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## Science Comprehension

# Magnetism



**Magnets** have a north pole and a south pole. The north pole of a magnet will attract the south pole of another magnet. Two north poles or two south poles will repel each other.

Magnets attract iron which is magnetic. Steel (which is an alloy of iron) is also magnetic because it contains iron. An alloy is a metal which is made from two or more metals. Nickel and cobalt are also magnetic, but most metals are not.

The Earth is like a giant magnet. This is why a compass will point to *magnetic*

*north*. Magnetic north is actually slightly different to *true north* and it is constantly changing. It moves approximately 25 miles every year.

Magnets have lots of everyday uses. From keeping our refrigerator doors closed to storing information on computers and bank cards – magnets are everywhere. In fact, everything with an electric motor contains magnets. You will find electric motors in vacuum cleaners, washing machines and electric cars.

1. Explain how the poles of a magnet behave using the words **similar** and **opposite**.

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2. Which metals are not attracted to a magnet?

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3. What could be the problem facing a sailor using a compass for direction?

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4. Name some things in your home which contain several magnets.

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## Answers

1. Similar poles repel and opposite poles attract each other.
2. Any metal or alloy which does not contain iron, nickel or cobalt.
3. They might get lost or not find their destination because magnetic north is constantly changing.
4. Fridges, freezers and washing machines have magnets in their motors and also magnets to keep their doors closed.