

# Yet Another Firearms Module

## Simple Rules for Fantasy Firearms in 5e



*"In the great expanses of the tunnels, where shadows devour and leave behind nothing but their victims' screams, new weapons were forged from grim necessity. It's hotly debated whether the Gnomes or the Dwarves invented the first firearms, but both take credit for the invention. The inaccuracy of the weapon doesn't matter in the tunnels; no skittering horror dares approach a line of gnomes or dwarves: the cascade of bullets will leave pulp behind. Poorer mining clans and prospecting teams will sometimes even carry fake firearms to imitate the tactics of the Firing Square in hopes that creatures who know the bite of a bullet will simply leave them alone."*

— Binn Faldwin,  
*A History of Winter's Glow*

This simple module adds fantasy firearms to your D&D 5e campaign. It's designed to be light on mechanics (with a few crunchier options for those who prefer them) and to make these weapons an effective and attractive option to use within the otherwise unchanged game; guns are meant to be attractive to players, but not to overshadow class abilities, spells, or even other ranged weapons.

### 1. PROFICIENCY

Firearms fall under the categories of either Simple Ranged Weapons or Martial Ranged Weapons. All

Simple Firearms are also Simple Ranged Weapons, and all Martial Firearms are also Martial Ranged Weapons.

### 2. RACIAL OPTIONS

The weapons have not spread far from their underground homes. Rock Gnomes and Mountain Dwarves can begin with proficiency in Firearms; Mountain Dwarves can trade one of their weapon or armor proficiencies for proficiency in one Firearm, and Rock Gnomes can trade their Tinker ability for Simple or Martial Firearms Proficiency, and can additionally create ammunition in half the time.

### 3. CLASS OPTIONS

Classes with proficiencies in these areas also gain proficiencies with the appropriate firearms.

If a class has individual ranged weapon proficiencies, they can (on creating their character) swap that proficiency for a comparable Firearm Proficiency. For instance, a Wizard could change her Sling Proficiency (a Simple Ranged Weapon) to Pistol Proficiency or Human-Style Blunderbuss Proficiency (Simple Firearms), but not to any Martial Firearm.

Fighters are the notable exception, and simply gain the proficiencies. If you're playing with any Gunslinger Archetype modules, instead limit Firearm proficiencies to

this subclass of fighter.

### 4. GREAT EQUALIZERS

The mechanics here aim to represent the firearm's role as the great equalizer. Firearms are devastating at long ranges and don't require nearly as much training to use at martial levels of proficiency. The weapons here are neither modern guns nor are they renaissance weapons, but rather firearms in a high fantasy setting.

Firearms throughout history made gruesome violence more accessible to wide varieties of people. A frail, ill person with a sword is concerning; that same person with a shotgun is terrifying. To better reflect this, Ranged Weapon Attacks made with Firearms have no associated Ability Score; only a character's proficiency modifier is added to the Ranged Weapon Attack Rolls made with Firearms. This makes Firearms an attractive option to Player Characters and Creatures with negative dexterity scores.

### 5. POINT-BLANK RANGE

It's much more difficult to interfere with gunfire than it is to interfere with releasing a missile from a bow or sling. Additionally, since there are no Ability Scores tied to Firearms, imposing disadvantage on them in close range is especially odious to the player.

The point-and-click nature of

Firearms makes them easier to use at very close range. Ranged Weapon Attacks made with Firearms in melee distance with a target are not made at disadvantage, unlike with other ranged weapons.

**Alternate Rule:**

**WISDOM FIREARMS**

Mechanically, giving a ton of extra damage to Dex players means that they'll have the highest armor class and the most damage output, and while that can be appealing to certain types of play, it's hardly balanced. Wisdom isn't tied to defenses or (often) to damage, so having it be the Ability Score tied to attacks made with firearms gives your campaign's gunfighters makes an interesting choice, and will have your min-maxers looking at Rangers, Druids and Clerics in a new light.

As the great equalizer, firearms are accessible to people who don't have a lot of physical training. While hand-eye coordination is typically assigned to Dexterity, perception is tied to Wisdom, so the ability to aim and fire a Firearm accurately can be seen as a more deliberate and less automatic action.

If the DM decides that Firearms need an associated Ability Score, this module suggests using Wisdom. Under this ruling, I suggest ignoring the section called "Point-Blank Range."

**6. CINEMATIC  
AMMUNITION**

The cop and her partner are pinned down by sheets of gunfire. The partner throws his shotgun away in disgust. "I'm out," he says. The cop spins out the side of her revolver. "I've got two left," she says. They brace for the worst.

In fiction centered around gunslinging heroes, ammunition is only an issue when there is a plot-related need for it. This mechanic tries to emulate that feeling.

