

HOT AIR BALLOONS!

The First Flight

Did you know that the first hot air balloon flight in the United States took place on January 9, 1793? Jean-Pierre Francois Blanchard rode in the first manned hot-air balloon flight in American history. The flight lasted for about 45 minutes, and the hot air balloon went about 15 miles. The flight started in Philadelphia and ended in Gloucester County, New Jersey. It is reported that he took one passenger with him, a little black dog. George Washington was even there to witness it!

Parts of a Hot Air Balloon

A hot air balloon is made up of 3 main parts. The envelope is the fabric balloon which holds air. The burner is the unit which propels the heat up into the envelope. The basket is where the passengers and pilot stand.

How They Work

The basic description of how a hot air balloon works is that warmer air rises in cooler air. This is because hot air is lighter than cool air. The balloon, called an envelope, needs to be very large because it takes a large amount of heated air to lift it off the ground. The burner uses propane gas to heat up the air in the envelope to lift the balloon off the ground and into the air. The pilot must keep firing the burner during the flight to keep it in the air.

