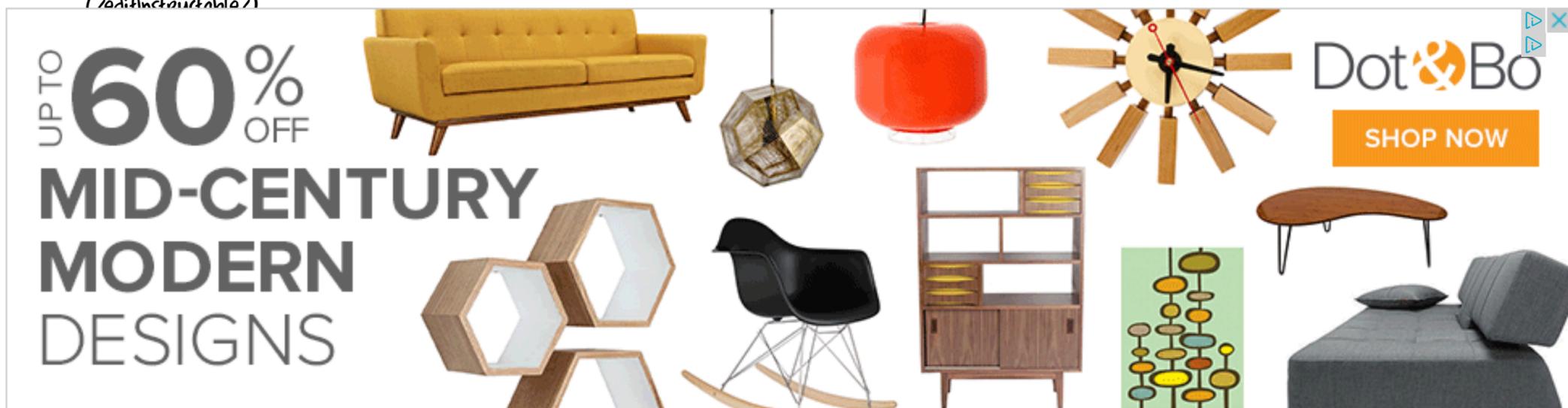


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Fire Tubes - Original and New Compartment Design

by Not-Dead Undead



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(/member/Not-Dead+Undead/)

Download (/id/Fire-Tubes-Original-and-New-Compartment-Design/?download=pdf)

(/id/Fire-Tubes-Original-and-New-Compartment-Design/) 9 Steps



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(/member/Not-Dead+Undead/)

Not-Dead Undead Hypothesis
(http://notdeadundeadhypothesis/)

(/member/Not-Dead+Undead/)

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118

Bio: I am a Biologist by training, a zombie prepper in my spare time. Plus, I like to be outdoors.

More by Not-Dead Undead



(/id/Fire-Tube-Drinking-Straw-Hack)

Fire Tubes, my straw survival hack is back by popular demand with upgrades. Yes, compartments! After rigorous testing and many cold beers I have a solution for those wanting compartments. These little plastic guys will keep your tinder (and anything else that will fit) dry when you are outdoors.

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Step 1: Begin



(<http://cdn.instructables.com/FEV1S3V/I697RHRZ/FEV1S3V/I697RHRZ.LARGE.jpg>)

I will take you through the build, which is the original Fire Tube I posted here (<http://www.instructables.com/id/Fire-Tube-Drinking-Straw-Hack/>). And then where I added the compartment steps.

Step 2: Items Needed



([id/Pourable-Mason-Jar-for-Storage](http://www.instructables.com/id/Pourable-Mason-Jar-for-Storage/))

Tags:

fire tube ([/tag/type-id/category-outside/keyword-fire-tube/](http://www.instructables.com/tag/type-id/category-outside/keyword-fire-tube/))

straw ([/tag/type-id/category-outside/keyword-straw/](http://www.instructables.com/tag/type-id/category-outside/keyword-straw/))

hack ([/tag/type-id/category-outside/keyword-hack/](http://www.instructables.com/tag/type-id/category-outside/keyword-hack/))

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fire starter ([/tag/type-id/category-outside/keyword-fire-starter/](http://www.instructables.com/tag/type-id/category-outside/keyword-fire-starter/))

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camping ([/tag/type-id/category-outside/keyword-camping/](http://www.instructables.com/tag/type-id/category-outside/keyword-camping/))

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Altoids Survival Kit 2.0
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How To Customize Your Altoids Survival Kit
(<http://www.instructables.com/To-Customize-Your-Altoids-Survival-Kit/>)



