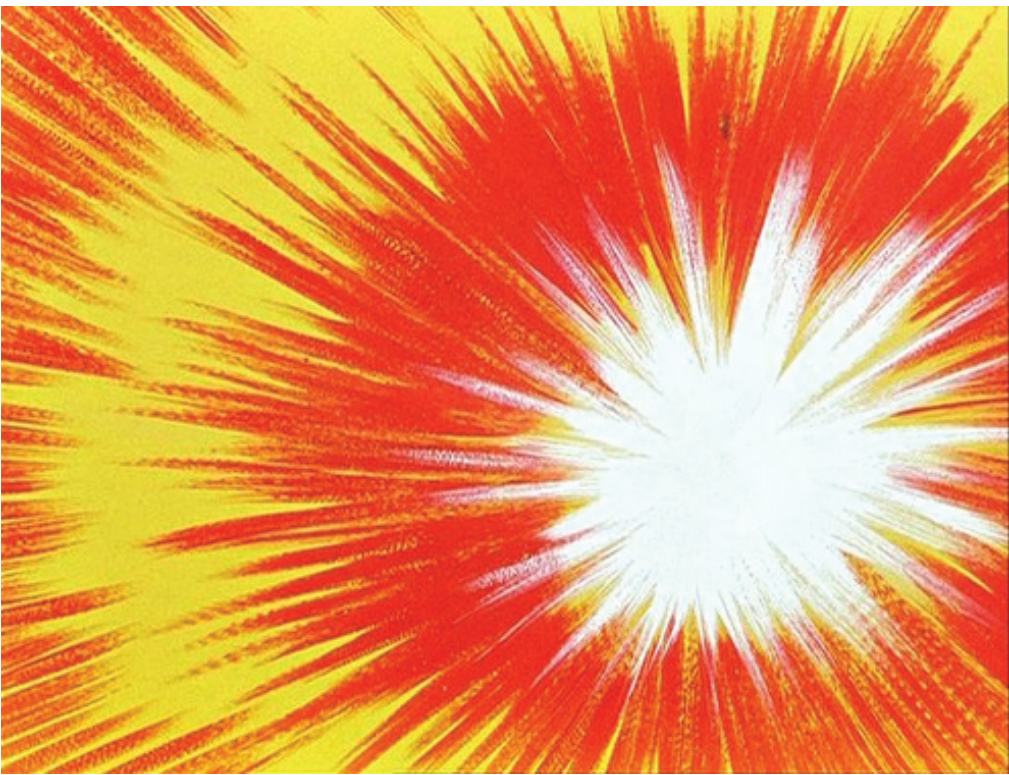




Do you have an urge to delete something from your life? This guidebook has a simple solution: It’s easy to build firecrackers using commonly available materials like paper and matchsticks. One small spark and poof! anything you’d like to purge bursts into a thousand tiny fragments. In creating this guide our hope is to reimagine what an explosion can do and how it can mean.

The narrative of human history has been dominated by the idea of rupture, the notion that an established ideology (along with the people and culture that embody it) must be violently displaced in order for progress to occur. Explosives, the technological embodiment of rupture, are used to commemorate victories and losses, annihilate enemies and cultivate the land. In the form of firecrackers or fireworks, explosives perform a largely representational function. On the Fourth of July, fireworks displays are used as a ceremonial illustration of “the rockets red glare” described in the United States’ national anthem. In other countries they likewise accompany national celebrations of historical events or the passage of time. During celebrations of the Chinese New Year, explosives act as a cleansing agent, a way to purge evil spirits.

Whereas Independence Day commemorations deploy fireworks displays as a representation of a historical break, Chinese New Year celebrations employ firecrackers as a symbol of a new spiritual beginning.

Why do fireworks accompany this type of nationalistic public spectacle, untethered from historical context, where raw feeling fuels collective catharsis? The structure of this relationship is not unlike the coupling of politics with the current media landscape, which tends to amplify empty rhetoric and transform ideas into entertainment. Extravagant fireworks displays and overblown news cycles both become vehicles for public consumption of desire, fear, outrage, hate, love, jubilation, ecstasy, etc., but these feelings only exist through proxies, passive experiences abstracted through form and language. How else might explosions be put to use? Could we imagine them as part of a personal, intimate, meditative practice? If firecrackers are an embodiment of rupture, perhaps we can slow down their production to a point where extended inquiry and committed conversation become possible. We propose taking the time to make your own firecracker; choose an object, image or idea to focus on and consider the possibility in violent obliteration or the silent fertility of a failed bomb.

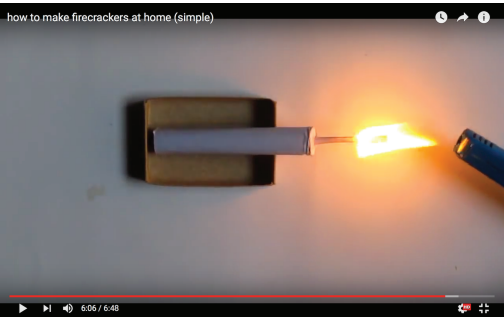


Black Powder (cracker guide), 2016

Performed by Hideous Beast
Curated by Allison Lacher and Jeff Robinson
Hosted by Roman Susan

hideousbeast.com





<https://goo.gl/lsGpx6>



<https://goo.gl/VdYP48>

This video uses paper, glue, and matchsticks to make a firecracker yielding a charge somewhere between a “black cat” and a “ladyfinger” but certainly louder than a “snap n’ pop.” The size and thickness of the tube you create to contain the black powder can be changed to suit your destructive desires and available materials. We found that one 8.5”x11” could be used to make four firecrackers.

Alternative - use match boxes and packing tape. Also utilizes needle nose pliers for a “crush” method on the matchsticks to produce powder.

Materials

- ✳ paper (used printer paper, magazines, etc.)
- ✳ glue stick
- ✳ needle nose pliers or heavy-duty scissors (or any large sharp scissor, a knife will also work)
- ✳ small flat head screwdriver
- ✳ matches (roughly 30 per cracker)
- ✳ mortar and pestle (a ceramic bowl and end of a screwdriver could also work)
- ✳ dowel (3/16” to 1/4”), pen or pencil
- ✳ drill bit (1/16” to 1/8”)



Powder

- ✳ use the knife, scissors, or needle nose pliers to scrape the colored powder off the match tips.
- ✳ grind up the powder with a mortar and pestle.

Tube

- ✳ use the dowel to roll the paper along the short side into a tube.
- ✳ tighten up the roll a bit and glue the outside edge to the roll.
- ✳ cut the tube into four 2” pieces.
- ✳ use a flat head screwdriver to fold the end of a tube in on itself. use the tip of the screwdriver to push small flaps of paper down towards the center of the tube. rotate the tube as you are working and continue to fold down small flaps until the end is sealed.



Wick

- ✳ cut a piece of paper 3” x 1”
- ✳ place a thin line of match powder on the paper..
- ✳ roll the paper tightly with the match powder. the wick should be 1/16”-1/8” thick.
- ✳ use the drill bit to hollow out a hole in the closed end of the firecracker.
- ✳ insert the wick into the hole. make sure to insert it fairly deep in the tube.



Finishing

- ✳ use small papers or a funnel to load the rest of the match powder in the open side of the tube
- ✳ use the screwdriver to close up the end of the tube the same as before
- ✳ use outdoors only under adult supervision
- ✳ lay on ground, light fuse, get away!

**BLACK
POWDER
CRACKERS**