

Bristol's Largest Independent Gas Suppliers

**BRISTOL GAS
SUPPLIES LTD**

Hints on Running a Successful Balloon Race

How the Race Works

Tickets are sold to your customers. These tickets are then each attached to a gas filled balloon which is released into the atmosphere. The race organizers then wait for the race tickets to be posted back to them and it is calculated which balloon has travelled the furthest distance. It is normal for a main prize to be awarded to the actual finder (to encourage them to post back the tickets).

We supply race tickets.

A Balloon Race is classed as a lottery so you ought to obtain the relevant license from your local authority.

Balloon Gas

To avoid accidents ensure that you read and follow all the safety instructions when handling gas cylinders. You will be provided with a pressure reducing/filling valve with the cylinder. Balloons should be slightly under inflated because the gas inside will expand as the balloons rise in altitude. A single wire loop of about 10 inches in diameter should be rigged up to act as an inflation gauge to ensure equal filling as well as control gas consumption. Alternatively, the balloons could be filled between two cardboard boxes or something similar set at 10 inches apart.

Helium gas permeates the rubber film much more quickly than air. A gas filled 10 inch balloon will float for approximately 6-8 hours. It is prudent therefore to delay inflation until immediately prior to use. 12 inch balloons will float for longer than 10 inch balloons, but it should be noted that they require nearly twice as much gas to fill.

Making the Race Successful

There is quite a lot of work involved in running a balloon race, but if it is done properly it can prove quite profitable.

The following suggestions should help.

1. Decide how many tickets you intend to sell and do some costings to make sure you charge enough money to cover the cost of the balloons, tickets, gas and prizes and leave a profit. We advise £1.00.
2. Sell as many tickets as you can before the day of the race. If you are from a school we advise that you give each child in the school 5 tickets x 200 children = £1000.00. Award a small prize to the child that sells the most tickets (a popular incentive is to allow the child that sells the most tables to release the balloons).
3. Make sure you have plenty of helpers to assist in the filling and knotting of the balloons.
4. Always make sure all balloons are released in your sight. Don't allow customers to take their balloons away as you leave yourself open to fiddles (e.g., they may detach the ticket and then post it to a relative/friend who lives, miles away!).
5. Reduce your cost by purchasing our own balloons. They have our logo and phone number on them and we charge less for these than our normal balloons. We can of course supply balloons in your school/club colours and have them printed.
6. Sell balloons on strings to people as additional source of income. There are always people who want a balloon to take home.

Full approval must be obtained from Air Traffic control. The phone number of the National Air Traffic Services is 01895 276108/ 1276109. Please give them at least 4 weeks notice if possible.



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