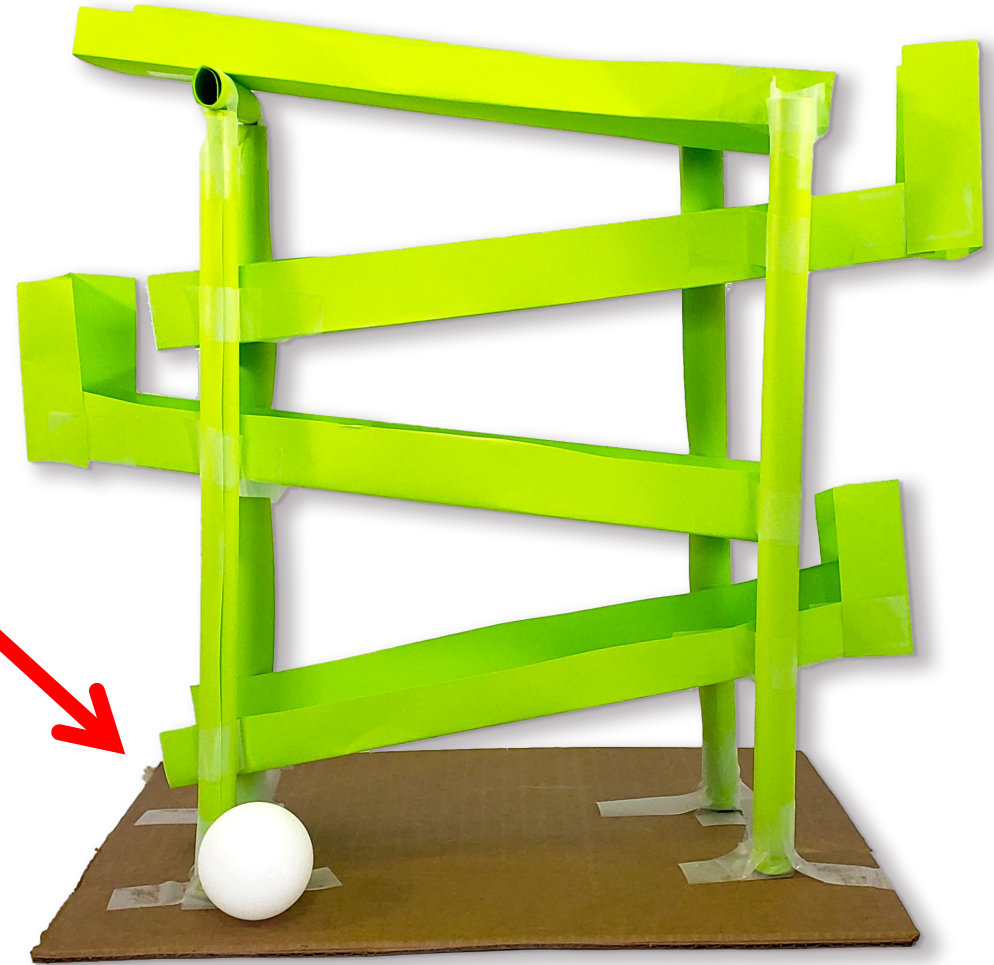
Ball Run Challenge

Science Buddies Engineering Challenge

www.sciencebuddies.org/engineering-challenge

2026 Ball Run Challenge – Rules

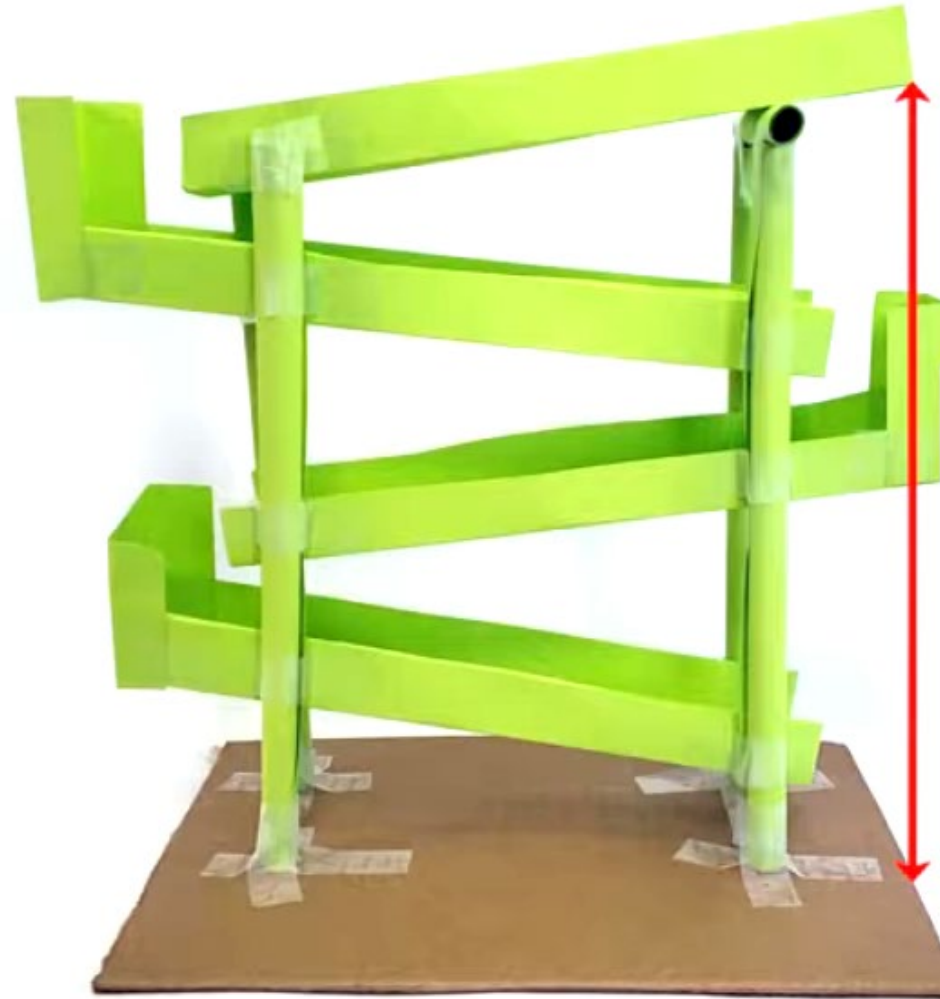
1. The run must stand on a flat horizontal surface like the floor or a table/countertop/desk/piece of cardboard. It can be taped to this surface. It cannot be taped to or supported by anything else (the ceiling, walls, furniture, a person, etc.).



2026 Ball Run Challenge – Rules

2. The run must have both an **entrance point** and an **exit point** for the ball.

- The **entrance point** is where the ball is placed into the run. It must be at least 10 inches (25 cm) above the supporting surface.



Entrance:
at least 10"
(25cm)

