

Tools for Rolling and Filling .58 Cal Cartridges

By Lew Zervas, June 26, 2004

This article tells you how create the tools for rolling and filling cartridge tubes for use in .58 caliber muskets.

Description:

Paper tubes are used to hold black powder as "loads" for Civil War era muskets while reenacting.

Safety:

Extreme caution should be used in handling and storing black powder, and the disposal of any material used in the construction of cartridges. This includes the storage of finished tubes. This instruction is for information only and the author assumes no responsibility for errors and mishandling by the user.

Materials needed:

- 1/2-inch wood dowel.
- 1-1/4-inch diameter wood ball (craft shop).
- 1/2-inch outside diameter plastic tubing 1-inch long(Home Depot plumbing area).
- 30-06 brass cartridge casing.
- Small (1/8 – 1/4-inch) diameter copper or brass (tubing or solid).

Making tools (first photo):

Drill hole in wood ball to accept dowel end. Epoxy in place. File and sand other end down so it will light press fit into tubing. Tubing should extend about 3/8-inch past end of dowel.

Cut brass cartridge where the straight side reduces diameter. Solder copper/brass tube to cartridge. This will hold about 65gr. powder.



Roll Paper (photos two – five):

Roll paper over dowel, slip off about 5/8-inch, then twist end while holding the paper on the dowel from moving.

Press twisted stub toward end of dowel on a hard surface, forcing stub into hollow area of tubing.

Note the neat twisted end of paper tube is now recessed.



Dipping Paper:

(Per other instruction.)

Filling Tubes:

Pour 65 gr. of black powder in each tube using the tool described here. This tool eliminates the need for a funnel as it can be complete inserted into the cartridge tube. Fold the end of end of the tube at least twice, then put a "V" fold perpendicular to that to prevent unfolding.