Fire Tube - Drinking Straw Hack
(<http://www.instructables.com/Fire-Tube-Drinking-Straw-Hack/>)



How to Build the Ultimate Survival Shotgun
(<http://www.instructables.com/How-to-Build-the-Ultimate-Survival-Shotgun/>)



Survival kit
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(<http://cdn.instructables.com/FWH/E4KD/I697RJP9/FWHE4KDI697RJP9.LARGE.jpg>)

Materials

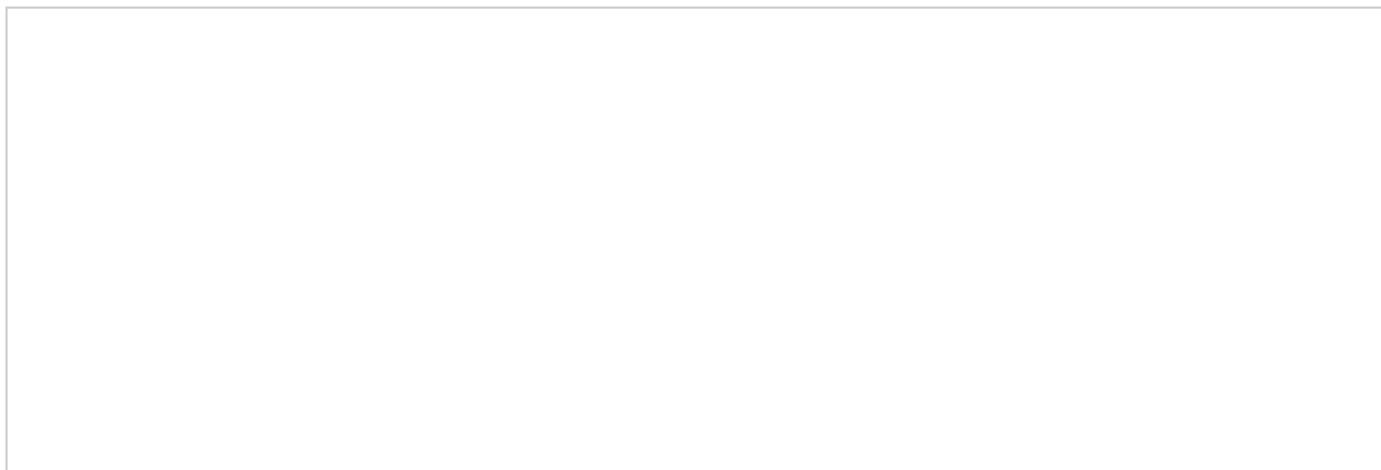
- Straws (Not all straws are created equal)*
- Lighter
- Needle pliers
- Scissors
- Matches
- Petroleum Jelly
- Cotton balls
- Poking stick (skewer that fits inside straw)

If not matches, just what ever you want to put in there.

***A Word About Straws**

Not all straws work for this hack. I prefer clear straws so that I can easily see what is inside. But many clear straws are small in diameter and thin plastic. I have had better luck with thicker, opaque straws. One of my favorite is the McStraw from that place with a big yellow M. Its thick and seals very well.

Step 3: Sealing the ends





(<http://cdn.instructables.com/F3R/AAW8/I6AVPWZW/F3RAAW8I6AVPWZW.LARGE.jpg>)

(<http://cdn.instructables.com/F9Y/7XBK/I6AVPX1W/F9Y7XBKI6AVPX1W.LARGE.jpg>)

1. With your pliers hold the end of the straw where you will create your first seal.

Leave a little straw hanging out so you have enough plastic to melt. As heat is applied, the overhanging straw will melt back to the pliers where it will stop.

2. Allow to cool. This end should now be sealed. You can check your seal by placing the sealed end into a glass of water and blowing into the open end.

Step 4: Making and Adding Tinder

(<http://cdn.instructables.com/FM6/CY2T/I6AVPX1Y/FM6CY2TI6AVPX1Y.LARGE.jpg>)



(<http://cdn.instructables.com/F3E/P608/I697RJ9Y/F3EP608I697RJ9Y.LARGE.jpg>)

(<http://cdn.instructables.com/F5G/UZ5Q/I697RJ9V/F5GUZ5QI697RJ9V.LARGE.jpg>)

I like to use cotton balls with a light coat of petroleum jelly. But there are other options, just use a cotton ball, or even dryer lint. Both are great tinder.

