

ARACHNID ARCHITECTURE

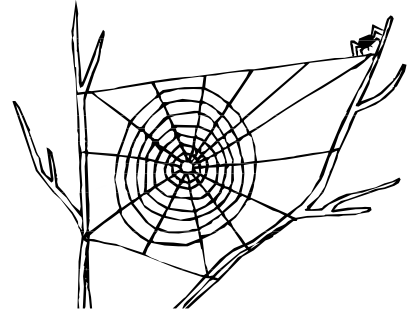


Insects are food. Well, not usually to us. But to anteaters, birds and spiders. Spiders are particularly interesting because of their unique method for catching insects: **the spider web**.

The different parts of a spider web do different jobs. Let's see if you can figure out what they are for.

What You Need: Craft picks or toothpicks, and an **ORB SPIDER WEB** to observe. (An orb spider web is the spiral kind. The most likely time to find one is late summer or early fall.)

Now fill out the chart on the back side of this sheet.

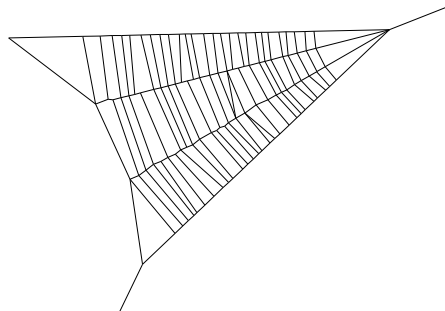


An Orb Web

*WANT TO SEE SOMETHING AMAZING? PICK A STRAND FROM THE MAIN SPIRAL, AND USE YOUR CRAFT PICK TO TEST HOW FAR YOU CAN **STRETCH** THE SPIDER WEB BEFORE IT BREAKS!*

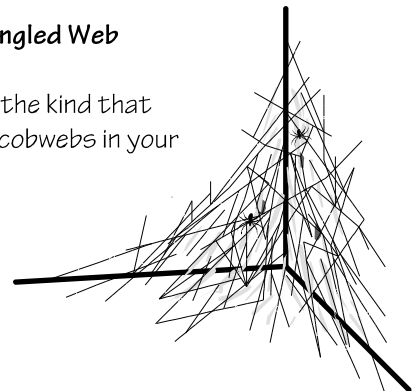
Here are a few other ways spiders use webbing to trap insects.

The Triangle Web



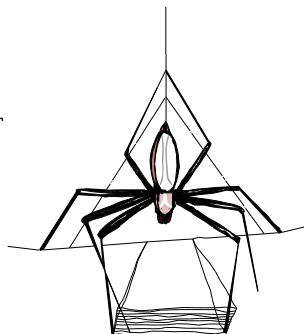
The Tangled Web

This is the kind that forms cobwebs in your attic.



The Net

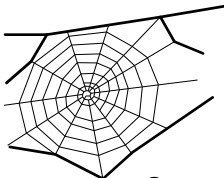
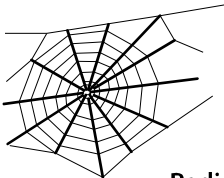
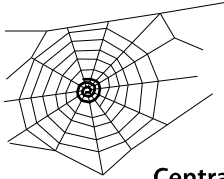
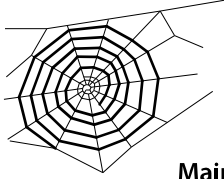
A net-casting spider hangs around waiting for an insect to walk below, then scoops it up.



"Oh, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to weave Tangled Webs."

Test each part of the spiderweb for stickiness, by touching with the craft pick. Also, look how thick the lines appear.

Record your findings in the chart below.

 <p>Support Lines</p>	
 <p>Radial Lines</p>	
 <p>Central Spiral</p>	
 <p>Main Spiral</p>	

Based on your observations and your own common sense, what do you think is the function of each part of the spider web?

Support Lines

Main Spiral

Radial Lines

Central Spiral
