

## Crucible

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Photograph of a crucible surrounded by fireplace coals. A crucible is a cup-shaped vessel used to heat metals to very high temperatures. Because crucibles must be capable of withstanding a great deal of heat, they are usually made of earthenware, or baked clay.

Early gunsmiths used crucibles to heat gun metal, making it flexible so they could form it into the shapes they wanted. This photograph was taken in a gunsmith's shop in Old Salem, North Carolina.



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