

# GADGET GUIDE: GUNS

Some heroes look on them with disdain, others use them as essential equalizers. All heroes have to deal with them sooner or later. Guns are the most common type of modern weapon, used by criminals, the authorities opposed to them, national armies, and the agents of criminal masterminds.

## GUN ACTIONS

Guns in *M&M* fall into three categories in terms of their action, or how quickly they fire.

- **Single Action:** Pulling the trigger of a single action weapon fires the round currently loaded into the weapon's firing chamber. Readyng the weapon to fire again may involve manually levering a new round into the chamber, cocking a hammer, or some similar action.
- **Semi-automatic:** A semi-automatic weapon fire and chambers a new round with a single pull of the trigger, allowing the weapon to fire fairly rapidly with multiple trigger pulls. There is little effective difference between single action and semi-automatic weapons in *M&M* game terms, apart from potential complications which can arise from malfunctioning equipment, which is more common in semi-automatic weapons.
- **Automatic:** A fully automatic firearm continues to fire so long as the trigger is pulled. Some automatic weapons can be set for burst fire, which fires a set number of rounds (typically three to five) with each trigger pull, to help conserve ammunition. Automatic weapons have the Multiattack modifier (*Hero's Handbook*, page 143).

Their ability to fire multiple rounds with a single trigger pull allows automatic weapons to perform all of the effects given for the Multiattack modifier: increased damage against a single target, hitting multiple targets by sweeping the attack across an area, and providing covering or "suppressing" fire for an ally.

## GUN TYPES

The following firearm categories discuss guns in general terms based on different configurations. The subtle differences between makes and models (or particular calibers or gauges) is largely irrelevant in a system like *MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS* except as descriptors and background color.



## PISTOLS

**Holdout pistol:** A palm-sized, typically low-caliber weapon, easily concealed and used as a backup, often worn in an ankle holster or hidden in a wrist holster.

**Light pistol:** A common semi-automatic handgun or small caliber revolver like the typical sidearm used by a police officer or detective licensed to carry a firearm.

**Heavy pistol:** A high-caliber handgun (semi-automatic or revolver) like the .357 Magnum or Desert Eagle.

## RIFLES

**Rifle:** A long-barrelled firearm, fired with both hands. Rifles typically have higher caliber, longer range, and a more stable firing stance, making them easier to aim. Some hunting rifles are single action (requiring manual reloading) while others are semi-automatic.

**Sniper Rifle:** A rifle designed for use at greater range, typically in conjunction with accessories like a targeting scope and a tripod or other stabilizing platform.

**Assault Rifle:** An assault rifle is an automatic weapon, typically with settings for single shot, burst, and fully automatic fire. It is the configuration for standard military rifles like the M-16 and AK-47.

## SHOTGUNS

**Shotguns**, both single- and double-barrelled, can fire solid slugs, which inflict the weapon's normal ballistic damage, or they can load shot, which gains Accurate (+2 bonus to hit) but applies the Limited to target's without Protection modifier to 2 ranks of the gun's Damage, due to shot's limited ability to penetrate. A shotgun can also load material other than metal shot, including things like rock salt, which is not only less lethal, but may be more effective against the vulnerabilities of certain targets.

## SUBMACHINE GUNS

Submachine guns are automatic carbines or pistols that can be fired with one or both hands. Their damage capability is similar to that of a pistol but their effectiveness is enhanced by their ability to fire multiple rounds with a single trigger pull. Widely used by militaries since the mid-20th century, submachine guns have largely been replaced by assault rifles for military use, but they still see use both by police and counterterrorist units as well as criminals.



## OTHER GUNS

**Air Gun:** This pistol-sized gun fires a blast of compressed air powerful enough to knock targets down and potentially stun them. A useful non-lethal weapon with no projectiles required.

**Dart Gun:** A pistol or rifle that fires small hypodermic darts, primarily intended to deliver drugs or poisons into the target's system. Typically used by naturalists and animal control officers to tranquilize dangerous animals, they can also be used on human targets.