2026 Ball Run Challenge – Rules

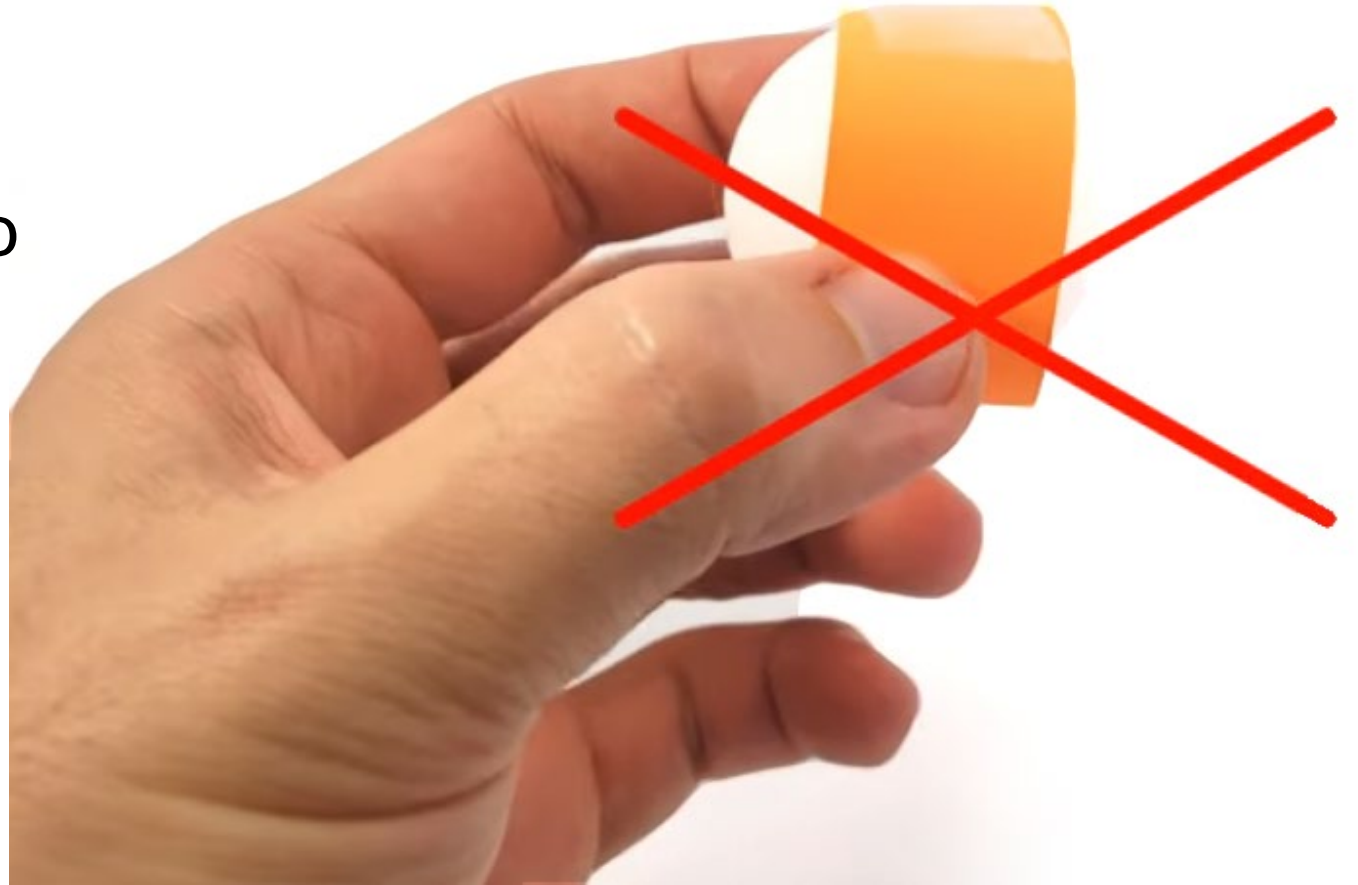
2. The run must have both an **entrance point** and an **exit point** for the ball.

- The **exit point** is where the ball exits the run. It must be at least 1 inch (2.5 cm) above the surface.



