

Steel wool sparkler

Iron is combustible

You will need....

- ✓ Steel wool
- ✓ 9V Battery
- ✓ Baking tray

Background:

The iron in the steel wool is finely divided and therefore it burns more readily than a block of iron.

Follow these steps:

1. Pull apart the steel wool until it is the size of a tennis ball.
2. Place the steel wool in the baking tray.
3. Touch the steel wool with the terminals of the battery.

So what happened?

Electric current heats some wires which ignite. A sparkling fire spreads through the loose ball of steel wool.

What next?

1. Even the Scouts manuals recommend starting a fire using this equipment rather than the traditional method of using a flint and steel.

2. This demonstration can be used to show how fuses work and the effect of current passing through thin wires.

Safety

- ! Care should be taken with naked flames.