**Flare Gun:** Not intended as a weapon, but a signaling device, this gun fires a brightly glowing flare straight up into the air where it slowly drifts down towards the ground, providing some illumination and signaling anyone within sighting distance of the flare, particularly at night, when it is most visible. Members of a hero team may use flare guns to signal to each other in emergencies; less common in the modern age of compact radio communicators, but flare guns aren't affected by jamming or electromagnetic interference. Flare guns can be used as weapons in a pinch and inflict rank 1 burning and impact Damage on their targets and may ignite flammable materials.

**Paintball Gun:** A compressed air gun that fires gel pellets filled with paint or dye. Paintball guns are typically sporting "weapons" for games or training exercises, since the impact of the paintballs may sting, but is generally harmless. They may be modified into actual

weapons by changing the ammunition they fire, with loads such as acid or contact poison, created a Ranged Affliction effect in most cases.

**Taser:** A compressed air weapon firing a pair of darts that release a powerful electrical charge on impact capable of stunning the target.

## PRIMITIVE GUNS

Although they're not likely to come up often, time-travel, parallel universes, and obsessed collectors mean *M&M* characters may occasionally encounter primitive firearms like flintlocks and muskets. These weapons used black powder and small metallic balls (usually lead shot) as projectiles. They were only good for one shot and took long enough to reload that they were rarely reloaded in combat unless along a firing line some distance from the enemy. They have a variation of the Unreliable flaw that allows them to be fired only once every five rounds, taking the rest of the time to reload.

Most of the "primitive" firearms that show up in *M&M* settings merely look like old fashioned flintlocks and the like, but are actually as sophisticated (if not more so) than modern weapons, being descriptors for a character's powers. Examples include "space pirates" with primitive-looking energy weapons and "Colonial ghosts" armed with muskets that fire spectral "bullets" that don't require reloading (and that may have effects other than just Damage).

## BEING BULLETPROOF

The most common way of being immune to gunfire in *MUTANTS & MASTERMINDS* is ranks of Impervious Toughness; 10 ranks is enough to provide immunity to most guns (with a base Damage rank of 5 or less), 12–14 ranks covers most man-portable military weapons as well. If the character's invulnerability is limited to bullets or projectiles, then the Impervious modifier may have the Limited flaw. It may also be sustained rather than permanent in duration, if the Impervious extra requires some modicum of effort or concentration on the character's part, such as bringing a shield or bracer into a defensive position, or reinforcing a force shield or the character's own innate Toughness. The Immunity effect can also make characters "bulletproof," ranging from 5 ranks for Immunity to Ballistic Damage (but no other form of damage) to higher ranks that include gun fire (like Immunity to Impact Damage) up to full-fledged Immunity to Toughness effects at 80 ranks.

## AMMUNITION & ACCESSORIES

As described on page 161 of the *Hero's Handbook*, *M&M* does not generally track ammunition or differentiate between weapons based on magazine capacity or how many shots a weapon can fire before it must be reloaded.

Running out of ammunition is handled as a complication when the Gamemaster chooses to impose it, the same as having a gun jam or some similar complication that deprives the character of the use of the weapon. These complications are separate from other circumstances that deprive characters of their equipment, mainly having the weapons taken away, damaged, or destroyed, which is covered by the nature of the equipment itself and not considered a complication (see page 162 of the *Hero's Handbook* for further discussion).

In addition to the ammunition types discussed here, characters may carry and use different ammunition materials with the addition of the Variable Descriptor modifier to the weapon. Examples include bullets made of substances like silver or wood (potentially triggering supernatural vulnerabilities) or things like ice bullets, which have been used in assassinations; the bullet melts, leaving only traces of water and no ballistics (effectively a variation on the Insidious extra).

## ACCESSORIES AND BONUSES

Note that circumstance bonuses provided by accessories stack to a limited degree; a +2 bonus becomes a major (+5) bonus. Other bonuses, such as those provided by the Accurate extra, also stack, but are limited by power level, whereas circumstances bonuses are not.

### AMMUNITION, ARMOR-PIERCING

This ammunition is designed to punch and slip through armor, increasing its penetrating power but reducing its explosive impact.

