

Virtual Balloon Race FAQs

How it works.....	1
Creating an account & Buying Balloons.....	1
Payments.....	2
Decorating and Tracking	2
Enhance your chances of winning	3
Tracking balloons.....	3
Dashboards and codes	4
About balloons	4
Is this gambling?	6

How it works

Ecoracing have created the virtual balloon race platform and lots of PTAs and charities across the country select which race they wish to be part of.

Ecoracing have their own main prizes for the overall competition winners which are £500 cash, Apple iPad and 10 x £10 book tokens.

Friends of Fawbert & Barnards have also chosen our own prizes for those that enter the race from our link so we will have our own winner of £30 gift card and runner up £10 gift card.

Friends of Fawbert & Barnards will be send a spreadsheet at the close of the event with our entries and winners. This is not chosen by us, it is all coordinated via Eco racing.

Creating an account & Buying Balloons

Before you can buy a balloon, gift an activation code, activate a gifted code, or start fundraising for your own cause, you must create an account www.ecoracing.co otherwise we do not know who you are if your balloon wins.

Each balloon costs just £3 and you can buy as many balloons as you want to increase your chances of winning, and of course, indirectly donate more to our school.

BUYING OR GIFTING BALLOONS

Sign in to go direct to your personal dashboard. Click the

<https://ecoracing.co/user/page/825>

[Buy balloons for you | Buy activation codes to gift | Activate a gifted code]

The next screen will then give you 3 options.

Click [Buy balloons for you] and buy as many balloons for your race that you wish to buy. Alternatively, you can buy activation codes to gift to friends and family – note that an activation code is the same as a purchased balloon i.e. is valuable.

Click [Buy activation codes to gift] and buy as many codes as you wish to give to friends and family. A code is the same as a balloon but prepaid and therefore free to the recipient. All the purchased codes will be sent directly to you by email for redistribution by any suitable method - email, text or WhatsApp, for example. Please ensure you use the person's correct email address or telephone number as mistakes cannot be rectified

ACTIVATING A GIFTED CODE

You need to create an account otherwise we don't know who you are if you win.

Signing in takes you directly to your dashboard. Click the <https://ecoracing.co/user/page/825>

[Buy balloons for you | Buy activation codes to gift | Activate a gifted code]

Enter your code in the [Activate a gifted code] field and click Activate. Repeat, if necessary, with more codes. Well done, a balloon has been added to your account. It appears in your dashboard and can be found in the central [view / decorate / track] button of the cause you are supporting.

Payments

Payments for balloons are made directly through the website, the website uses a company called Stripe, they are an American Tier One Level Payment provider similar to Worldpay.

Decorating and Tracking

DECORATING YOUR BALLOON

[Sign in](#) to go direct to your personal dashboard - <https://ecoracing.co/user/page/825>

On the left under Recently Supported you will see the cause(s) you've chosen. There are three yellow buttons. Click [View / decorate / track] to display your balloons and click on

them individually to decorate. Remember to save all your design and parameter changes - the [Save changes] button is at the bottom of the page.

Enhance your chances of winning

When on your dashboard you can 'customise' each balloon by changing various parameters - balloon helium contents; shape; thickness of rubber.

Reflecting real life, virtual balloons just like latex ones, can pop if the balloon parameters are not suited to the weather. For example, maximising helium content, having the fastest shape and thinnest rubber during stormy weather is not advisable. So, looking at the predicted weather for your race period prior to customisation helps your chances of winning.

LAUNCH AND FLIGHT INFORMATION

At the designated race launch time and at any time thereafter, you can see the virtual launch sequence on the race homepage. You do not need to login, just go to the Race Page and click on [launch visual].

Balloons are subject to a simulated flight pattern based on your balloon's individual flight parameters plus the real weather conditions at that actual time such as the prevailing wind speed and current temperature. This simulation uses an advanced computer modelling programme linked to Google maps and, Aeris, a commercial global weather data supplier.

Tracking balloons

The leading 100 Balloons

All 100 race leading balloons can be seen at any time 24/7 during the race. Information shown includes the straight-line distance travelled in kilometres from the launch point, plus the balloon's latitude and longitude.

The button [race leaders] is found just above the race map on the Race page.

