

MILITARY MEDIA INC.

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BLACKPOWDER

You will need potassium or sodium nitrate, sulfur, and hardwood charcoal. The common name for potassium nitrate is saltpeter. Sodium nitrate is sold at farm supplies under the name of nitrate of soda. It is also called chile saltpeter. Sodium nitrate make a slightly more powerful black powder but has a disadvantage because it will absorb moisture from the air. So, if you use it then be sure to store it in a dry, air tight container. You also can get sulfur at farm supplies as a **wetable** powder used for spraying. It is cheap and works well. Some drug stores sell sulfur under the name of flowers of sulfur. If you use nitrate of soda, it will be in the form of little round beads. Bake it in an oven at 200 degrees for 10-15 minutes to drive out the moisture. Then dump a cup or two into a blender and switch it on. It will do a beautiful job of reducing it to powder. Buy a bag of charcoal briquettes at a grocery store. Put a few briquettes in a rag and pound with a hammer. Dip the results into the blender, grind, and strain through a tea strainer. Mix by volume:

6 parts potassium or sodium nitrate.
2 parts powdered charcoal
1 part sulfur

This mixture will burn if ignited and will explode if ignited while tightly confined. It can be greatly improved, however, by processing it as follows:

Moisten with water until it will stick together when pinched between thumb and finger.

Press it into a disposable aluminum pie pan.

Bake it in a **preheated** oven at 200 degrees for about 30 minutes.

Get it totally dry. Grind into a fine powder as possible with a mortar and pestle.

If you use a blender at this point, there is a danger of explosion. It is not very sensitive to friction or impact, but is very sensitive to sparks.

If you followed these directions, you should have a fine slate gray powder .