**Armor-piercing Ammunition:** Penetrating • 1 point per rank

### AMMUNITION, EXPLOSIVE

Explosive rounds are designed to burst or flatten to enhance the damage caused by their impact (rather than passing straight through a target) making more serious damage from a shot more likely.

**Explosive Ammunition:** Improved Critical • 1 point per rank.

### AMMUNITION, SMART

Super-science or magical ammunition capable of changing course in mid-flight to seek out a target it has locked on to. This type of ammunition is not available as equipment in most settings, but may be part of a gun device.

**Smart Ammunition:** Homing • 1 point per rank.

### AMMUNITION, STUN

Rubber bullets or other non-lethal ammunition designed to stun targets temporarily.

**Stun Ammunition:** Alternate Effect: Ranged Affliction (Resisted and Overcome by Fortitude; Dazed, Stunned, Incapacitated) • 1 point

### AMMUNITION, TRACER

Ammunition that leaves a visible streak of light, particularly in dim or dark conditions, making it easier to place where the shots are going and adjust aim accordingly, providing a +2 bonus to attack checks.

**Tracer Ammunition:** Accurate • 1 point

### BAYONET

A bayonet is a blade that mounts onto the end of a rifle, turning it into a spear for use in close combat. Bayonets originated when rifles were usable for only one or two shots, but still remain useful for close quarters fighting or occasions when a firearm is unusable (jammed, out of ammo, and so forth).

**Bayonet:** Alternate Effect, Strength-based Damage 2 • 1 point

### BIOMETRIC LOCK

The weapon's grip has an electronic scanner that reads the wielder's finger- and palm-prints (or possibly even DNA code). If the wielder is not authorized in the weapon's built-in database, it locks out all of its functions, preventing the weapon from firing. This prevents a confiscated gun from being used against its owner, amongst

## TRICK SHOTS & GUN POWERS

Most combat advantages from Chapter 5 of the *Hero's Handbook* work in conjunction with guns unless the advantage's description specifies otherwise. The descriptors of the advantage may change slightly when used with guns; for example, a Power Attack isn't necessarily more forceful (it's difficult to "shoot harder" with a gun) but an attack that gains in damage potential in exchange for increased difficulty with the attack check, such as making a more difficult shot at a more vulnerable part of the target. Similarly, Accurate Attack (trading damage for accuracy) may involve snapping off multiple shots in hopes that one will "wing" a difficult to hit target.

Likewise, many of the actions and maneuvers from Chapter 8 of the *Hero's Handbook* are usable in conjunction with guns beyond just Attack. In particular, Aim and Delay are common gun actions, used to improve accuracy and to "cover" targets without having to shoot them. Guns are also usable for Disarm and Smash actions, although at a considerable attack penalty.

The **Talent Powers** Profile from *Power Profiles* adds the additional option of "gun-fu" abilities, powers involving the use of firearms based on training, talent, and skill rather than another power source. The examples in that profile include Flurry (adding Multiattack to a weapon) or Hurt Anything (adding Penetrating to a weapon's damage) but may also add different extras or Features to a gun's Damage that it does not normally possess. These powers generally have the Variable Descriptor extra for any gun the character picks up and uses.

Lastly, some *M&M* characters have guns that are far more than mere firearms, either Devices specific to that character, or just descriptors for other powers. This includes all of the various super-science weapons (some touched upon in the **Energy Weapons** Guide) and things like enchanted guns, to characters able to do things like cause guns (or even whole arsenals of weapons) to appear in their hands at will.

other things. A Precise Illusion or Morph effect can fool and override a biometric lock.

**Biometric Lock:** Feature (Restricted) • 1 point

## IRON SIGHTS

Flanges on the end of the gun's barrel help to line it up with a target for improved accuracy. Iron sights give a weapon the benefit of the Improved Aim advantage, increasing the circumstance bonus for aiming from +2 to +5.