Instead of players tracking individual bullets and arrows, they have levels of ammunition. These levels only decrease in specific circumstances.

The four levels of ammunition are: **Plenty, Enough, Several, Three Left, Two Left, One Left and Empty.**

When a player's character has an ammunition level of Plenty, Enough, or Several, they can fire as often as they want without worrying about running out of ammunition. In all three cases, the ammunition level can decrease in these specific circumstances:

**Falling in combat:** suffering a Critical Hit that lowers the character to zero Hit Points will reduce the character's ammunition level. The character can recover this level of ammunition if they can search the area where they fell after the fight.

**Scrambling away:** failing a Dexterity Saving Throw to avoid a trap or a similar effect that requires quick movement to avoid damage will reduce the character's ammunition level. The DM can rule that the ammunition is lost or recoverable. If its recoverable, time spent searching the area will recover it.

**Falling:** taking any falling damage will reduce the character's ammunition level. The DM can rule that the ammunition is lost or recoverable. If its recoverable, time spent searching the

area will recover it. (For ideas on how to put time pressure on players, check out our Move It! Module.)

**Resting:** Taking a Long Rest or Short Rest after expending ammunition will reduce the character's ammunition level. The player can roll an unmodified D20 against the DM's unmodified D20 immediately after the rest to not lose a level of ammunition.

**The player must always be alerted if their level of ammunition has changed.**

When the player has an ammunition level of Several, the DM can choose to roll a D6 any time the player expends ammunition. On a result of 1, the player's ammunition level is reduced to Three Left.

When the player has an ammunition level of Three Left, the next Ranged Weapon Attack that uses this type of ammunition will expend it, and they will then they will be at Two Left, etc, until all ammunition of this type is expended.

Magical and Silvered ammunition should be given out one level at a time, starting with One Left. Finding more of the same type of ammunition will increase it by one level

**7. PROPERTIES**

Rules for using weapons are modified with properties, which are special words affixed to a weapon that describe its function in the game-world. The Dangerous and Spread properties are unique to this module. The other properties referenced in this document are found in the Dungeons and Dragons Systems Reference Document and The Player's Handbook, but for convenience are re-

produced here.

### **Dangerous**

Firearms in fiction and in real life are devastating weapons. To better reflect that with game mechanics, all firearms have the Dangerous property, which is a special kind of critical strike.

A weapon with the Dangerous property (a “Dangerous Weapon” for the rest of this document) can score an additional type of critical hit: whenever a Dangerous Weapon rolls maximum damage on any of its damage dice, that dice can be rerolled and its new result added to the total damage for that attack, including the rerolled dice’s result.

This can happen a number of times equal to half the level of the attacker. This effect stacks with traditional critical hits, and effects that lower the crit range of an attack also affect these rolls. For instance, if a Fighter has a critical attack range of 19-20, they can reroll the damage dice of a D4 Firearm on a 3-4.

### **Spread**

A weapon with the Spread property forces the attacker to roll an attack at disadvantage against other targets within five feet of the intended target.

### **Light**

When you take the Attack action and attack with a Light Melee Weapon that you’re holding in one hand, you can use a bonus action to attack with a different Light Melee Weapon that you’re holding in the other hand.

### **Versatile**

This weapon can be used with one or two hands. A damage value in parentheses appears with the property—the damage when the weapon is used with two hands to make

a Melee Attack.

### **Heavy**

Small creatures have disadvantage on Attack rolls with Heavy Weapons. A Heavy Weapon’s size and bulk make it too large for a Small creature to use effectively.

### **Two-handed**

This weapon requires two hands when you Attack with it.

### **Loading**

Because of the time required to load this weapon, you can fire only one piece of ammunition from it when you use an Action, Bonus Action, or Reaction to fire it, regardless of the number of attacks you can normally make per Attack Action.

### **Ammunition**

You can use a weapon that has the ammunition property to make a Ranged Weapon Attack only if you have ammunition to fire from the weapon. Each time you attack with the weapon, you expend one piece of ammunition. Drawing the ammunition from a quiver, case, or other container is part of the attack (you need a free hand to load a one-handed weapon). At the end of the battle, you can recover half your expended ammunition by taking a minute to search the battlefield. If you use a weapon that has the ammunition property to make a melee attack, you treat the weapon as an improvised weapon (see “Improvised Weapons” below). A sling must be loaded to deal any damage when used in this way.

## 8. CREATURES STRONGER THAN REASON

Dealing extra damage to goblins and other cannon fodder is fine, but you might have a setting where some creatures have a cinematic

ability to shrug off bullets – demigods with adamantite resilience, dragons with scales as dense and firm as mountains, and unthinkable horrors that absorb a hypercane of incoming fire and then lurch forward, undaunted, unaffected.

