

# Removing Sky Dust from a Collector with Water

This procedure will remove sky dust from a nylon collector using spray bottles filled with water. It's simple, easy, and uses materials found in every home.

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## Gather and prepare your materials first.

Prepare the filter.



The coffee can filter. Note how the plastic lid has been cut away leaving a small lip.

- Cut both ends from a coffee can.
- Cut the center from the plastic coffee can lid leaving a quarter-inch lip around the top.
- Tuck a 3.5-inch basket-style coffee filter into one end of the coffee can. Fold a half-inch of filter over the rim of the can.
- Snap the cut plastic lid over the rim of the can to hold the filter in place.

Prepare cardboard sheets.

- You will need two sheets of single-ply cardboard for each filter. A good source is the front and back of cereal boxes.
- Use kitchen shears to cut the cardboard panels.

Prepare the glue mixture.

- Mix an equal amount of water with any brand of white glue. This step is best done just before you cut the filter (next page).

Gather quart-size plastic zipper bags, kitchen shears, pump spray bottle(s), fine tip indelible markers, microscope slides, masking tape, white glue, razor blade or sharp craft knife, and pencils.

- The quart-sized plastic zipper bags are used to store anything that might otherwise get contaminated.
- Use pencil to write identifications around the rim of dry filters *before* they are used. Pencil won't bleed, and it's nearly impossible to write on wet filters.
- Use indelible marker to label plastic zipper bags.

## Carefully peel the tape from the nylon collector.

- Place a finger on the nylon and peel the tape toward the pool end of the strip.
- Try not to disturb the collector.

## Lift the collector from the kiddy pool and hold in position for rinsing. NB - this takes four people!

- Have two people hold the collector. One end must be lower than the other.
- Have a third person hold the low end of the collector over the coffee can filter with one finger and the other thumb.

- The fourth (or more) person rinses the collector with a spray bottle filled with clean water.



It takes at least four people to rinse the collector.

- Rinse systematically down one side from top to bottom. Then do the other side.
- Finally rinse the bottom fold toward the coffee can filter.

**Remove the filter and sky dust from the coffee can holder.**

**NB - wash your hands first!**

- Write the identification data on a plastic zipper bag with an indelible marker.
- Carefully pry the plastic rim from the coffee can filter holder.
- Lift the filter by its rim so that it forms a little pocket.
- Slide the filter into the labeled plastic zipper bag.

**Cut and mount a strip from the center of the filter.**

- Place three microscope slides side-by-side on the unfinished side of a sheet of cardboard.
- Use two strips of masking tape to tape the ends of the slides to the cardboard.
- Carefully lay the still-damp filter flat on the unfinished side of a second sheet of cardboard.
- Use kitchen shears to cut a two-inch wide strip from the center of the filter. Cut the filter and cardboard together.
- Smear a thin layer of the white glue mixture on the taped-down slides.
- Carefully lay the cut filter strip on the slides, dust side up, so that the strip passes over the center of the slides. This will leave a half-inch of each slide end uncovered.
- Discard the cut cardboard.
- The glue will be on the down side of the filter and will wick up as it dries. This will glue the dust to the filter without covering it with a confusing film.



A two-inch wide strip has been cut from the center of the still-damp filter. Here it is placed on the glue-covered slides that have been taped to a new piece of cardboard.

- Set the slides in a protected place to dry. Avoid contamination by providing a raised cover.

**Separate the slides for viewing.**

- When dry, use an indelible marker to label the end of the slides with an identification mark.
- Use a razor blade or sharp craft knife to cut the slides apart.
- Place the slides in a labeled plastic zipper bag until ready to observe. Be careful not to cause one slide to scrap the surface of another.