1. Coat the cotton ball lightly with petroleum jelly, you don't want to glob this on.
2. Then use your poking stick to push the cotton ball to the sealed end of the straw

Step 5: Add Matches and Final Seal



(<http://cdn.instructables.com/FP8/E8WW/I697RJ9R/FP8E8WW/I697RJ9R.LARGE.jpg>)

(<http://cdn.instructables.com/FZY/OHD6/I6AVPX2/FZY/OHD6/I6AVPX2.LARGE.jpg>)

I like to use strike anywhere matches. Sometimes I will add sandpaper strips or small slivers of the striking pad from matchbooks. That's your call.

1. Add matches, heads away from cotton ball. *If using strike anywhere matches, you can alternate matches heads to that they don't rub together. I have not had them ignite, but it is possible. (See Step 9: User Comment and Design Suggestions)

Note: Many comments on the Fire Tube was concerning the petroleum jelly soaking the matches. I have not had this problem. Even if it did slightly absorb into the matchstick, the head would light and still burn the stick. However, there is a solution.

2. If you want to make a compartment, move on to the next step. Otherwise....

3. Cut the straw to length, and repeat the sealing technique as before on the open end.

Step 6: Compartment #1



(<http://cdn.instructables.com/F1X/A3MU/I697RIW5/F1XA3MUI697RIW5.LARGE.jpg>)

(<http://cdn.instructables.com/FL1/DC1J/I697RITU/FL1DC1JI697RITU.LARGE.jpg>)

For this compartment, you will be melting a seam between your two items.

1. Using your lighter, heat up your pliers. I find that 20s is pretty good, depends on your tool.

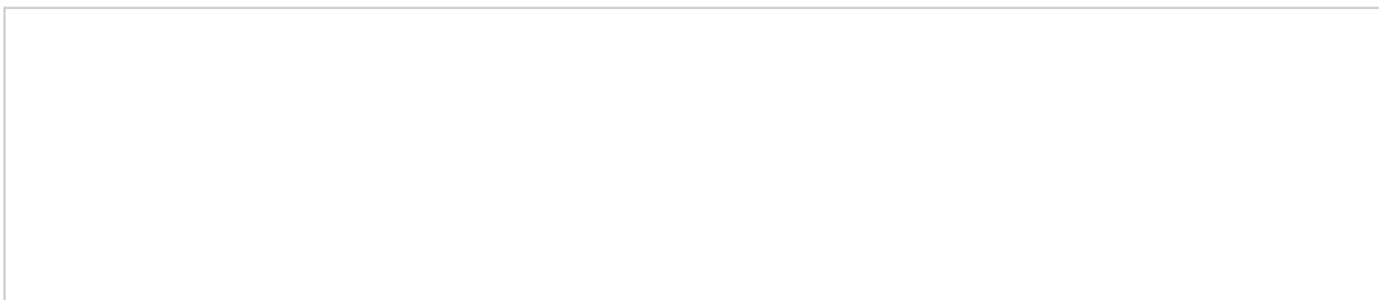
Caution: Too hot and you can cause the plastic to melt too much creating tiny holes in your compartments.

