

## PREPARATION OF PICRIC ACID FROM ASPIRIN

Picric acid can be used as a booster explosive in detonators

### MATERIAL REQUIRED:

Aspirin tablets (5 grains per tablet)  
Alcohol, 95% pure  
Sulfuric acid, concentrated, (battery  
acid - boil until white fumes  
appear)

Potassium Nitrate

Water

Paper towels

Canning jar, 1 pint

Rod (glass or wood)

Glass containers

Ceramic or glass dish

Cup

Teaspoon

Tablespoon

Pan

Heat Source

Tape

1. Crush 20 aspirin tablets in a glass container. Add 1 teaspoon of water and work into a paste.

2. Add approximately  $\frac{1}{3}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of alcohol (100 milliliters) to the aspirin paste; stir while pouring.
3. Filter the alcohol-aspirin solution through a paper towel into another glass container. Discard the solid left on the paper towel.
4. Pour the filtered solution into a ceramic or glass dish.
5. Evaporate the alcohol and water from the solution by placing the dish into a pan of hot water. White powder will remain in the dish after evaporation.
6. Pour  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup (80 milliliters) of concentrated sulfuric acid into a canning jar. Add the white powder to the sulfuric acid.
7. Heat canning jar of sulfuric acid in a pan of simmering hot water bath for 15 minutes; then remove jar from the bath. Solution will turn to a yellow-orange color.
8. Add 3 level teaspoons (15 grams) of potassium nitrate in three portions to the yellow-orange solution; stir vigorously during additions. Solution will turn red, and then back to a yellow-orange color.
9. Allow the solution to cool to ambient or room temperature while stirring occasionally.

10. Slowly pour the solution, while stirring, into 1-1/4 cup (300 milliliters) of cold water and allow to cool.

11. Filter the solution through a paper towel into a glass container. Light yellow particles will collect on the paper towel.

12. Wash the light yellow particles with 2 tablespoons (25 milliliters) of water. Discard the waste liquid in the container.

13. Place particles in ceramic dish and set in a hot water bath, as in step 5, for 2 hours.