

# Bristol's Largest Independent Gas Suppliers

**BRISTOL GAS  
SUPPLIES LTD**

## Hints on Running a Successful Helium Balloon Race

### How the Helium Balloon Race Works

Tickets are sold to your customers. These tickets are then each attached to a helium 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 Helium Balloon Race is classed as a lottery so you ought to obtain the relevant license from your local authority.

### Helium Balloon Gas

To avoid accidents ensure that you read and follow all the safety instructions when handling helium gas cylinders. You will be provided with a pressure reducing/filling valve with the helium cylinder. Balloons should be slightly under inflated because the helium 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 a helium inflation gauge to ensure equal helium filling as well as control helium gas consumption. Alternatively, the helium 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 helium 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 helium balloons will float for longer than 10 inch helium balloons, but it should be noted that they require nearly twice as much helium gas to fill.

### Making the Helium Balloon Race Successful

There is quite a lot of work involved in running a helium 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, helium 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 tickets to release the balloons).
3. Make sure you have plenty of helpers to assist in the filling and knotting of the helium balloons.
4. Always make sure all helium 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 helium balloons on strings to people as an additional source of income. There are always people who want a helium 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.



**0117 300 9993**

**www.bristol-gas.co.uk**  
Victoria Road, St Philips, Bristol BS2 0UT