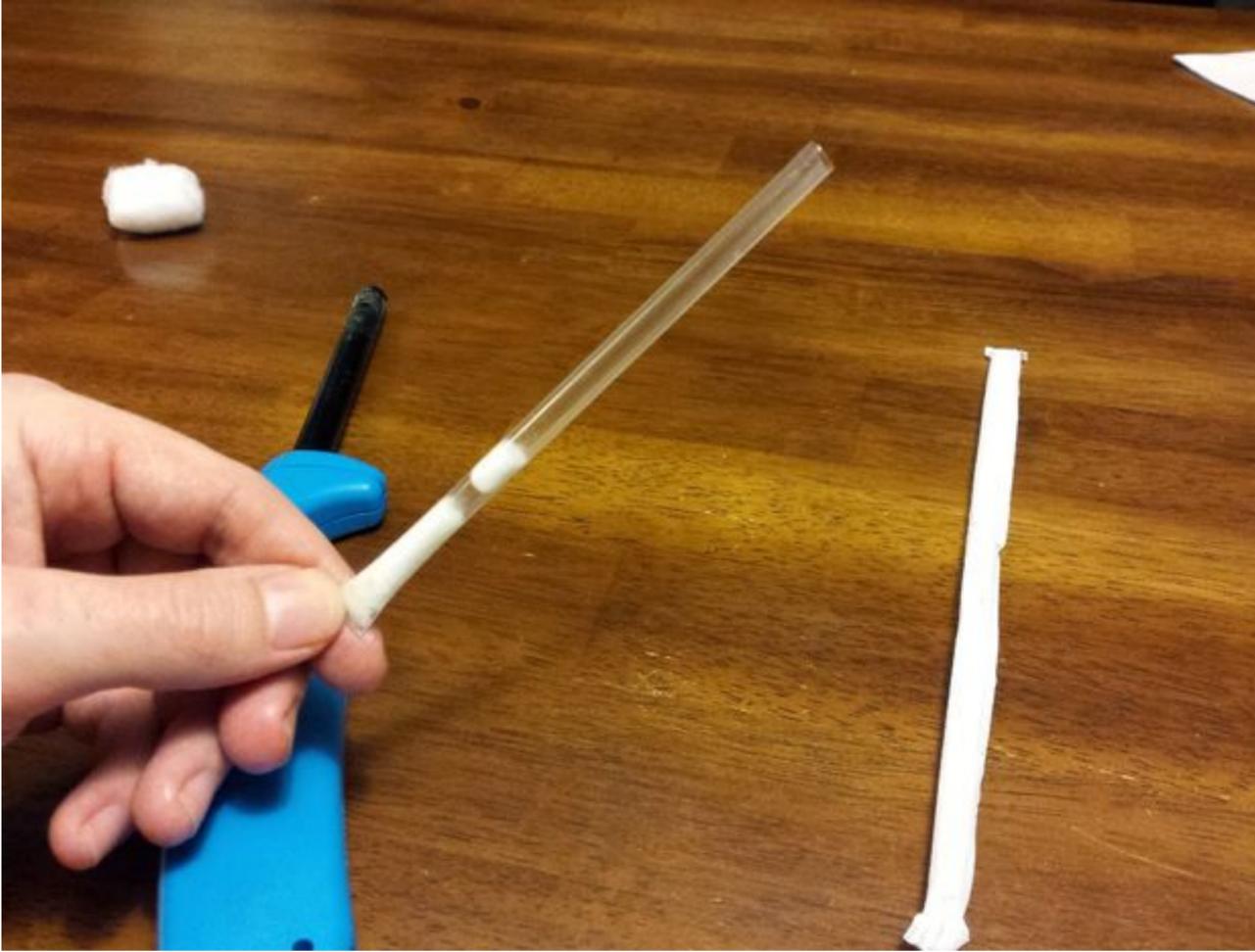
2. Simply crimp the straw where you want the compartment, hold let the plastic melt and then cool before releasing. I find pliers with teeth are best because is creates a better seal due to the teeth creating grooves.

3. Add matches and seal other end as previously stated.

*Note: I have not been able to create an air-tight seal between each compartment, but it works to keep most things separated.

Step 7: Compartment #2





(<http://cdn.instructables.com/F09/PN5V/I697RICY/F09PN5VI697RICY.LARGE.jpg>)

(<http://cdn.instructables.com/FMB/ZWKU/I6AVPY9J/FMBZWKUI6AVPY9J.LARGE.jpg>)

For this compartment, I'm not concerned about waterproofing each compartment from each other, but simply to separate.

1. Before your final seal, simply place another wad of cotton to create a separator. Don't allow the cotton separator to touch the petroleum cotton ball. This will prevent any moisture to transfer.

Note: A cotton ball separator is quite effective. I previously worked in a lab where we would half fill test tubes with water and cap off with a cotton ball. We would lay them on their side, and to my surprise, it didn't leak. The compacted cotton ball keep the water from leaking out.

2. Add your matches and seal open end as stated before.

Step 8: And there you have it!



(<http://cdn.instructables.com/F16/DOBN/I697RI1N/F16DOBN/I697RI1N.LARGE.jpg>)

Now if you want to separate many items go for!

Use these for everything. Pictured I have:

- Tabasco sauce
- Salt
- Pepper
- Q-tip
- Fire tube with compartment

Hope you enjoyed, and get outdoors!

Step 9: User Comments and Design Suggestions



(<http://cdn.instructables.com/FSK/B0H6/I6EXKHUA/FSKB0H6I6EXKHUA.LARGE.jpg>)

(<http://cdn.instructables.com/F31/PZO6/I6EXKHUC/F31PZO6I6EXKHUC.LARGE.jpg>)

First, thanks for the support and comments. You are what makes this community great!

Ok, so with so many comments I am adding this so that I can answer and address many questions at once.

Folding to make compartment:

Thanks to users: hnaraghi and WilliamB14
(<http://cdn.instructables.com/FZE/VO6F/I6EXKHU8/FZEVO6FI6EXKHU8.LARGE.jpg>)

Yes you can simply fold the straw, or put two equal lengths together and melt to make compartments. This design though may cause the straws to be compressed, as you can see from the images. Maybe this would work better with a different straw. Great suggestions. My personal preference is separates.

