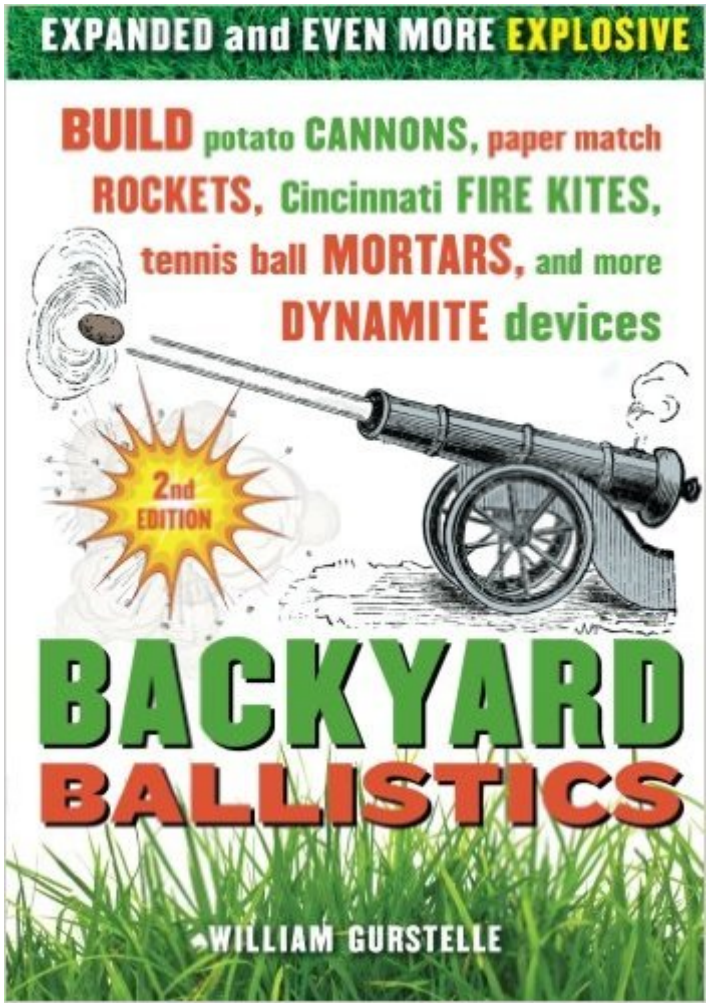
Backyard Ballistics: Build Potato Cannons, Paper Match Rockets, Cincinnati Fire Kites, Tennis Ball Mortars, And More Dynamite Devices



Synopsis

This bestselling DIY handbook now features new and expanded projects, enabling ordinary folks to construct 16 awesome ballistic devices in their garage or basement workshops using inexpensive household or hardware store materials and this step-by-step guide. Clear instructions, diagrams, and photographs show how to build projects ranging from the simple match-powered rocket to the more complex tabletop catapult and the offbeat Cincinnati fire kite. The classic potato cannon has a new evil twin-the piezo-electric spud gun-and the electromagnetic pipe gun has joined the company of such favorites as the tennis ball mortar. With a strong emphasis on safety, the book also gives tips on troubleshooting, explains the physics behind the projects, and profiles scientists and extraordinary experimenters such as Alfred Nobel, Robert Goddard, and Isaac Newton. This book will be indispensable for the legions of backyard toy-rocket launchers and fireworks fanatics who wish every day was the fourth of July.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (224 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

This is a great resource book for pyromaniacs who want to expand their horizons.The highlight of this book is the chapter on the venerated potato cannon (a.k.a. spud gun). The author presents a simple yet effective design and gives detailed instructions on how to construct it. I have seen a number of designs on the web, and I prefer this for it parsimonious design. I have "launched" a number of spuds with this cannon, and am perfectly pleased with its operation.Other projects include back porch rocketry (the paper match rocket, the hydro pump rocket, and the pneumatic

missile), the Cincinnati fire kite, the Greek fire and the catapult, the tennis ball mortar, the flinger, Pnewton’s petard, the dry cleaning bag balloon, the carbide cannon, and the ballistic pendulum.The book is clearly written and illustrated (with drawings and black and white photographis). It contains a number of history vignettes along with some illustrations of ancient weapons. The remaining chapter includes some ideas for further study.While I highly recommend this book, please note that some of these projects (most notably the potato gun) are illegal in some states. In that case, this book would be for "reference" only.

This book is a wonderful resource for those boys who have graduated from Nerf and waterguns- and for those of us that never will. What struck me most was the sheer variety of projects in this book- from little rockets powered by a match(!) to monster potato guns, this book has everything. I built a potato gun similar to the one in this book several years ago, and have been looking for projects in the same vein. With this book, I’ve found them. I especially love the fact that he uses a variety of power sources- the traditional hair spray of the potato gun, air pressure, even chemical combustion.One of the unique things about this book, as compared to other similar books, is the emphasis on both safety and history. Safety is important for obvious reasons. But most readers are enthusiasts about this sort of stuff, and the history lessons are exciting.My only complaint is that there is no room in this book for any sort of modification to the designs. For example, there are formulas that can be used to determine the maximum chamber size for a PVC-constructed potato gun, and with this, you can design your own potato gun in relative safety. Unfortunately, the author insists that you stick strictly to his designs. This appears to be an effort to ensure that all of the "toys" created with his book are safe, so that’s only a minor complaint.Can’t wait to start lobbing tennis balls!

What a wonderful boys book--boys from 9 to 90 will get a bang out of these projects. The author presents enough safety information to be reasonable, and mixes in scientific explanations, a bit of math, and interesting anectdotes that take us back into the history of ballistics. But most of all, he presents details plans and parts lists (including sources for hard to find parts) to build things that shoot up into the air, things that go "BOOM," and other cool stuff like fire kites.Many of the projects described here are also well documented on the internet. But most internet postings have little to say about safety, science, or history. Using this book as a starting point, and the internet as a resource to expand the ideas, could lead one to develop a truly interesting ballistic arsenal indeed!!Before we had homeland security to worry about, this might have been a good source book

for a science fair. Now, it just might be a great way to spend a lifetime behind bars. But, if you're in touch with your inner Goddard, von Braun, or just love the idea of a tennis ball mortar ... then this is the book for you!

This is a great book. Just from skimming through it you can tell that a lot of thought and precaution went into it's construction. Parents may be scared seeing a book like this in the hands of their child, but don't be frightened. Most of the projects in here are pretty innocuous and saftey is paramount. The book and author STRESS proper precautions and advise saftey gear for any dangerous experiments. If you have a kid who has been playing with fire, been showing a disturbing interest in explosives or such, then buy them this book and do these projects with them! It will give kids a productive, educational and supervised outlet for these curiosities and fascinations and will give you a chance to teach them a bit about physics and further bond with them. Some young pyros grow into arsonists, others grow into firemen and physicists... you make the choice! Instead of punishing them and trying to curb their interest in such things, channel this energy into something positive.From the perspective of an adult or adolesent this book is still great. Fun projects and lots of information make for a fun read, and an even more fun summer project. Science teachers and the like will love this book as some of these projects could prove wonderful classroom demonstrations to aid in teaching and more importantly, in getting kids' attention and perhaps sparking an interest.Great book. more stuff like this might help the curb effects of all the negative stuff out there like the Anarchist's Cookbook and all those [explosive] websites.A big five stars!

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