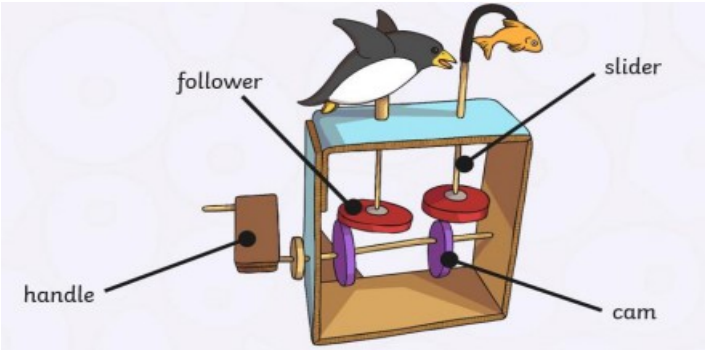
Burwell Village College Primary

Mechanisms — Cams

Key Vocabulary	
mechanism	any tool used to convert or control motion or transmit control or power
cam	a part in a mechanical linkage that can rotate or slide
crankshaft	a rotating shaft driven by (or driving) a crank
follower	mechanisms which are in contact with the shape of the cam to produce a pattern of motion
pivot	the part that turns or rotates

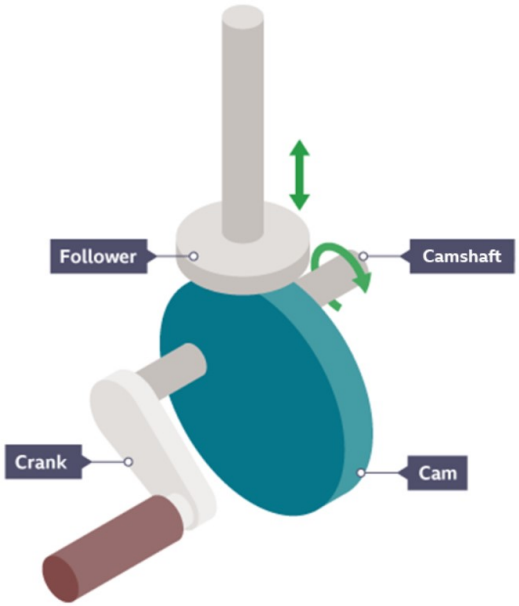
Cam

A cam mechanism is made up of three components: a cam, slider and follower. The mechanism causes components to move. Cams can be made out of metal, plastic or wood.

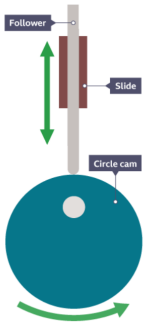


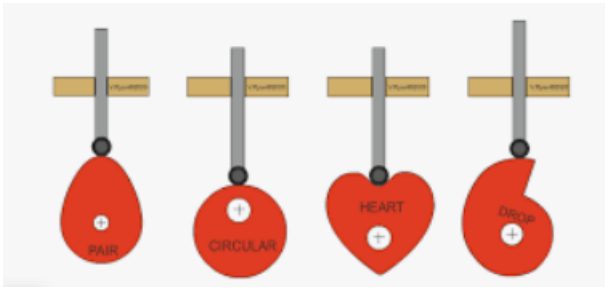
A **cam mechanism** has two main parts:

- a **cam** - attached to a **crankshaft**, which rotates
- a **follower** - touches the cam and follows the shape, moving up and down.



Circular **cams** use an off-centre **pivot** to cause the **follower** to move up and down. The **follower** will rise and fall by a reasonably large amount. These can be seen in pistons, for example on steam engines.





Different **cam** shapes will create different movements.