

Salvaging Throw Away Flash Cameras

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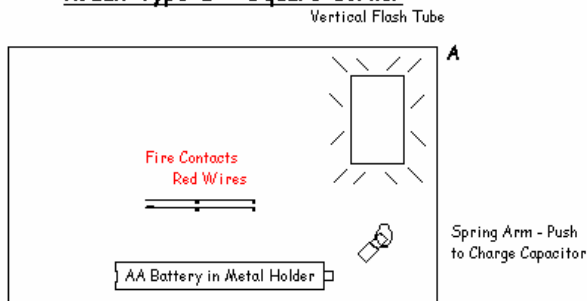
While bring in film for processing at a local mini-lab, I noticed that there was a bucket of 'one time use' camera bodies. I asked the clerk about them to see if they were being recycled. The answer was that the recycling procedure was complex and time consuming to the point that the used cameras were just thrown away in the trash. I saw several cameras that had flashes in the trash and asked if I could have them. They were happy to give them away. These little boxes are loaded with fun stuff, but need to be taken seriously.

CAUTION: HIGH VOLTAGE ON THE CAPACITOR AND FROM THE INVERTER INSIDE THESE CAMERAS. THIS HIGH VOLTAGE MAY CAUSE SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH. ONLY TAKE THESE CAMERAS APART AT YOUR OWN RISK.

I found that over time I was getting four types of cameras from my trips to the mini-lab (they would put aside the flash cameras for me to pick up a couple of times a week). The first was Kodak Type 1 (Fun Saver 35, Fun Time 35), Kodak Type 2 (Fun Saver Pocket Camera), Fuji Type 1 (Quick Snap Plus), and Fuji Type 2 (Quick Snap Super Flash). The different types are shown graphically below with instructions on how to remove each board with the flash attached. I have seen some Chinese screw together types lately, but have not taken the time to take them apart. I am sure that there are even more different types than these, but the basic procedures should work for most of them.

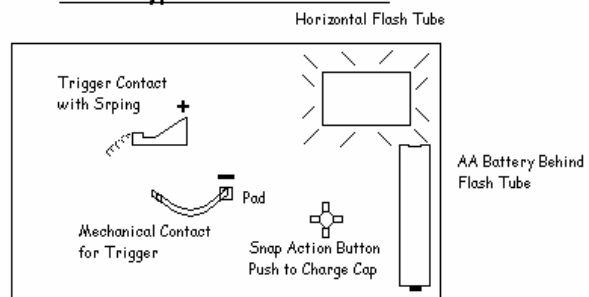
Inside the cameras, besides the flash unit, is a AA size battery that is still fairly fresh. The capacitors can be added in parallel to increase the output of the flash tube. It shortens the life of the flash tube, but there are always more in the salvage pile. Slaves can be added so that these units can be used for fill flash. Have fun, but be careful!

Kodak Type 1 - Square Corner



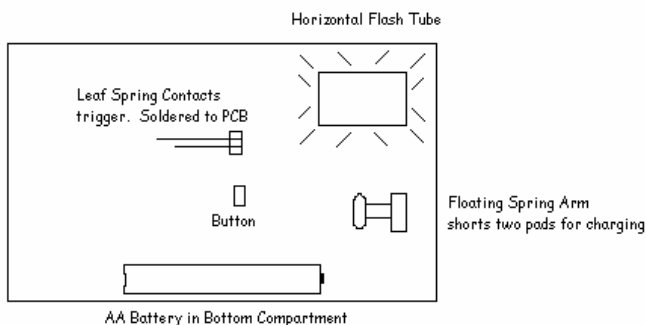
1. Remove Paper Cover
2. Pop off front
3. Remove Battery
4. Short Contacts (discharge cap)
5. Bend corner 'A'
6. Remove Flash

Kodak Type 2 - Round Corner



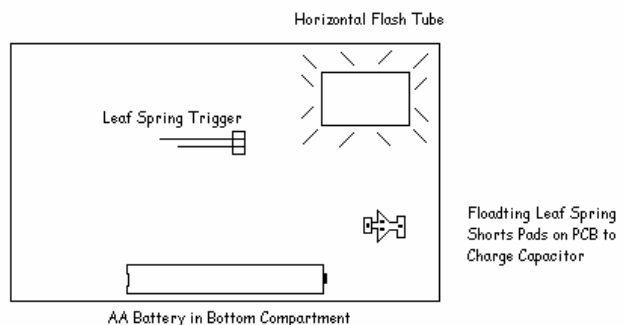
1. Use Screwdriver to remove battery and open camera
2. Wind Blue sprocket in film chamber to cock shutter
3. Fire camera with shutter to discharge cap
- 2a. OR short + to - to discharge cap
4. Remove Spring
5. Remove Flash

Fuji Type 1 - Square Corners



1. Remove Paper
2. Remove Battery
3. Remove Front - from left side
4. Short Contacts
5. Push button to left & remove flash

Fuji Type 2 - Round Corners Small Tube



1. Remove Paper
2. Remove Battery
3. Pull off Top
4. Lift out Flash