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B.C.B. Matchless Fire Set

Tjin

- Gear reviews and tests - Emergency and survival -



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Description :

Backup fire kit.

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B.C.B. Matchless Fire Set

The B.C.B. Matchless Fire Set is a light weight and compact set, it appears to be mend as a backup fire starting kit. To make fire with, without matches. If used properly it's claimed to outlast a box of matches. It's contents are put in a small tin, which is taped shut. I first bought one of these kits many years ago, when i mine interest of survival and bushcraft was just starting. Actually when I bought it, I though it was a PSK. Until I opened the package, that's because I bought one with French/German packaging. I was and I still am very bad with those 2 languages.



Size comparison Left firesteel, middle the matchless fire set and right a altoid tin.

I recently found one discounted to just 50 euro cents! Identical to the one I bought many years ago. Reviewed here is that old model.

The Contents are:

- ▶ Ranger Firelighting Flint (Ferrocerium rod with striker)
- ▶ Esbit blocks (hexamine)
- ▶ Compressed cotton wool
- ▶ Tape to close the tin

Now-days there are 2 versions available; a "Normal" and a "NATO" version. The "normal" version has a plastic container and less tinder than the other "NATO" version. The "NATO" version has a metal container and more tinder.



The tin opened. Firesteel for size comparison



The tin with the contents

The idea of this kit is to light fire's with the supplied Ferrocerium rod; the Ranger Firelighting Flint. You should always try to find some natural tinder to use first. If you can not find good tinder, you can use some of the cotton wool. If you don't have good kindling either you have the esbit to get the fire started. Making fire lighting possible in many conditions.

When I first bought it I tried to use the ranger flint, it was my first Ferrocerium rod, so I had a lot to learn. They weren't marketed as well, they weren't easily available and good detailed information was hard to find. First tries to light cotton wool was disastrous. It wouldn't light. I was sitting and try to throw sparks 30cm away from the tinder. I only noticed what i was doing wrong when i was trying to light tinder on the kitchen sink while standing, it would light! But why? Distance! I now know that you have to put you Ferrocerium rod as closely, if not in to the pile of tinder. Pretty logical, since sparks cools down very rapidly. But nobody told me that...

I have had loads and loads of Ferrocerium rods after mine first one. I have both the old and new model of the ranger flint, they perform just as well. The newer model is overall slightly shorter, but the rod is just as long. The rod on the newer one can be scrapper further deeper than the old one, increasing the lifespan of the rod. They are harder to master when compared to Ferrocerium rods from the brand Firesteel. The Ranger Firelighting Flint will not easily light harder kinds of tinder easily like dried grass, paper or scrapped fatwood.

After figuring out that, lighting good tinder was easy. The supplied cotton wool is compressed in to a square shaped, but without plastic packaging. Not sure what the newer model have, on the manufacture website you can see tampons on there picture. No waterproofing of the cotton wasn't a really big problem. Yes, wet cotton is pretty useless and some plastic wouldn't hurt. But the tin is sealed with tape to give it good water resistance. Just tape it properly shut after opening it. The tape on mine was a little brittle, but it's pretty old tape. Looks like electrician tape, but thicker.

The Esbit is stored in a small zip-loc bag. The newer one's appears to have blister type of packaging, but I'm not sure. Mine has 6 rectangular piece of esbit. Each can be broken in the middle to double the amount of blocks. They can not be lighted by sparks directly. Some people say that scrapping some of the esbit will create some powder that will light from sparks, but I never tried that. I usually use some cotton wool to light esbit. Mine old model tin has sharp edges and i managed to cut my finger open once. But the newer model seems to have rounded edges.

Conclusion: Want a simple system that will light fire in most conditions? This kit will do it, but i personally would prefer

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better tinder than plain cotton wool. Petroleum jelly infused cotton wool will burn much longer and there are also good commercially tinders available. Also I would like to see more means to light a fire. The price of the "normal" version is +/- 6 pounds, which is OK. But the NATO version is +/- 11 pounds, you could make your own version for about the same amount of money or even less. I carry a big variety of tinders and fire lighting equipment when I go in to the wilderness. I would NOT recommend having only this kit as your only mean to light fire. If this kit fails you, you will have a problem. Remember Murphy's rules: one is not, two is one.

manufacture website [here](#)

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