You have several mechanical tools at your disposal for this.

### **Method One:**

#### **Creature CR**

Whenever a player’s level is not as high as the CR of the creature they’re fighting, the Dangerous Tag no longer applies. This puts the gun-dependent player characters squarely in the role of killing trash monsters, so this should only be used if you have plenty of low-threat fights and take a high-attrition approach to DMing.

### **Method Two:**

#### **AC**

Whenever a monster’s AC is higher than 20, the Dangerous Tag only applies if the player has taken a firearms related feat.

### **Method Three:**

#### **More Hit Points**

In your descriptions of the damage, mention that the creature is unfazed. Make sure it’s clear that it’s taking damage as normal, but that it laughs at the weaponry of the lesser races. And as you can guess from the title, make the creatures that you want to survive longer against gun-wielding player characters simply have more Hit Points. 5e is not a very crunchy system, so this is my go-to option, though I do regularly play with crunchier rules imposed on 5e, and this is when I look to the other methods.

## 9. WEAPONS LISTS

In addition to the weapons tables on page 4, the DMG has a list of

## SIMPLE RANGED FIREARMS

Name	Value	Weight	Damage	Properties
Human-style Pistol	25gp	2 lbs	1D4 piercing	Ammunition (range 30/60), Loading, Light; Dangerous
Human-style Blunderbuss	50gp	5 lbs	2D4 piercing	Ammunition (range 15/30), Loading, Dangerous, Two-handed, Spread

## MARTIAL RANGED FIREARMS

Name	Value	Weight	Damage	Properties
Human-style Musket	100gp	5 lbs	1D4 piercing	Ammunition (range 30/60), Loading, Light; Dangerous
Human-style Hand-cannon	150 gp	5 lbs	2D6 piercing	Ammunition (range 30/80), Loading, Dangerous
Gnomish Rifle	200gp	3 lbs	1D8 piercing	Ammunition (range 50/100), Loading, Dangerous, Versatile (2D8)
Dwarven Gravity-Fed Reloader	500gp	20 lbs	1D10 piercing	Ammunition (range 60/80), Dangerous, Heavy

firearms and accompanying rules on pages 261-262. These weapons are compatible with this module; simply add the Dangerous tag. The result will be that Firearms hit less often, but have the potential to do incredibly lethal amounts of damage, especially in the hands of a fighter.

Additionally, these rules can be made compatible with Matt Mercer's Gunslinger Archetype (because there is a roughly 50% chance that players will want to be a gunslinger once you explain that guns are in the game). Gunslingers should keep the ability to use Dexterity for their firearms, and this should be unique to that subclass. The Dangerous tag will make the Gunslinger do more damage, but a Champion will be far more lethal.

## 10. EQUIPMENT

**Firearm Ammunition:****Prices Vary Wildly**

Guns require specialized ammunition, which is made from various metals and explosive powders. It can be rare to find merchants selling ammunition wholesale, since guns tend to not be standardized. They're much more likely to sell a Gunsmithing Kit.

If a merchant is selling ammunition individually, it's probably been silvered or is otherwise magical in some other way (for example, +1 Firearm Ammunition).

**Gunsmith Kit:****10gp – 5lbs - common**

A collection of volatile powders, empty shells, and tools for combining and sealing them. Most gun owners have one of these, and

they're fairly common to items in the world, either as military surplus or the runoff of failed adventurers. Someone proficient with this tool can create 25 rounds in an hour, and can use the kit five times in this manner. Without proficiency, the kit can still use used five times, but the non-standardized nature of ammunition in the world makes each piece of ammunition its own tiny puzzle, thus rendering the results predictable; roll a D10 plus your Intelligence modifier to see how many shells you create.

With Cinematic Ammunition rules, this can instead increase the level of a non-magical, non-silvered ammunition by one, or to the **Sever** level from a lower level.

**Bayonet:****15gp – 2lbs – common**

Any blade made to augment a Firearm. When affixed to a Firearm, it

allows that Firearm to function as a spear (if affixed to two-handed Firearm) or as a short-sword (if affixed to a one-handed Firearm.)

#### EXAMPLE MAGIC ITEMS

##### **Belt of the Gunslinger:**

##### **1,000 gp – Wondrous Item**

A belt of ammunition designed to be worn across the chest or waist. It is covered in Firearms ammunition suitable for any two guns the wearer is wielding. The ammunition disappears if it is removed from the belt for more than a minute, unless it is loaded into a Firearm used by the wearer.