2026 Ball Run Challenge – Rules

3. The ball **cannot be modified** in any way or have anything attached to it.



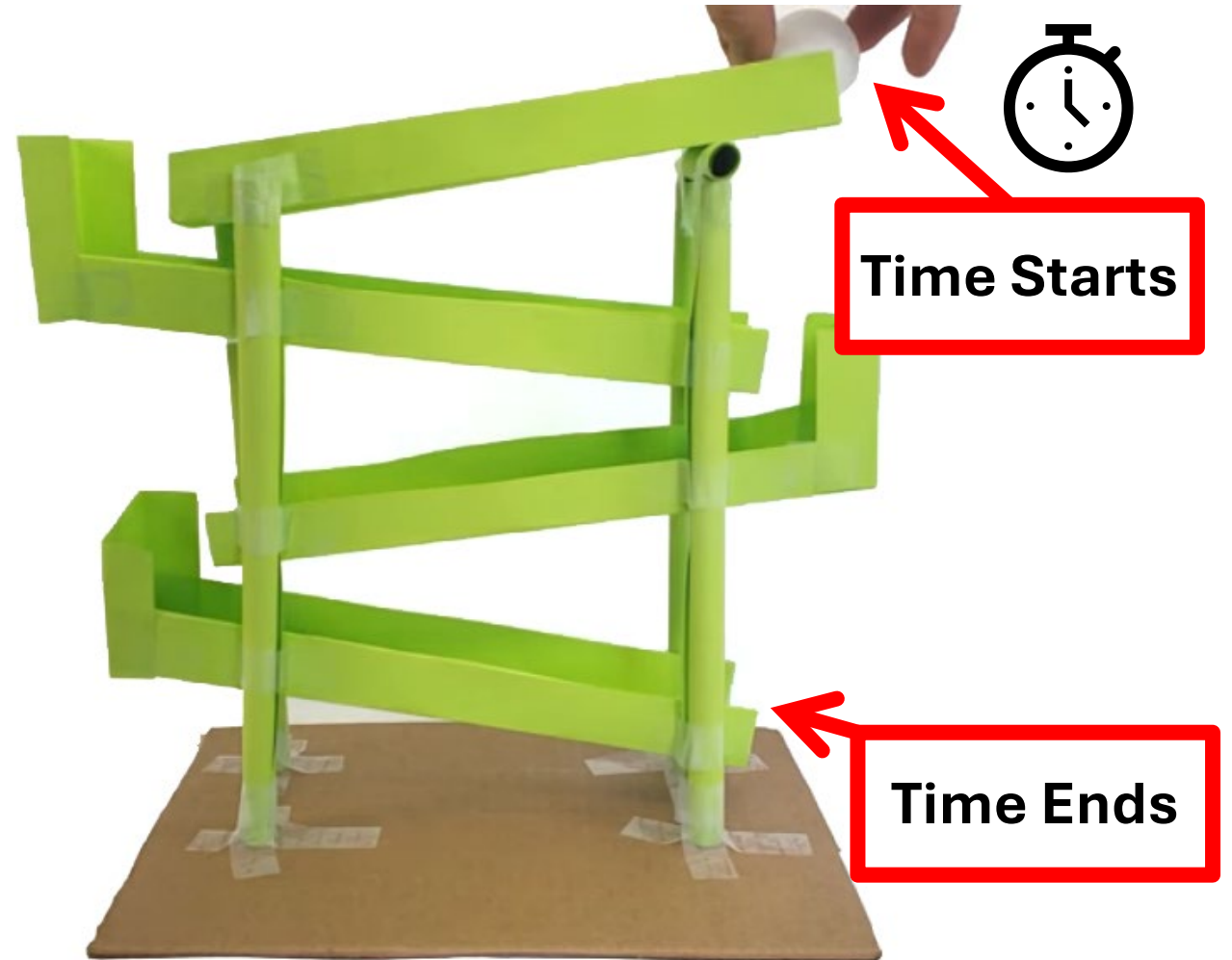
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4. The ball must be gently placed into the run to start. It cannot be dropped from above the run, thrown, flicked, etc.