Strike anywhere matches ignition:

Thanks to users: ElectroFrank, Algag, J3DImindTRIP, anode505, mgalyean, and wobler
(<http://cdn.instructables.com/FU5/F6NJ/I6EXKLXV/FU5F6NJI6EXKLXV.LARGE.jpg>)

The concern was placing the head of two strike anywhere matches together. In my personal experience with this method, I have had no problem. However, being a scientist, I had to test it.

I rubbed the matches inside the tube twisting the base. I forced the match heads together in quick twists. Nothing. I did this for about 3 minutes. But I kept going. I noticed that the heads were wearing and created a fine powder from all the friction. After about 1 minute of this power forming, the matches ignited. (See photo) They did not burn but simple ignited and went out. I suspect the power was the key here.

So is it possible they can ignite? YES! However, Is it probable? I'm going to say no. The amount of friction and twisting to get that was kinda crazy. If that was happening in your pocket, you just went through the worst ride of your life and are probably dead. However, let it be known, use at your own risk.



We have a **be nice** comment policy.
Please be positive and constructive.

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1-40 of 81 [Next »](http://www.instructables.com/id/Fire-Tubes-Original-and-New-Compartment-Design/?&sort=ACTIVE&limit=40&offset=40#DISCUSS) (<http://www.instructables.com/id/Fire-Tubes-Original-and-New-Compartment-Design/?&sort=ACTIVE&limit=40&offset=40#DISCUSS>)

 **mderusha** (</member/mderusha/>) 4 days ago [Reply](#)
those 3ft long pixie stick straw would be sweet.
</member/mderusha/> maybe a spot of hot glue for a seal. Unless it's too hot for the plastic. If you put a plug in one end you could make a gun that used them as cartridges.



3 days ago

Reply

How could I have missed the giant pixie stix. That is a fantastic idea!

(/member/Not-Dead+Undead/)



Berkana (/member/Berkana/)

3 days ago

Reply

Try using char cloth instead of cotton soaked in petroleum jelly. char cloth sprayed with melted candle wax is best. It catches fire extremely easily, and with a little bit extra air, it bursts into flames.

Char cloth: DIY Emergency Fire Starter (Char Cloth):

<http://youtu.be/8Makaciz3Xc>



TampaGeek (/member/TampaGeek/)

18 hours ago

Reply

Someone may have already suggested this, but instead of trying to seal "compartments" into the straws I just make the individual components and then seal THOSE up in a larger diameter straw. Keeps things separated, twice the water protection from the outside, etc. Loved the overall concept ever since I read the original instructable, and use it for a lot of camping and emergency preparedness uses. (For what it's worth, the big Icee straws work wonders as the outermost part.)



gdf55 (/member/gdf55/)

yesterday

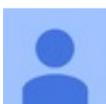
Reply

Former and current Boy Scout here. I'm tempted to do some tinder experiments to see if vaseline-soaked cotton works better than dryer lint. But there's still a better choice.

There are two qualities to good tinder. One is obviously that it lights easily with a match. Any of the materials suggested here do so. But the other quality, less appreciated, is that it will continue to burn long enough to get your kindling started, even when it's damp.

To that end, A CANDLE works better than any tinder you can come up with. We've made firestarters with melted wax and sawdust in paper egg-carton slots (use a candle for the wax, and save the wick to stick in your firestarter mold). They burn a very long time and you'd have to be really incompetent not to get a fire started with that kind of helper.

So in this case, I suggest using a birthday candle instead of tinder! Better yet, use one of those trick candles that can't be blown out. It could go in its own compartment, or its own fire tube, or even in the same tube as the matches. Why not? And because they aren't vaseline-impregnated, you aren't getting the inside of your tube goopy.



rjcullis (/member/rjcullis/) gdf55

19 hours ago

Reply

As a former Akela, Scouter, & Venturer advisor I too have used a lot of different fire starters. I like these little pouches 'cause they give you a dry first start. I would follow this with dry birch bark if it was around 'cause that stuff lights fast and burns real hot. Candles are fine but they are not all that hot and do not always get the larger pieces of wood going before you've gone through a lot of your candle.



gdf55 (/member/gdf55/) gdf55

yesterday

Reply

Oh yeah - and in a pinch, you have an emergency birthday cake surprise kit. Just add cupcake!



