

JULY 4TH MASTER PACK: THE ULTIMATE SMOKE PHOTOGRAPHY & SAFETY GUIDE

Field Kit Edition | v2026.1

THE SAFETY MANIFESTO (7 Non-Negotiables)

Print this and keep it in your gear bag. Before you pull the ring, clear these gates.

1. **LEGALITY CHECK:** Federal law \neq Local law. Some cities have temporary "burn bans" during dry spells. Check your local fire department's Facebook page or website before heading out.
 2. **THE 10-FOOT RADIUS:** Maintain a clear circle of non-combustible ground (concrete, gravel, or ceramic tiles). Never pull on dry grass, wooden decks, or near vinyl siding.
 3. **WIND DIRECTION:** Atmospheric stewardship is key. Stand UPWIND of the smoke. If the wind is above 10mph, wait for a lull or your shot will be a blurry mess.
 4. **THE QUENCH BUCKET:** Always have a 5-gallon bucket of water within arm's reach. No exceptions.
 5. **PROPER GRIP:** Hold the unit at the base, away from the top vent. Never point the vent toward your face or another person.
 6. **RESPIRATORY SAFETY:** Do not inhale the smoke. If you are shooting in a low-wind environment, use a small fan or wait for the air to clear between pulls.
 7. **SOAK-TO-SAFE:** A "dead" smoke bomb is still a thermal hazard. Submerge the spent canister in water for at least 30 minutes before disposal.
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COLOR THEORY: THE PATRIOTIC STACK

How to get the "Big Screen" Americana look without the muddy overlap.

Strategy: The White Foundation

1. **PULL WHITE FIRST:** Start a white smoke bomb 10 seconds before your colors.
2. **THE REASON:** White smoke acts as a giant high-key reflector. It catches the sun and illuminates the edges of the Red and Blue plumes, making them pop.
3. **POSITIONING:** Place White furthest back, Red/Blue slightly forward and to the sides.

The Camera Settings (The "-1.0 Secret")

- **Manual Mode:** 1/125s, f/4.0, ISO 200.
 - **Exposure Compensation:** Set to **-0.7 or -1.0**.
 - **Why?** Smoke is highly reflective. Your camera will try to "save" the dark areas by blowing out the highlights. Intentionally underexposing preserves the texture and "folds" in the smoke clouds.
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NIGHT-SKY TUTORIALS (Twilight & Dark)

When the fireworks start, use these to steal the show.

1. The Car Headlight Halo

- Subject stands 10ft in front of car headlights.
- Pull White smoke behind the subject.
- The directional light rim-lights the smoke, creating a glowing "halo."

2. The Patriotic Silhouette

- Place Red and Blue units 5ft behind the subject.
- Point a powerful flashlight INTO the smoke toward the camera.
- The subject becomes a sharp black silhouette against a glowing patriotic cloud.

3. The "Light Painter" Long Exposure

- Tripod required. 4-second shutter speed, f/11, ISO 100.
- Pull Blue smoke and move it in a large circle around a still subject.

- The "trail" of smoke becomes a solid, glowing ring.
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INDEPENDENCE EXCLUSIVE: USA10

Use code **USA10** for 10% off at ShutterBombs.com.

Standard Ground Deadline: June 24th

Expedited Ground Deadline: June 28th

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