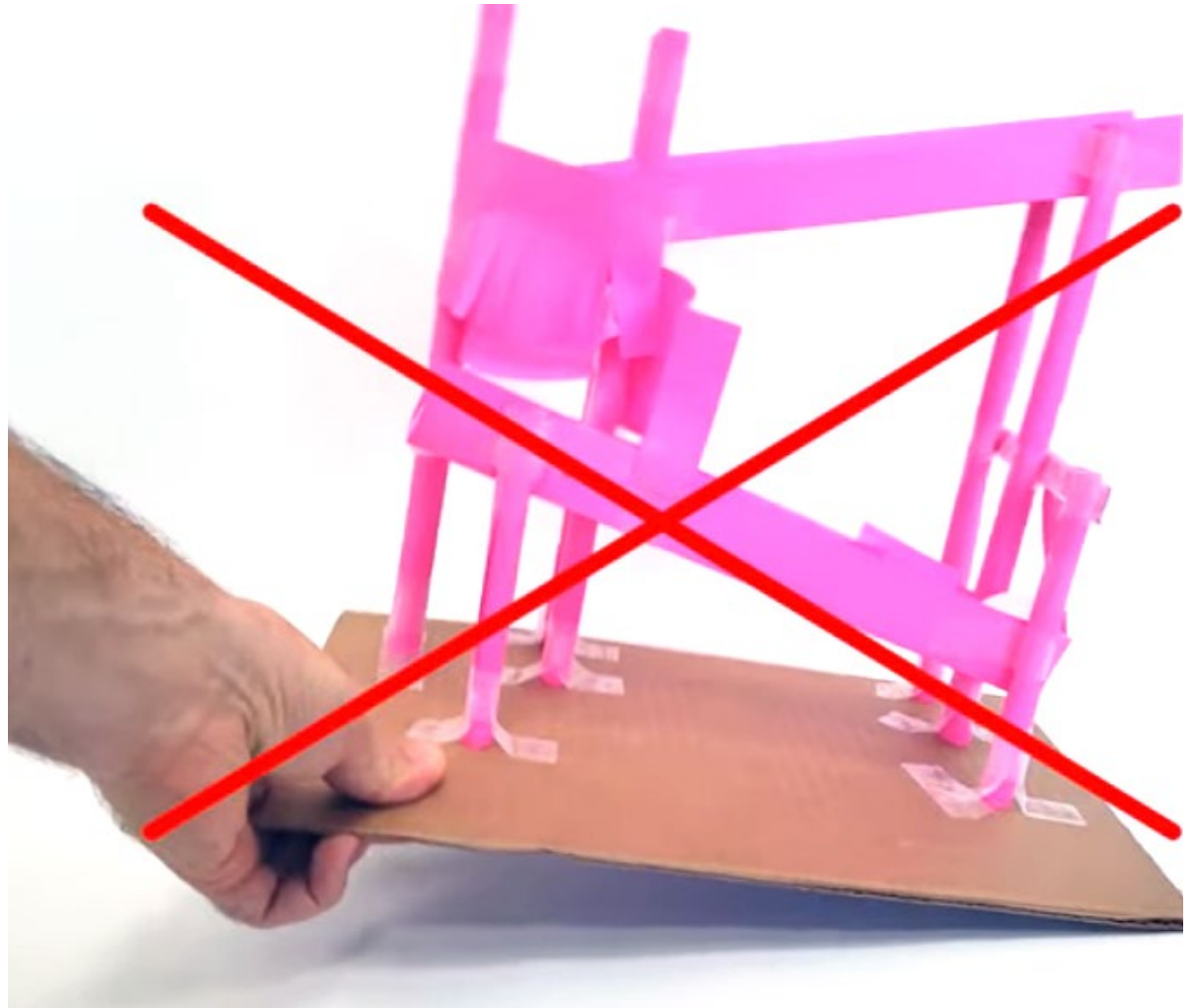
2026 Ball Run Challenge – Rules

5. Time starts when the ball is placed in the run and ends when the ball exits the run.



2026 Ball Run Challenge – Rules

6. After the ball has entered the run, you cannot touch the ball or the run, or influence their motion in any way (e.g., by blowing on the ball, shaking the table, or tilting the run, etc.).



