Explosive Alchemicals

Early firearms used smoky gunpowder as propellant for its ammunition, but recent alchemical advances have produced firedust. This powdered variant of alchemist's fire produces less smoke when used in firearms, has a lower risk of fouling or corroding the weapon's internals, and is hydrophobic, allowing it to burn even after immersion in water.

Many other firearm accelerants exist, including magmite (a granular black substance rendered in alchemical furnaces) and phlogistite (transluscent red vapor slime that floats in globules if exposed to open air), but firedust is by far the most widely used. Steam engines use a variant, firegems, which burn slower but longer.

While it is the source of a firearm's deadly power, firedust is relatively harmless as a weapon in its own right, since it burns too fast to cause serious wounds like traditional alchemist fire. If someone ignites a cask full of firedust, though, the resulting explosion could seriously hurt those nearby.

Use the improvised attack guidelines in the DMG to determine damage from detonating firedust, usually the low limited entry, though possibly higher if a character has spent time preparing the explosives. Detonating a cask requires striking the object with an attack that can deal fire damage. A twenty pound cask of firedust, roughly a foot across, might explode in burst 1. A one-ton pallet, enough to fill an entire square, could explode in burst 5.

Firearms

Firearms use explosive alchemicals to fire metal ammunition. These weapons take two standard actions to load. Normally powers that let you make multiple ranged attacks let you reload freely between these attacks, but you cannot freely reload firearms in this way. For that reason, a typical character characters might carry a loaded firearm to use as a once-per-encounter damage boost. A character who wants to use a firearm as a primary weapon should take the **Firearm Expertise** feat.

We understand that many gaming groups use Wizard of the Coast's Character Builder, and that – barring revisions to the software – adding new items is impossible. For that reason, we have based each firearm on an existing crossbow. The firearms trade a slower reload time for the brutal 2 and high crit properties.

To give your character a firearm, just equip the analogous weapon. When you print out your character sheet, you just need to remember or mark the different traits. To give your character Firearm Expertise, instead take the feat Crossbow Expertise. You gain the same attack bonus benefit, but use the firearm feat's faster reloading in place of the secondary benefit of the crossbow feat. Feats, abilities, and powers that apply to crossbows also apply to firearms, and any character proficient in a crossbow is proficient in the equivalent firearm.

We admit this is a bit of a kludge, but it should let you take advantage of the Character Builder's automatic calculations of attacks and damage, while giving firearms their own unique identity.

Pistol. This weapon is analogous to a hand crossbow.

Carbine. This weapon is analogous to a crossbow.

Rifle. This weapon is analogous to a superior crossbow, from the Adventurer's Vault.

Combination Weapons and Bayonets

Some firearms integrate a bladed weapon into their designs, such as a dagger with a pistol that fires along the crosspiece, or a carbine that fires down the length of a longsword. Such weapons are almost always custom-built. Other firearms have attachments that let the wielder affix a melee weapon to a gun barrel. Typically this is to

attach a bayonet to a carbine or rifle, allowing the weapon to be used as a spear.

Mechanically, these hybrid weapons function as two distinct weapons, and each would need to be enchanted separately. Their main benefit is to allow a wielder to switch between ranged and melee attacks without having to draw a new weapon.

The DM should use common sense to determine whether a combination is feasible, and if it should reduce the efficacy of a given power. You might be fine with a rogue using a pistol with a bayonet as if it were a rapier. Likewise, a carbine/axe could theoretically work, but a pistol/spear or spiked-chain/rifle is ridiculous. (Some groups might like ridiculous, though.)

Optional Firearm Rules

The firearm rules are designed to be easy to use while providing enough flavor to differentiate guns from crossbows. The default assumption for the campaign is that firearms have advanced so that they no longer release gouts of smoke or have significant risk of mishap, but you can retain these traits if you like the aesthetics of more primitive firearms.

Gunsmoke. Whenever you shoot a firearm, you create smoke in close burst 1, including your own square. This smoke provides concealment, and lasts until the end of your next turn. Strong winds may disperse such smoke immediately, whereas very enclosed spaces might cause the smoke to linger additional rounds.

Mishaps. Whenever you roll a natural 1 on an attack roll with a firearm, you can choose to reroll the attack. If you do, the gun is damaged after the attack, and must be repaired during a short rest before it can be used again. Additionally, if the second roll is a 1, the weapon deals 1[w] damage to you. If the gun is magical, it is only damaged if the second roll is a 1 to 5. Magical guns still damage you if the second roll is a natural 1.

As a heroic adventure game, weapons of all varieties are less lethal in D&D than in reality. However, if you feel guns should be more dangerous than archaic melee weapons, the following options achieve that, albeit by wildly altering the balance of combat and the world's aesthetic. If you use these rules, everyone will want guns, and fights will end much more quickly.

Killing Tool. Firearms lose the brutal property. Instead, pistols deal an extra two dice of damage. A 1[w] attack with a pistol does 3d6, 3d8 with a carbine, or 3d10 with a rifle. A 3[w] attack with a rifle does 5d10. On a critical hit, that attack would do 50 damage, plus 1d10 from high crit.

Threat of Force. The real power of a firearm is that it can easily strike before a melee-armed attacker can close the distance. A character wielding a firearm can make a ranged basic attack as an immediate reaction when a target he is aware enters a space

within 6 squares of him. If the target had cover or concealment relative to him at any point during its movement, it benefits from the cover or concealment for this attack.

If a character does shoot in this way, he skips his standard action on his next turn.

Simple Ranged Weapons
One-Handed

Pistol	
Prof.	+2
Damage	1d6
Range	10/20
Price	25gp
Weight	2lb.
Group	Firearm
Properties	Load two standard, brutal 2, high crit

Two-Handed

Carbine	
Prof.	+2
Damage	1d8
Range	15/30
Price	25gp
Weight	4lb.
Group	Firearm
Properties	Load two standard, brutal 2, high crit

Superior Ranged Weapons
Two-Handed

Rifle	
Prof.	+3
Damage	1d10
Range	20/40
Price	30gp
Weight	6lb.
Group	Firearm
Properties	Load two standard, brutal 2, high crit