

How does a Glow Stick Glow?

Fluorescent Dyes

Fluorescent dyes are used to colour the glowstick. Green, yellow and orange glowsticks contain less dye and so glow brighter as a result.



Hydrogen Peroxide

This is contained in a very fine glass tube that floats within the mixture inside the glow stick.



tert-butyl Alcohol

A colourless liquid that's soluble in water. Often used in perfumes and food flavourings.



...inside the glow stick

CHEMILUMINESCENCE



Bend



Snap



Shake

When you bend a glowstick, it causes the 2 liquids to mix and starts a chemical reaction where light is created as a by product.

This process is known as CHEMILUMINESCENCE.

Electrons in the glowstick become excited and create a bright GLOW.

WooOo!

YEAHHH!

Over time (0-24 hours) the electrons drop back to their normal levels and gradually release less energy in the form of light making the glowstick slowly dim.

The process cannot be reversed but is sensitive to temperature and so will slow significantly when placed in a freezer, almost to the point of stopping, but will return to its usual speed and intensity once removed.



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