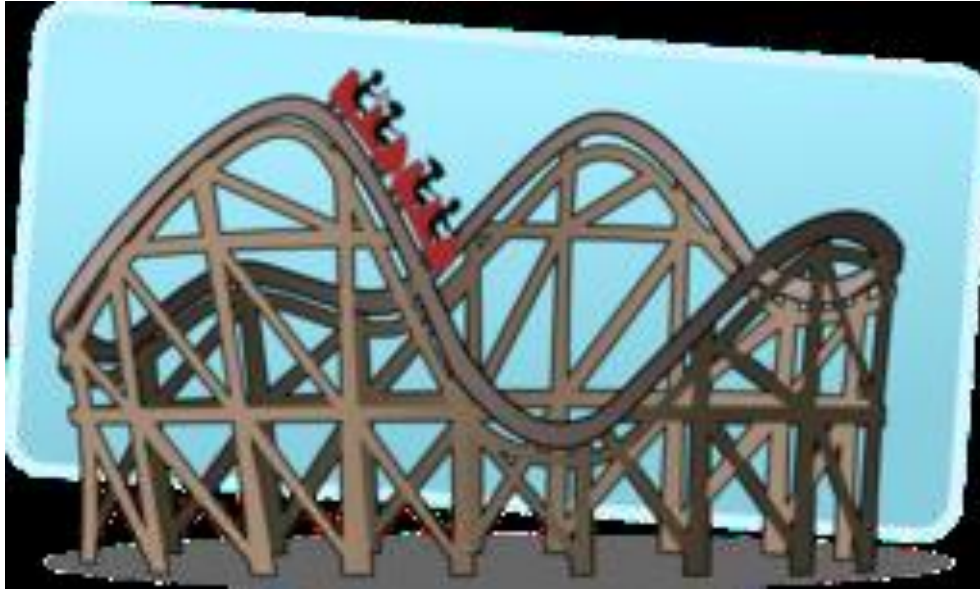


How Roller Coasters Work

by Danny Martin



Many people like to go to amusement parks to ride roller coasters. But have you ever wondered how roller coasters work?

You probably know that roller coasters go really fast! They also have all kinds of twists and turns. But did you know that there is no engine on a roller coaster? Roller coasters actually move using gravity!

Gravity causes two things to pull close to each other. For example, when you jump up in the air, gravity will pull you back down to Earth. Without gravity, we would be floating around in space!

A roller coaster ride usually starts with a big hill. At first, the coaster is pulled up the hill using a machine. The roller coaster makes a chugging noise as it goes up. When it gets to the top, though, gravity pulls it quickly down.

The bigger the hill, the faster the coaster will go. For example, if you are on a roller coaster that has a 100 foot hill, you will go down much faster than a roller coaster that has a 20 foot hill. This is because gravity will have a longer time to push you back down.

Once the coaster is down the big hill, it still will not need a machine or engine. This is because the coaster has enough speed from its race down the last hill to push it up the next. At the top of that hill, gravity takes over, and you are off again!