Molotov Cocktail Encyclopedia Article

Molotov Cocktail

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Molotov Cocktail

The Molotov cocktail was first used as a weapon during the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). This crude device consists of a bottle filled with flammable liquid--usually gasoline--stopped with an oily rag; the user simply has to ignite the rag and throw the bottle at his target. Named after the Soviet premier Vyacheslav M. Molotov (1890-1986), who ordered production of the device during World War II, molotov cocktails were used against advancing German tanks but were often ineffective. Because of their simplicity, molotov cocktails have become a standard projectile weapon for those without access to traditional military weapons.