ElectroFrank (/member/ElectroFrank/)

yesterday

Reply

(/member/ElectroFrank/)

Just a thought: Your match experiment leads on my train of thought - suppose everything is very wet - are there any two chemicals that could be sealed in, and would ignite when mixed together to provide fire, in the manner of a glow stick ?

Or maybe that's a bit too dangerous ?



GJ_Token (/member/GJ_Token/) ElectroFrank

yesterday

Reply

(/member/GJ_Token/)

Potassium Manganese (? - purple crystals) & Glycerin does this if I'm not mistaken

Problem being if you're trying to put this in a "compartment" tube, the join would need to be sufficient to prevent any leakage between them, even under pressure (like if you sat on it, or it got crushed in your backpack) or protected from shock some other way as to prevent accidental ignition.



rjcullis (/member/rjcullis/) GJ_Token

19 hours ago

Reply

(/member/rjcullis/)

The chemical is Potassium Permanganate. You can mix this with Glycerine or automotive antifreeze (glycol based) and get a hot flame within seconds.

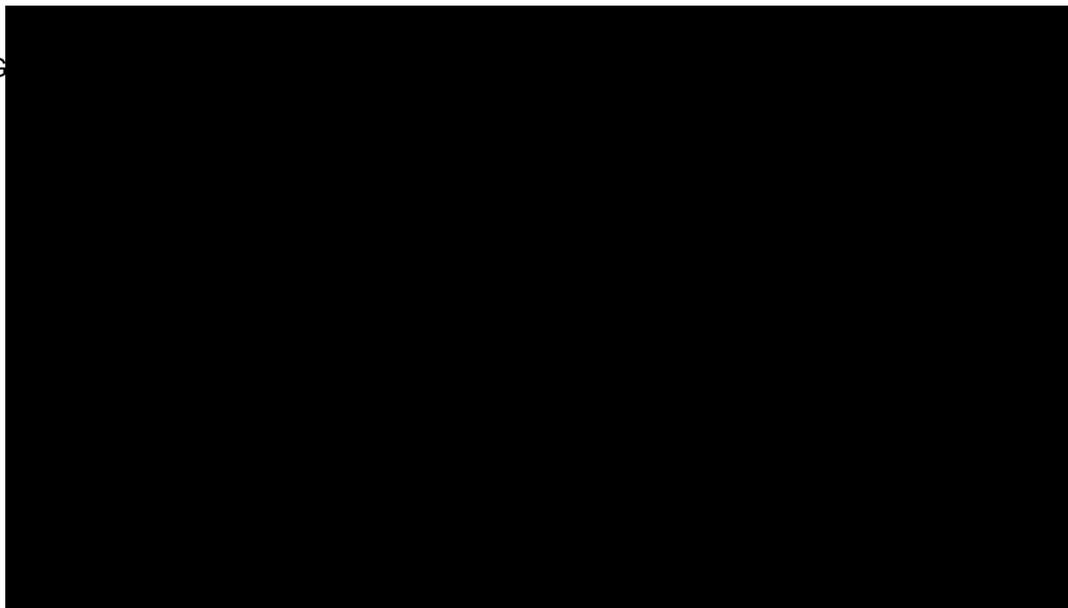


GJ_Token (/member/GJ_Token/) ElectroFrank

yesterday

Reply

(/member/GJ_Token/)



ElectroFrank (/member/ElectroFrank/) GJ_Token

20 hours ago

Reply

(/member/ElectroFrank/)

This video is not appearing. Is it working for anyone else ?



cnludwig (/member/cnludwig/)

20 hours ago

Reply

(/member/cnludwig/)

This would work well for storing garden seeds. You could put a slip of paper in with the seeds for identification.



MasonT2 (/member/MasonT2/)

yesterday

Reply

(/member/MasonT2/)

This is seriously one of the best instructables I've seen, so simple too!



J3DImindTRIP (/member/J3DImindTRIP/)

5 days ago

Reply

I would suggest rotating one of the matches, if the heads rub it may ignite.

(/member/J3DImindTRIP/) Some matches are very sensitive.



GeckoHiker1 (/member/GeckoHiker1/)

J3DImindTRIP

2 days ago

Reply

Safety matches aren't supposed to ignite unless struck across the glass particles of the striker surface of the box they are packed in.

