WE’VE ALL HEARD ABOUT THE SAVAGE FORCE OF A TORNADO. Its 300 mile-per-hour winds are strong enough to drive a piece of straw clear through a telephone pole. So you can imagine that if you left a drinking straw near a potato as a tornado approached, you might return to find the potato skewered by the straw. But can you imagine getting the same result by hand? Read on, and see how you can do it.

**Method**

1. Put the glove on one hand.
2. Hold the potato (lengthwise vertically) with the gloved hand, pinching it between your thumb and index finger.
3. Holding the potato steady, pick up the straw (holding it in the middle), and line it up with the potato.
4. Slowly draw the straw back, then stab the straw quickly into the potato.
5. If you’re quick enough—and the straw is strong enough—you’ll stab it right through the potato.

**The Scientific Excuse**

The cylindrical shape of the straw gives it surprising strength along its length, although it remains weak and flexible crossways. That strength, coupled with the narrowness and sharpness of its edge, gives the straw a good chance of making it through the potato with ease. Some people might see your thumb over one end of the straw as you push and decide that it’s all due to air pressure. That’s a nice try, but not the reason—and you can prove it by doing the experiment again with your thumb well away from the open end of the straw.

**You Will Need**

- Gardening Glove (left glove if you’re right-handed or vice versa)
- Uncooked Potato
- Rigid (Non-Bendy) Drinking Straw

**Take Care!** This is a relatively low-risk experiment, although the same combination of strength and sharpness of the straw could lead to a hand injury if your aim isn’t up to scratch. (That’s why you should use the gardening glove.)

**Excerpted From**

The Book of Totally Irresponsible Science
ISBN: 978-0-7611-5020-6

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