**Iron Sights:** Enhanced Advantage (Improved Aim) • 1 point

## LASER SIGHT

Projects a low-level laser beam to show a small red dot of light where the gun is expected to hit. A laser sight provides a rank of Accurate to the weapon (+2 bonus to hit) and can often grant a circumstance bonus to Intimidation checks when used as an implied threat. At the GM's option, additional ranks of Accurate may be available to more advanced laser sights or weapons with "smart" munitions.

**Laser Sight:** Accurate • 1 point

## SCAN-PROOF

The weapon and its ammunition are made from non-metallic components (advanced ceramics and plastics, for example), making it virtually invisible to conventional methods of scanning and detection.

**Scan-Proof:** Feature • 1 point

## SILENCER

A gas- and sound-suppression attachment added to the weapon's barrel, reducing the sound of the gunshot to a loud coughing noise. Silencer devices (beyond the capability of equipment) may even make the shot completely silent with 2 ranks of Subtle. The flash suppressor, a similar attachment, reduces the muzzle flash of the weapon, making it visually Subtle. A piece of equipment can perform both functions for 2 points.

**Silencer:** Subtle (sound) • 1 point

## SPOTLIGHT

The barrel of the weapon mounts a powerful light, illuminating whatever the weapon is pointing at, useful for overcoming darkness penalties, at the cost of making the weapon wielder highly visible.

**Spotlight:** Feature (light, eliminates circumstance penalties for darkness) • 1 point

## TARGETING SCOPE

An optical or electronic telescope to enhance targeting. The scope provides ranks of Extended Vision to counteract circumstance penalties due to range. Sniper weapons with targeting scopes typically also have both iron sights (cross-hairs) and possibly a laser sight, for up to a +7 attack bonus (with no range penalty) from the weapon's maximum range while aiming.

**Targeting Scope:** Extended Vision • 1 point per rank



## GUNS

WEAPON	EFFECT	CRITICAL	COST
PISTOLS			
Holdout pistol	Ranged Damage 2	20	4
Light pistol	Ranged Damage 3	20	6
Heavy pistol	Ranged Damage 4	20	8
RIFLES			
Rifle	Ranged Damage 4	20	8
Rifle, high-power	Ranged Damage 5	20	10
Sniper rifle	Ranged Damage 5, Extended Range	20	11
Assault rifle	Ranged Damage 5, Multiattack	20	15
SHOTGUNS			
Shotgun	Ranged Damage 5 (AE: Ranged Damage 5, Accurate, 2 ranks Limited to targets without Protection)	20	11
SUBMACHINE GUN			
Machine pistol	Ranged Damage 3, Multiattack	20	9
Submachine gun	Ranged Damage 4, Multiattack	20	12
OTHER GUNS			
Air gun	Ranged Affliction (Resisted and Overcome by Fortitude; Dazed, Prone, Incapacitated)	20	2/rank
Dart gun	Ranged Affliction (Resisted and Overcome by Fortitude; Impaired, Disbaled, Incapacitated; Resistible by Toughness)	20	1/rank
Flare gun	Environment 2 (light)	20	2
Taser	Ranged Affliction (Resisted and Overcome by Fortitude; Dazed, Stunned, Incapacitated)	20	2/rank
Paintball gun	Feature 1 or Ranged Affliction	20	1 or 2/rank
ACCESSORIES			
Ammunition			
Armor-piercing	Penetrating	20	1/rank
Explosive	Improved Critical	20+	1/rank
Smart	Homing	20	1/rank
Stun	AE: Ranged Affliction* (Resisted and Overcome by Fortitude; Dazed, Stunned, Incapacitated)	20	1 point
Tracer	Accurate	20	1 point
Bayonette	AE: Strength-based Damage 2 (piercing)	20	1 point
Biometric Lock	Restricted	—	1 point
Iron Sights	Improved Aim	—	1 point
Laser Sight	Accurate	—	1 point
Scan-proof	Subtle (DC 20)	—	1 point
Silencer	Subtle (DC 20)	—	1 point
Spotlight	Feature (counter darkness penalties)	—	1 point
Targeting Scope	Extended Vision	—	1/rank

\*Ranks equal to the weapon's Damage rank

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