

Constructing Your Cotton Ball Launcher

Step 1: If you are using a paper towel tube, cut it in half. Most paper towel tubes are around 11", so measure 5½" from one end and cut. If you have 2 toilet-paper tubes, skip this step.

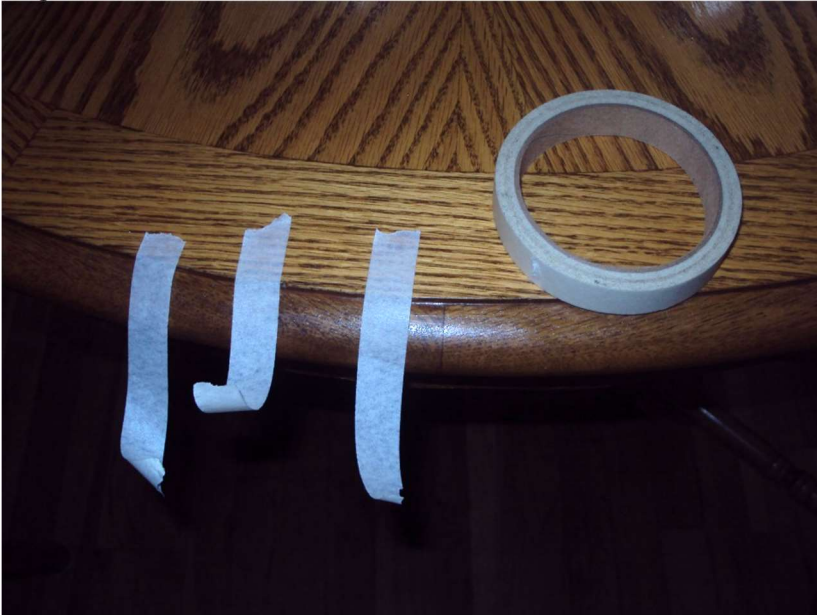


If one of the halves is slightly longer than the other, that's fine. Save the shorter half for the outside part of the launcher. Use the longer half for step 2.

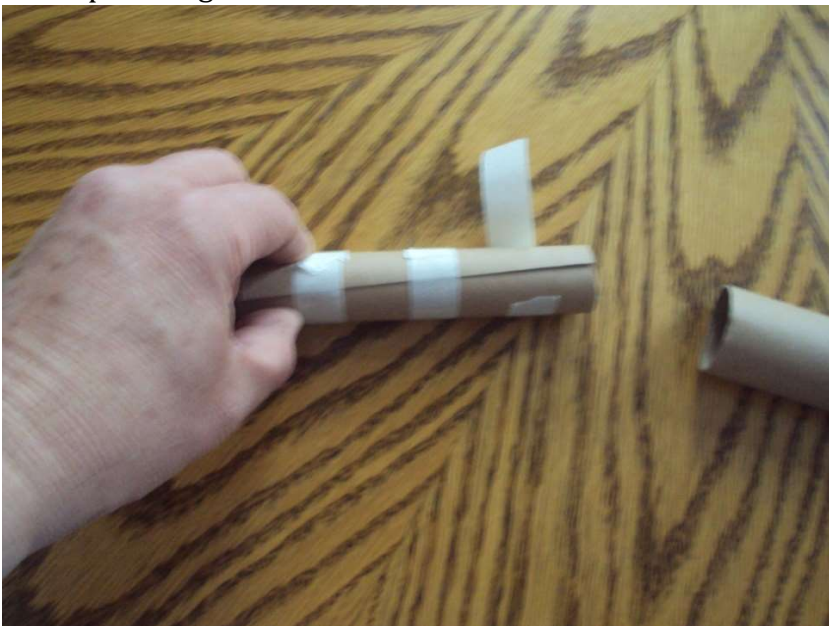
Step 2: Cut one of the tubes open lengthwise.



Step 3: Tear off three pieces of masking tape, each about 2½" to 3" long. Tuck one of the edges of the split tube inside the other. Overlap the edges so that this tube is narrower than the other tube.



Use the masking tape to tape this tube. Test to make sure it slides up and down inside the other tube easily. If it doesn't, remove the tape, overlap the edges more so that the diameter is smaller and then re-tape.



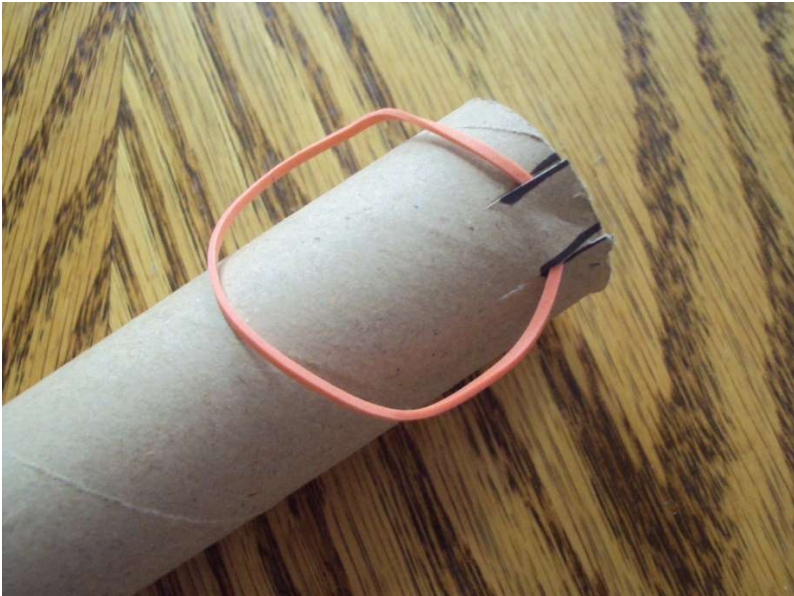
Step 4: Cut a slit about $\frac{1}{4}$ " long into the end of the other tube. Cut a second slit the same length about $\frac{1}{4}$ " away from the first slit. Then roll the tube over and do the same thing on the opposite side at the same end of the tube.



Notice these two flaps here.

The end of your tube should look like the photo on the right.

Step 5: Insert a rubber band into one of the flaps that you just cut and tape it in place. Then do the same thing to the other flap with a second rubber band. Set this tube aside for a moment.



Step 6: Poke a small hole in one end of the tube that you taped—the narrower tube—about ½” to 1” from one of the ends. Roll the tube over and do the same thing on the opposite side at the same end.



Step 7: Use a pencil to widen this hole just enough so that you can insert the pencil through one of the holes, through the tube and out the other hole.



Step 8: Put this tube into the end of the other tube opposite the rubber bands, and then loop the rubber bands over the pencil.



Your rubber band launcher is now complete. Pull back on the pencils, stuff a cotton ball inside and launch!