(/member/GeckoHiker1/)

However, strike anywhere matches can ignite when rubbed against anything. So you are right, the matches should be carried into the field with the heads set opposite to each other. That's one of the reasons why many people cover match heads in wax before packing them for survival or backpacking.



snoopindaweb (/member/snoopindaweb/)

GeckoHiker1

yesterday

Reply

I was in the Boy Scouts in the late 50's early 60's. Mrrick497 is most

(/member/snoopindaweb/)

correct. We Scouts were taught, to water proof. That is when "Strike Anywhere" matches could be lit by lifting Your leg and lighting the match by quickly drawing it across the bottom of Your thigh. That was before "Safety Matches" where in a tight spot a person could depend on the match taking flame, I remember kids striking those matches on a tooth. A good old water proof metal Scout carrying case would serve with those matches back then, If a (Reactor Leak) would happen in that metal case, it may get hot but there wasn't enough oxygen in that case full of matches to support a long burning situation. Lord I miss those great old matches, before the Snivleing, Shivering, Hand Wringing, safety BY Their demand crew came along. "When Men were Men and Women were glad of it".



ToolboxGuy (/member/ToolboxGuy/)

GeckoHiker1

2 days ago

Reply

i was taught to quick dip strike anywhere matches with nail polish to

(/member/ToolboxGuy/)

prevent self starting.



bshep001 (/member/bshep001/)

ToolboxGuy

yesterday

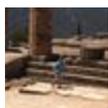
Reply

I have been coating match heads with wax and clear nail polish for

(/member/bshep001/)

years, but SOLELY for waterproofing. As far as self-ignition, I could put my time to better pursuits such as: finding insurance to protect me in case I get hit by meteors, lightning, or a bus. Sel-ignition: scientifically and theoretically possible; Yes, realistically likely to happen; No.

Aside from the worry of how you put the matches in, it was a good 'ible that showed good ideas for backpacking, survival, and EDC. Thank you.



Algag (/member/Algag/)

J3DImindTRIP

3 days ago

Reply

I have never seen this before. What would stop matches in a box from

(/member/Algag/)

igniting? Otherwise, would they even have enough oxygen in this environment to burn? Would they have enough to burn through the plastic?



(/member/ElectroFrank/)

2 days ago

Reply

There are two kinds of matches: Safety and Non-Safety. Safety matches are chemically designed to only strike on a matchbox. Non-Safety matches are designed to strike on any surface which provides sufficient friction.

Air is not needed to strike, only to burn the wood. Matches will (theoretically) strike and burn (just the head) in a vacuum, because the head contains a mixture of substances containing oxygen which burns by chemical reaction (without air).

It seems possible that non-safety matches could strike if crushed together, but they would not be loose in boxes if rattling would set them off.

Just in case you are in the woods with no rocks (or dry rocks) to strike matches on, how about including a strip of matchbox side striker ?



(/member/DavidM15/)

DavidM15 (/member/DavidM15/) ElectroFrank

yesterday

Reply

fire requires 3 things Air, Heat, and fuel. If you take any one of the 3 away you can not have a fire. So to say a fire could burn in a vacuum is not really true since you are missing one of the 3 requirements. That being said however you could have a chemical that provides oxygen (air) and could indeed have a fire in a vacuum.



(/member/ElectroFrank/)

ElectroFrank (/member/ElectroFrank/) DavidM15

yesterday

Reply

I said the head would burn, not the wood. Once again: Just like gun powder, a matchhead contains chemicals that include oxygen, otherwise it would not be able to flare up so quickly.

Fire requires oxygen and fuel to continue. The wood of a match requires air to burn, the the matchhead does not. Once the chemical reaction between oxygen and the other chemicals in a matchhead has started, it is fed by its own heat.



(/member/Not-Dead+Undead/)

Not-Dead Undead (/member/Not-Dead+Undead/) (author)

ElectroFrank

2 days ago

Reply

Thanks for the suggestion! I updated on Step 9, check out the results!



(/member/Not-Dead+Undead/)

Not-Dead Undead (/member/Not-Dead+Undead/) (author)

Algag

2 days ago

Reply

Thanks for the suggestion! I updated on Step 9, check out the results!



(/member/mrrick497/)

mrrick497 (/member/mrrick497/) Algag

2 days ago

Reply

When I was a Boy Scout we used to dip the tips of matches in hot candle wax. Very quickly. This would coat and not absorb into the tip. Matches would ignite easily even if they were under water for a short time. Light a large candle and when the melted pool forms, swipe them into the pool.



(/member/NotDead+Undead/)

I haven't had that happen.....yet. Maybe I have been playing it too fast and loose!

