

## **Technology V12/S3: The Invention of Gunpowder**



Gunpowder was the first explosive invented in history. Gunpowder was invented in China during the 9th century. It was originally used as a medicinal tonic by doctors to promote a long life. It has been referred to as the “elixir of life” and as “fire medicine”. Gunpowder began being used as a weapon when it was found to cause burns.

Gunpowder was mostly used in warfare. It was added to arrows and spears to make them stronger. Early versions of gunpowder were highly flammable but not explosive. Eventually, this led to the inventions of cannons, guns, and rockets, all of which rely on explosions to damage the intended target. The invention of gunpowder caused the invention of new types of weapons. Gunpowder gives one side more advantage over the others. Soon, gunpowder became an effective tool, whose technology was shared all over the world.

Other uses for gunpowder included fireworks, mining, and construction projects. Explosives are used when clearing out areas of dense earth or tearing down buildings that already exist to make way for new ones. Mining companies can dig faster using explosives. The mining of important materials has also led to advances in technology. Today, many countries use fireworks to celebrate important festivals.