##### **Wolfbane:**

##### **5,000 gp – Rare Item**

This Firearm magically Silvers ammunition the moment it's been fired.

##### **Black Dragon Gun:**

##### **5,000 gp – Rare Item**

When you speak the command word, this Firearm spews goutts of acid instead of Firearm Ammunition, and deals an extra 2D6 acid damage.

#### 11. FEATS

In a world with fantastic firearms, heroes will emerge who are supernaturally good with them. These feats strive to represent exceptionally powerful gun-wielding heroes in a high fantasy setting.

##### **Quick Shot**

You can reload firearms with the Loading property very quickly. If you're proficient with a firearm, you may ignore the Loading tag from the weapon. Additionally, this is a task that you do so quickly that you employ other parts of your person to aid you; specialized ammunition belts, your teeth, a specially modified cantrip, or some other

flavoring. As a result, you can reload your firearms without the use of a free hand.

##### **Musketeer**

While this feat looks powerful, remember that Firearms do not benefit from Ability Scores, and thus are much less likely to hit.

The final bit is clarification of a somewhat arcane mechanics rule: RAW (Rules as Written) a Melee Weapon Attack with a light weapon does not allow a player to make a Ranged Weapon Attack with their bonus action. This puts the Hand Crossbow (and more relevantly, this module's pistol) in an odd place and specifically disallows certain types of swashbuckling fantasies from being enacted in 5e. This feat specifically removes this limitation.

You've mastered the technique of fighting in very close range with firearms. You gain +1 to your AC against melee attacks while wielding a Firearm in either hand, and your critical range with Ranged Weapon Attacks made with Firearms is 19-20 when you are within five feet of a target. Additionally, Ranged Weapon Attacks made with Firearms allow you to use your bonus action to make a Melee Weapon Attack with a Light Melee Weapon in your other hand.

##### **Gun Arcana**

##### **Prerequisite: Spell Slots**

You have learned how to mix magic with firearms to devastating effect. Once per day, as a reaction, you can expend a spell slot to reroll the damage dice from a Ranged Weapon Attack made with a Firearm that you can see. This damage is added to the previous value of the

roll. This can be used in conjunction with critical hits, as well as the Warlock & Paladin Smite class features, though both spell slots must be available.

Add your Spellcasting Modifier to attack and damage rolls for Ranged Weapon Attacks made with Firearms.

If you have this feat as well as the Warlock or Paladin Smite class feature, you may Smite with Ranged Weapon Attacks made with Firearms.

##### **Gun Zen**

##### **Prerequisite: 15 Wisdom**

You don't need your eyes to send a bullet into a beating heart. Rather than taking an Attack Action to make a Ranged Weapon Attack, you can take an Attack Action to Blindfire once, forcing the enemy to make a Dexterity or Constitution (your choice) Saving Throw. The DC is 8 plus your Wisdom modifier. On a failure, the target takes full weapon damage. On a save, the target takes half damage. You know exactly where and how to fire when you're Blindfiring, and thus you ignore resistances and immunities.

Additionally, when making a Ranged Weapon Attack with a Firearm, you do not suffer disadvantage when fighting creatures Obscured by darkness or fog.

Magical Darkness (as from the Darkness Spell) can still interfere with your aim and impose disadvantage on your Ranged Weapon Attacks with a Firearm. To do so, it must be cast at a higher level than half of your character level.

**Bullet Bending****Prerequisite: 15 Dexterity**

Your gunfighting technique is so lightning fast that you can put English on a bullet. So long as there is a reasonable path to your target, and this path does not total more than the Normal Range of your Firearm, you do not need line of sight on a target to hit it with a Ranged Weapon Attack made with a Firearm.

Your range with all Firearms increases by 20 (making a 30/60 weapon 50/80). Additionally, whenever the Dangerous property on a weapon triggers, you may make another Ranged Weapon Attack with the same Firearm against a creature who has line of sight on your original target. You may not affect the same target twice with this feature.

**Professional**

You are uncannily accurate with Firearms, taking shots with ease that others deem impossible. Attacking at long range doesn't impose disadvantage on your ranged weapon attack rolls.

Your ranged weapon attacks ignore half cover and three-quarters cover.

Whenever you make a Ranged Weapon Attack with a Firearm at its long range (i.e., the second number in sets like "30/60" that appear next to Firearms), you may make a called shot. Called shots are made at disadvantage, but are always critical when they are successful.

You may always make a called shot against creatures that are not aware of you, even if they're in the normal range of your Firearm.

You may add your Wisdom or Dexterity modifier (whichever is higher) to attack and damage rolls when making a called shot. If you're already adding one of those numbers to your attack and damage rolls, you may also add the other.

## 12. CREDITS

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