

How to avoid a Kaboom

First ,what is a kaboom? That is a term that is used among shooters and reloaders to describe a serious malfunction that blows up a gun or a barrel. Sometimes with disastrous consequences.

Kabooms can be caused by several things. One is firing a gun when the barrel is obstructed. This can happen if a barrel gets jammed into mud or snow.

Sometimes a round that had no powder in it, called a squib, leaves the bullet in the barrel, then if another round is fired ----- **Kaboom.**

Another cause is an accidental double charge of powder. The reloader somehow gives a casing a double charge. Nasty! When its fired ----- **Kaboom**

How to avoid these problems? In every case, watch how you point the gun so as to avoid plugging your barrel with snow or mud. If you stumble and fall with a gun, it is worth your time to make sure you didn't accidentally plug your barrel. **Check it every time.**

If you fire a round and just get a little pop, (a squib), stop now and unload the gun and make certain the barrel is clear. No exceptions. Just do it. **Never fire another round after a squib until you have checked the barrel.**

Now to the reloaders among us. Here are some tips that will insure that you never get squibs nor double charges. Use a powder that nearly fills the case. Then it is impossible to get a double charge. Double check the setting of your scale. Don't accidentally overcharge. If you use a progressive press, use a powder check die.

Always use a published load from a trusted source. Always start at the bottom of the chart and work up toward maximum with caution, checking for high pressure signs as you go. .

If you load with a single stage press, always use a loading board. Drop powder into enough casings to fill the board, then hold the board under the light so you can see into the casings and see to it that each has powder and none have a double charge. Then set the board down by the press and make sure you have no other casings within reach, and then seat bullets. The reason I say keep all other casings out of reach is that it is so easy to just grab another casing that is just sitting there with no powder in it and seat a bullet on it. This is how squibs come to be.

If you are loading handgun ammo and the casings are belled, you can set a bullet on each casing in the board, after checking the powder levels. Then seat the bullets.

Only one can of powder on the bench at a time. Don't accidentally use the wrong powder or mix powders. When done with a batch pour the powder in the measure back into the can.

Always keep records and mark each batch of ammo with the date, bullet, powder, primer, etc.

This is not rocket science but it does require attention to detail, and good sound procedural practices to avoid problems. Let us safely pursue the hobby.