

SCIENCE FAIR PROJECTS TO AVOID

First and Foremost:

ANY PROJECT IN VIOLATION OF GSDSEF, ISEF OR CALIFORNIA EDUCATION RULES AND REGULATIONS will not be accepted.

AVOID

- topics that are too general since these cannot be made into a problem and an experiment. *Instead, make general ideas more specific!*
- topics that require unavailable resources
- projects that require too much time or too little time/effort. Look at your overall schedule and decide on a topic that's reasonable.
- projects that you can easily find the answer to if you do a Google search.
- overly-common projects.
- projects that are ordinarily part of your classroom instruction.
- projects that lack a measurable endpoint. Results should be expressed in metric units of growth, size, mass, speed, time, volume, frequency, replication rate, chemical product analysis, etc.
- projects from the internet unless you have made them unique or made it to be your own idea. (see Note below)

The following examples of types of projects may meet all requirements but often do not win top awards or may not be accepted in to the GSDSEF because they are too commonly seen by judges. **With frequently done projects, acceptance may be granted if they have an original twist with exceptional thoroughness and solid scientific method.**

- Effect of colored light, music, or talking on plant growth (OK at middle school if variables included)
- Effect of color on memory, emotion, mood, strength, behavior, taste, etc. -
- Effect of cola, coffee, etc. on teeth (OK at middle school if variables included)
- Pouring soda on anything
- Effect of music, video games, etc. on blood pressure (OK with variables and 10 people per group)
- Astrology projects
- Optical Illusions
- Basic solar collectors or ovens (OK if engineering design variables included)
- Basic flight testing, e.g., planes, rockets (OK if variables are included)
- Basic growing plants in different soils, water, etc.
- Temperature effects on magnets, rubber's elasticity, ball bouncing, etc.
- Engineering projects without a functional purpose i.e. building a lego tower, building a bridge that is not unique and subject to some sort of testing
- Comparison projects:
 - Battery life comparisons (plug-in and run-down type)
 - Strength/absorbency of paper towels (discouraged because seen often)
 - What is the best insulation material such as wool versus cotton or down feathers
 - Comparing one soda, food, to another or their interaction with each other
 - Basic mold growth using food wrappings, or in different temperatures, amount of light etc.
 - Ice cube melting when making with different types of water, beverages etc.
 - Basic wing, fin shape comparison if mass has not been considered, basic flight tests.
 - Comparison of strength in different bridge designs.
 - Comparison of plant growth in different fertilizers
- Project which boils down to simple preference
 - Paw-preferences of cats, dogs, etc.
 - Male/female (especially if it shows bias)

Note: Projects Taken from the Internet

Projects taken directly from the Internet are considered plagiarism, and may be disqualified. Judges may identify projects similar to examples posted on the internet and they will be ranked low for creativity. Examples of projects from sites such as www.sciencebuddies.org are good sources of inspiration, but the idea for your project should be original.

Scientific fraud and misconduct are not condoned at any level of research or competition. This includes plagiarism, forgery, use or presentation of other researcher's work as one's own and fabrication of data. Fraudulent projects will fail to qualify for competition in GSDSEF and subsequent affiliated fairs.