Your Balloons

To locate and track your balloons, Sign in and go to your dashboard.

On the left under Recently Supported you will see the cause(s) you've chosen. There are three yellow buttons. Click [view / decorate / track] to display your balloons. Click on them individually to see their tracking on Google Maps and satellites.

If ranked outside the top100, a ranking of 100+ will be displayed.

Dashboards and codes

I've gifted an Activation Code, but I can't decorate it.

Yes, the key point here is that the activation code has been given to someone else. So, it is now not yours and will appear in someone else's dashboard for them to decorate.

I've gifted an Activation Code, but the recipient has not received them.

The most likely explanation is that you have inserted an incorrect email address.

I can't get to my dashboard.

Have you created an account? Without an account you don't have a dashboard. When you sign in, the system takes you directly there.

I've gifted an Activation Code, but I don't think my relative will redeem it. Does the money still go to the charity?

Yes, is the answer. Many people buy balloons purely as a mechanism to donate towards their favourite charity. They are not that bothered about taking part.

I'm having trouble with creating an account.

Sometimes when browsers autocomplete fields they can interject spacing.

Do you limit the number of balloons that can be decorated?

It is probable that you are unable to see beyond 2 balloons due to the lack of scrollbars within the decoration container. If you are on a PC scroll down the balloon.

About balloons

What makes a balloon burst?

Real balloons made of latex rubber are notoriously vulnerable and your virtual balloon is no different. If you chose thin rubber to make your balloon fly higher and therefore faster, your balloon could just explode if the wind speeds become excessive.

Balloons flying at lower levels are often struck by geese flying at higher altitudes than normal birds. If your balloon is at a very low level and heading for rocky Earth, it could even strike an electricity pylon or church spire. Conversely, flying at the highest altitude possible increases the risk of bursting from excess swelling through intense sunlight or orbital debris, for example.

So, to create a potential winning balloon, it pays to check the prevailing weather patterns before your race starts and chose your balloon parameters accordingly.

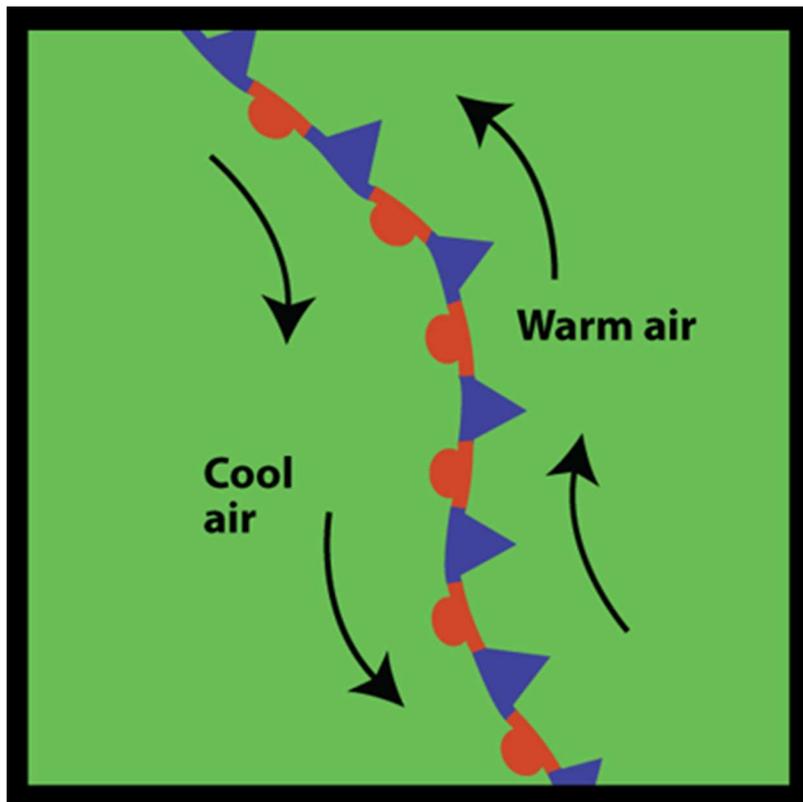
If my balloon bursts can I still win?

