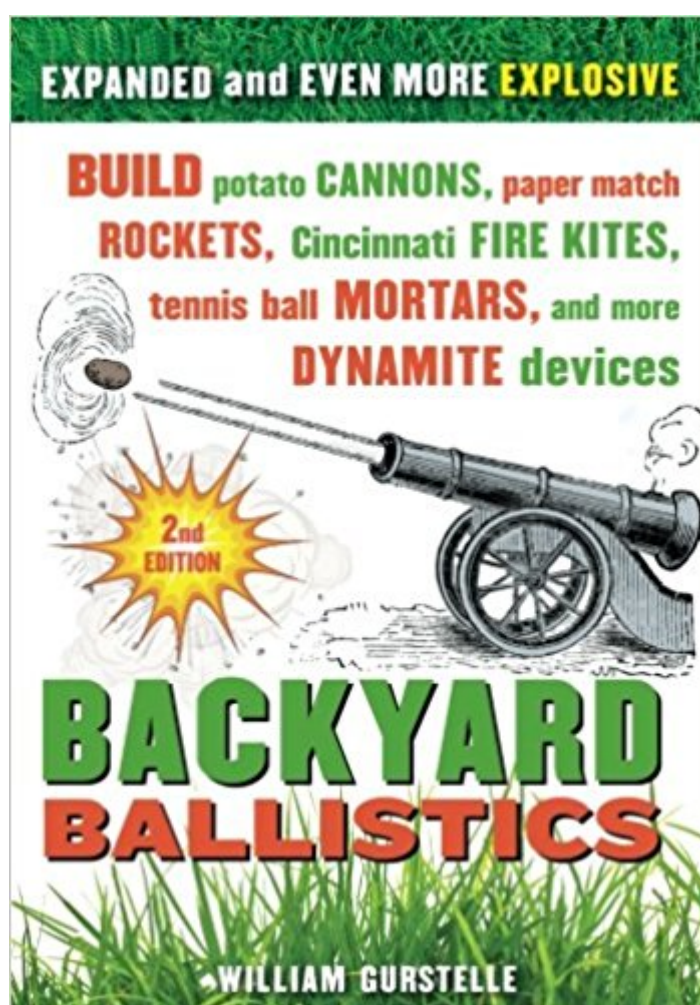


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# Backyard Ballistics: Build Potato Cannons, Paper Match Rockets, Cincinnati Fire Kites, Tennis Ball Mortars, And More Dynamite Devices



## 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

Age Range: 9 and up

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## Customer Reviews

• Fun and potentially dangerous, this is sure to be a hit at most public libraries. Recommended. Bring your own safety goggles."• "Library Journal"• A great primer for the would-be engineer, and a wonderful chance for bonding among like-minded parents and children . . . Great fun!• "• "Courier-Journal"• How is it possible not to love a book with chapter titles like 'Back Porch Rocketry' and 'Greek Fire and the Catapult?' I devoured this prodigious account of all things explosive."• "Homer Hickam, author of Rocket Boys"• Would-be rocketeers, take note: Engineer William

Gurstelle has written a book for you." Â Â "Chicago Tribune"If you want to make a potato souffl ©, pick up a book by Julia Child. If you want to decorate your holiday cards with hand-cut potato stamps, look to a Martha Stewart manual. If, however, you'd like to launch a potato in a blazing fireball of combusting hairspray from a PVC pipe, your best source is Backyard Ballistics, by William Gurstelle." Â Â "Time Out New York"Your inner boy will get a bang out of these 13 devices to build and shoot in your own back yard, some of them noisy enough to legally perk up a 4th of July."Â Â "Dallas Morning News

William Gurstelle is the author of Absinthe & Flamethrowers; The Art of the Catapult; Building Bots; The Practical Pyromaniac; Notes from the Technology Underground; and Whoosh, Boom, Splat. He is a professional engineer who has been researching and building model catapults and ballistic devices for more than 30 years and is a contributing editor at Popular Mechanics and Make magazine and writes frequently for Wired, The Rake, and several other national magazines. He lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Â I bought this book for my 6th grader nephew for Christmas. All the men (ages 12-55) spent time that Christmas day looking through the book and dreaming about making one of the projects! I also bought my nephew the stuff to build one of the projects -- the water rocket. He built it a few days later with the help of his grandpa and enjoyed it quite a bit. I only gave it four stars instead of five because I think all of the projects will require an adult to work with him and also require tools that not everyone may have. The parts lists are kind of long too, although some folks will have a lot of the stuff just lying around if they do a lot of home improvement stuff. So if someone in your family is "handy" and willing to help out a kid with the projects, it's a great gift and teaches lots of science, physics, mechanics.

We've had this book since 2012. As homeschooling parents of seven, we wanted to do more hands on science experiments with them. I also wanted to get my husband to do some of the teaching. Most of the projects we tried went very well, but a few did not perform as they should have even though we followed the directions and tried multiple times. Some of the items for other projects weren't easily obtained, so we had to make adaptations. Overall, we are very pleased with the book. It has helped us teach our children in a fun manner, made science very engaging, and has encouraged family time. -W

The most impressive book I've seen of it's type. The projects in it are mostly inexpensive to put together and require few special skills for great results. Caution is recommended when building projectile weapons of course, but if you've got a teen or a husband who loves these sort of things, they will find something they want to try in here. My favorite projects are the tennis ball mortars and the paper match rockets. The mortars because the section explains the difference between mortars and cannons and the project itself is a wonderful hands-on experiment for trajectory and how gravity effects it. The paper match rocket is minimal supplies and easy to put together and shows how a struck match creates energy in the form of heat which launches the miniature rocket. The science behind each project is well explained, and there is a lot of history about the scientists who came up with some of the most pivotal theories about physics and how they tested them. Recommended with adult supervision for middle school and high school children. It's not deeply technical and it's very accessible even for teens who aren't really interested in science. Also recommended for husbands who like to build things that go boom and are interested in science.

This one is a classic. Every adolescent boy needs this book. It's mischievous fun with some learning thrown in. Both of my boys loved the experiments. The potato cannon is the granddaddy of them all. They're in their 20's now and still have them. I just gave a copy to our 10 year old nephew. Hope he likes it as much too.

I'm not sure about this book? My son and I did a few projects or at least tried to without much luck. There's one project that requires 120V, this isn't for kids. If you're using 120V in a project you better know what you're doing.

Received within a few days. The book is made well. Decent paper, type is clear, big, and double spaced. Good illustrations. The author clearly enjoys his projects. Easy (too easy; must concentrate not to skip over) reading with safety and history injected. Each project is clearly defined, including background, material lists, sources, resources, tips, and the sciences & history applied. The book is written for those that don't have a clue. Though I've done most of this in my youth without the step by step instructions with no ill effects, it's good using the authors protocols with my grandson.

I purchased this as a gift for my brother for Christmas. He was super excited and I'm sure will have lots of fun with it. My SIL was less than thrilled, but she'll be ok.

I wasn't sure my 14 year old nephew would like a book, seeing as how everything is digital now, but he loved it. His dad even got excited that there was something he could do with his son. This is a great idea to get them away from the screen and doing something with their hands.

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