



<http://www.deathlord.net/JacobsLadder/jacobs.htm>

Jacob's Ladder



Everyone loves the part of the demented doctor's laboratory that makes the cool lightning bolts reach from one wire to the other that climbs to the top to eventually snap into thin air. This is a Jacob's Ladder. This was covered in the original Halloween-L archives, so I decided to give it a try for myself.

This is a very easy event to make for yourself, but one that requires the utmost of respect for the potential harm you could receive. While I'm sure a person could, in the right circumstances, survive the zap of 5,000 to 15,000 volts, it probably would NOT be an enjoyable experience at best. At worst it could leave you mumbling the same thing over and over and drooling at the mouth for the rest of your

already short human trek. If you already do these anyway, skip this disclaimer and go directly to the meat of your project. For the average tinker though, I urge caution. For those that decide this is the project for them, I recommend to first email me for my home address so you can send me a written document swearing to Allah that you won't hold me liable if you toast your chestnuts on your own bush fire.

I picked up a used neon sign transformer from a friend of mine that used to sell the signs for a living. I built up a base for the rectangular transformer to hide inside of and ran the wires to threaded rod that I mounted through the 3/4" plywood top of the box. I used brass thread stock as well as brass nuts and washers to pinch the wire tight. Then by bending a coat hanger to the appropriate length (between 10 and 15") I bolted the upper portion of the threaded rod to the hanger wire. You will notice the wire is bent to come close to one another at the base. This is about 1/4" for this particular transformer, but depending on the strength and size of the of yours you may be able to begin wider than that. I am using a weak-kneed little-girl of a transformer, so I have to start really close and

not get too wide or the spark wont start or if it does it wont climb to the top and snap off clean.

The coat hanger wire works alright for this event, but if you can find heavy copper wire you wont have to sand the surface rust off the wires each time you plug this in. I have noticed that this seems to have to "warm up" so don't be too concerned if the spark doesn't take off and race right up the wires as soon as you plug it in. I made another discovery upon completion of this and breaking two expensive hand-blown glass vases I tried to drill holes in the top of to screw it down to the housing. That is that the spark does NOT like to work with a glass cover over the wires. Take the glass off, and the spark jumps to life again. If I had to guess, I'd think the air being cut off to the spark is the culprit. That's just a guess though. Mine will be viewed through a window, so the TOTs wont get the opportunity to stick their hand in the spark and get killed. That WOULD be an exciting sight for all the other little children trick or treating with the victim but I'm not sure if other parents would bring their kids to my place again next year.

I hope your ladder turned out perfect. Let me know if you have any questions I can help with.

Rest In Pieces,

Death Lord

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