Absolutely you can! The health status of each balloon is calculated every 15 minutes and whether your balloon wins the race is dependent on several factors, some of which can be influenced by yourself, some of which are purely weather based. When a balloon's health deteriorates below zero per cent, it will burst / pop.

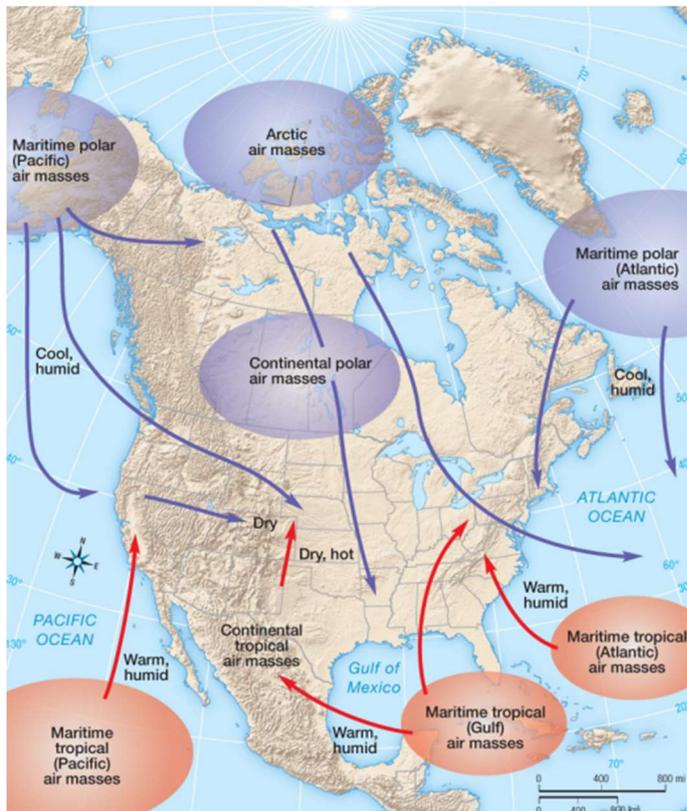
If your popped balloon happens to be in the lead, you may still win, because:

- a) Your chasers may pop too.
- b) The wind direction might change completely and the balloon start flying back on themselves. In effect they never catch up with you. Your balloon will only become invisible once other live balloons have passed your position.

Why is my balloon flying in a different direction to the others?



British weather is dominated by maritime systems and the Jet Stream, so whereas a high-pressure zone can sit stationary over the Azores off Africa for months, British weather changes daily. Similarly, North American air masses are multi-directional



If your balloon hits a sudden windy squall, it can be retracked into another front as per diagram. Your balloon will then start flying in a completely different direction to the other race participants.

Whilst that might seem disconcerting / worrying it's not the end of the world. And that's because the winner of the race is the balloon that's flown the furthest in ANY direction

Is this gambling?

Are the Ecoracing and Rentaballoonrace systems gambling?

Gambling is defined by Dictionary.com as the activity or practice of playing at a game of chance for money or other stakes. Chance is defined as an event where there is no predictability of outcome or ability to control it in any way.

Betting money on the result of a professional game of football or horserace is classed as gambling as the outcome is uncertain, and you, the gambler, cannot influence or change the football players or lawfully manipulate the race horse. Similarly, a lottery is gambling as the prize winners are chosen at random, and winning is just pure luck or chance.

In contrast, both Ecoracing and its sister bespoke platform Rentaballoonrace.com are considered games of skill where you, the balloon purchaser, can personally alter the helium

content, thickness of rubber and balloon shape in order to gain advantage. This is after studying the prevailing weather patterns to decide what parameters to choose to maximise performance under those conditions. An Extract from the UK Gambling Commission FAQs explains further

Do I need a [gambling] licence?

‘To be a genuine prize competition there must be an element of skill, knowledge or judgement that is reasonably likely to prevent a significant proportion of people who wish to participate from doing so, and prevent a significant proportion of people who participate from receiving a prize.

Genuine prize competitions are free from statutory control under the Gambling Act 2005 and therefore do not require a licence.’

In summary, our virtual balloon race systems are not gambling and needs no special licence. As a ‘belt and braces’ strategy, we now ask questions of the main winner too.