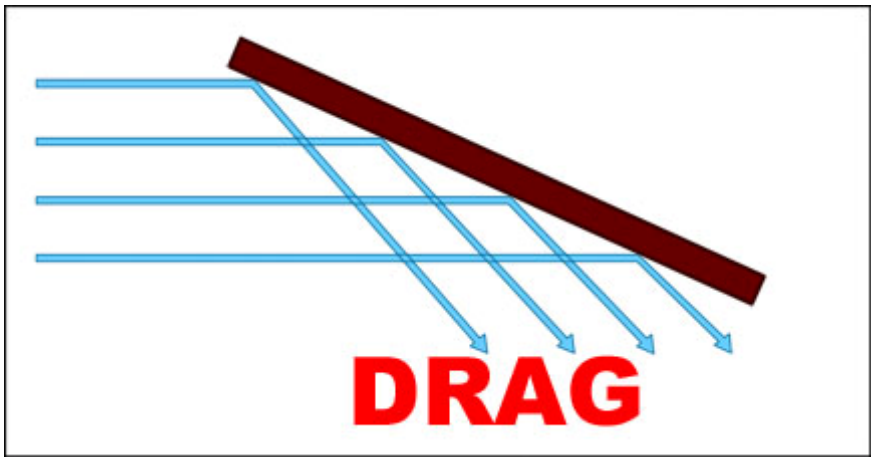
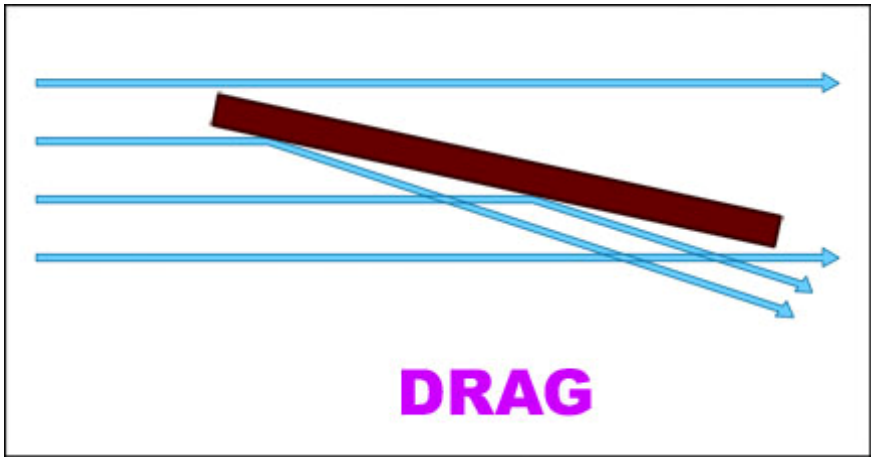
ROCKETS: Lesson 2

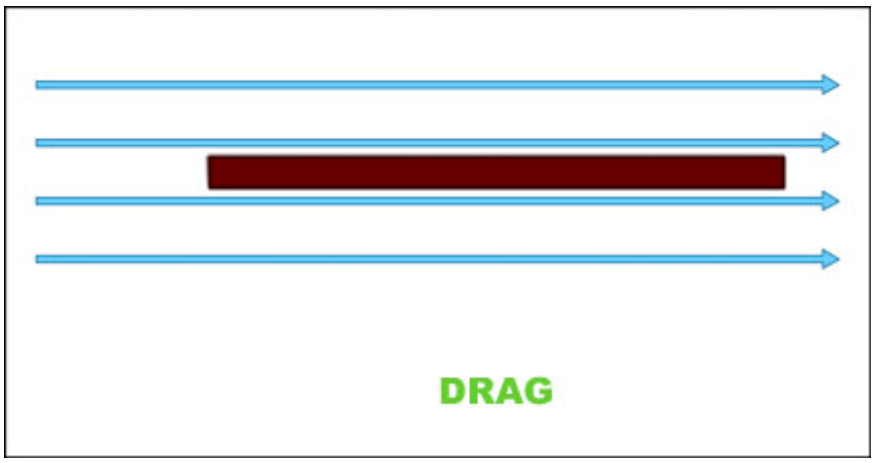
This webpage found at:
http://pa4h.cas.psu.edu/Curricula/AerospaceSupp/Activities/Rockets/Overview/RocketsLesson2.htm

How rocket fins work

- Because air has **MASS** (see Flight Lesson 2: An explanation of air), a rocket's **FINS** can keep a rocket stable by pushing against the air and forcing the rocket to move in a straighter path.
  - Fins provide the least **DRAG** when the narrowest side is the leading side moving through the air.







- When the narrowest side is not cutting directly through the air, the air exerts extra **FORCE** of **DRAG** on the fin. This **FORCE** pushes the fin until the narrowest edge is cutting directly through the air. When the fin is in this position, the rocket is also moving straight through the air

- With several fins working together, they can reduce **YAW** and **PITCH** by minimizing **DRAG** from all around the rocket. Together they keep the rocket moving in a straighter path than without them.

Web design: Victoria Kramer. This page was last updated on September 26, 2005.
There are no plans for future updates.