2026 Ball Run Challenge – Rules

7. If the ball gets stuck in the run, you must remove the ball and start over. A ball is considered stuck if it does not move for more than 10 seconds.

**If the ball is stuck
for more than ten
seconds, start over.**



2026 Ball Run Challenge – Materials

Construction materials

Paper (maximum 30 sheets).

Printer, construction, graph, and notebook paper are allowed (letter or A4 size; 9" x 12" or 22 x 30-cm construction paper also allowed).

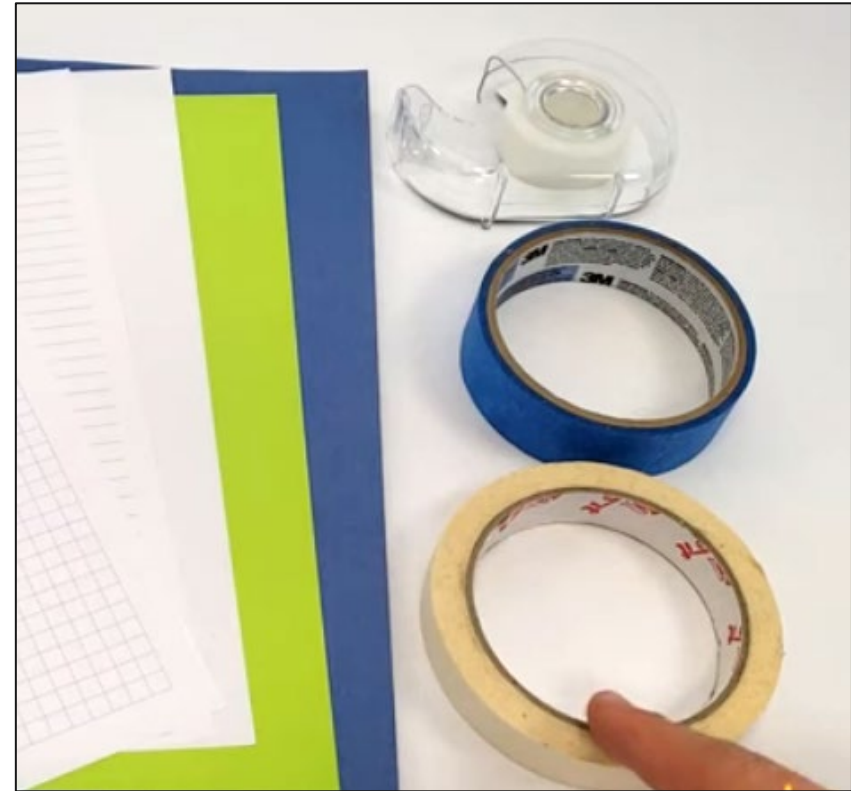
Cardstock and newspaper are *not allowed*.



2026 Ball Run Challenge – Materials

Construction materials

Tape (maximum one roll), maximum 1" (2.5 cm) wide. Clear office tape (e.g. Scotch®), masking, and painter's tape are allowed. Double-sided tape, duct tape, and packing tape are *not allowed*.



2026 Ball Run Challenge – Materials



2026 Ball Run Challenge – Materials

Construction materials

Flat surface, such as floor, table, countertop, or piece of cardboard

Tools

- Scissors
 - Ruler
 - Pencil
 - Tape measure or meterstick
 - Stopwatch
-
- **Ping pong ball**, also known as a table tennis ball (1)

2026 Ball Run Challenge – Submissions

To submit your entry, you (or your teacher) will need:

- Team Name
- Number of team members
- Average age of the team members
- Final Score (up to two decimal points)
- Time in seconds (rounded to nearest second)

2026 Ball Run Challenge – Submissions

**Entries will be accepted
February 22-March 31, 2026**

For questions about the Ball Run Challenge, see the FAQ!

If you have questions not answered
by the FAQ, email us:

engineeringchallenge@sciencebuddies.org