4 days ago

Reply



TeodoroC (/member/TeodoroC/)

yesterday

Reply

(/member/TeodoroC/)

A really awesome combo would be a little bit of glycerin in one straw and some potassium permanganate in the another! Be sure of the seals, though. For a fire just build a pile of tinder. Cut the potassium permanganate tube and dump on the contents into a pile in the middle of the soft tinder. Cut the end of the glycerine tube and squirt it a few drops onto the potassium. Toss some kindling on top immediately and stand back! Use the several seconds of time to reach for your camp mug, tea bag, and some water. ;-)



Lorax98 (/member/Lorax98/)

2 days ago

Reply

(/member/Lorax98/)

You mention "dryer lint". It is an excellent tinder if it does not contain lint from "fleece" clothing. Fleece lint melts into a lump and does not burn (as it is recycled plastic). Wash and dry all of your blue jeans (and cotton items) at the same time and use that lint for your tinder. it works great. Whatever tinder you intend to use, test burn a piece before you include the lint in your fire-making kit.



ccooper-burke (/member/ccooper-burke/)

Lorax98

yesterday

Reply

(/member/ccooper-burke/)

Yes. Only natural fiber lint is good for this(& it's actually GREAT for it!) The fumes from man made fibers can be highly toxic, when burned.



zpamelalee (/member/zpamelalee/)

yesterday

Reply

(/member/zpamelalee/)

Straw suggestion: clear, long, and thick plastic: Arby's straws



spark master (/member/spark+master/)

zpamelalee

yesterday

Reply

(/member/spark+master/)

finally a reason to go to Arby's, cus the food isn't.

very nice instructable. I have a "euro sealer" works on plastic bags takes practice, but these would be nice inside the tubes of a frame pack, protected from snapping. and they are waterproof!



zpamelalee (/member/zpamelalee/) made it!

yesterday

Reply

(/member/zpamelalee/)

Paraffin wax tipped strike-anywhere matches and paraffin wax soaked cotton ball. Cotton ball with paraffin burns for about 5 minutes.



(<http://cdn.instructables.com/F6H/TX82/I6GCWUVQ/F6HTX82I6GCWUVQ.LARGE.jpg>)

zpamelalee (/member/zpamelalee/)



This is a well done and very useful instructable. Thank you!

yesterday

Reply

(/member/zpamelalee/)



astrong0 (/member/strong0/)

yesterday

Reply

(/member/strong0/)

For sealing the seams I thought of poking a hole with a pin in one side of the straw and then squirting a tiny amount of superglue into the hole to glue the inside together. Just an idea.



kristinahoney (/member/kristinahoney/)

yesterday

Reply

(/member/kristinahoney/)

Were you by any chance using the test tubes to provide water to ants or to start queens?



Not-Dead Undead (/member/Not-Dead+Undead/) (author)

kristinahoney

yesterday

Reply

(/member/Not-Dead+Undead/)

Why yes I was! I'm surprised someone picked up on that.



fezzeryn (/member/fezzeryn/)

yesterday

Reply

(/member/fezzeryn/)

One thing i do with my straws is i make a dry rub for meat or mix spices that i can throw in my pack. I have been camping where we rely on what we catch/trap for dinner. The meat was not good but the spice mix cover the taste. Also worked gret for dish soap.



SpinninJenny (/member/SpinninJenny/)

yesterday

Reply

(/member/SpinninJenny/)

This was a great method, for small items. I used to do a similar thing many years ago when I was actively camping. As it is, I learned to plan ahead so I didn't have to take all the original containers of things like coffee cans or jars, creamer, sugar bags, and instant cocoa boxes. I used my Seal-a-Meal and pre-made bags. I created a heat sealed compartment on the vertical, sometimes with a second close seal, so I could cut them apart. Using a funnel, I filled the compartments with instant coffee, sugar and creamer, for my husband's morning coffee, and did the same for cocoa for the kids. I also used it to keep my salt and sugar from turning into a lumps in the humidity of the mountains. I sealed my fire starters the same way, with a bit of lint, some scrap pieces of newspaper, and strike anywhere matches. I measured out pancake mix, biscuit mix and made my own boil-in-a-bag meals. I wore out my original vacuum sealer and bought a second, that's still going strong. This was a very interesting adaption. Keep up the good work. I love this site!!



saversa (/member/saversa/)

yesterday

Reply

(/member/saversa/)

It's a pretty ingenious instructable. Thank you!

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of 81

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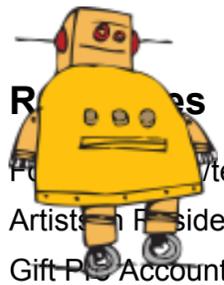
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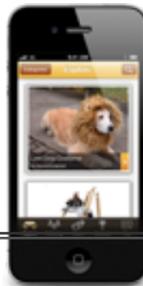
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