



Bullet Points

More Gadgety Goodness

By Owen K. C. Stephens

This time out we continue our look at gadgets, those technological add-ons first introduced in *d20 Future*. Gadgets are a great way to represent both customized gear and minor variations between similar items.

Like any technology, gadgets are tools to help a GM create the kind of world he wants to set adventures in, not as straitjackets of immutable rules that players can use to bypass plots, overcome campaign concepts, or buy their way to unreasonable levels of power.

☀ **Can you use "universal" weapon gadgets to enhance items from the modern era, or only things in campaigns set in the future?**


While it's the GM's prerogative to disallow any gadget that he feels doesn't match the tech level of his campaign, there's no reason a high-tech PL 5 game can't use the universal gadgets from any book.

☀ **What exactly qualifies as "close examination" for the concealable gadget? Is there a Spot or Search DC that allows you to notice there's something concealed in another object? Can you do it from 20 feet away? What about the use of X-rays and similar devices? If you hold the item, do you automatically notice something concealed? Does the item with something concealed inside still work normally?**


You notice the true nature of an item with the concealed gadget if you take the steps needed to see what it's made of and what's inside it. This is automatic if you're suspicious of the item and have unfettered opportunity to handle it, turn it over, or see inside (with x-rays, for example). If a character isn't suspicious or doesn't have unfettered access, a direct examination with the potential to see inside turns up the concealed item with a DC 13 Search check.

☀ **Does the extended range gadget increase the weapon's range increment or only its total range? In other words, if I have a SITES M9 with extended range, does it have a range increment of 60 ft. (and thus a total range of 600 ft., 10 range increments), or does it have a range increment of 30 ft. and a total range of 600 ft. (20 total range increments)?**


The extended range gadget doubles a weapon's range increment, so your first example is correct. Similarly, the flaw decreased range cuts a weapon's range increment in half.

 **If I fire a grenade from an M79 launcher, do I use a scatter diagram? If so, can I use the grappling sheath gadget to gain the same benefit as with thrown grenades even though the gadget description only talks about thrown (not fired) grenades?**

The M79 specifies that it works like a thrown attack except for a few specific exceptions, so yes, you need to use the deviation diagrams. That said, you can get the grappling sheath gadget for grenades fired from grenade launchers.


 **When the improved accuracy gadget states that it applies to any firearm, does it mean you can't use the gadget on energy weapons? Is there any limit to how many times you can put it on a weapon? If I'm willing to pay a +10 purchase DC, can I get a +5 plasma pistol?**

Although the gadget does say firearm, it's meant to apply to all ranged weapons other than thrown weapons (and a GM could allow that if he wished). While the rules allow for a purchase DC 37 plasma pistol with +5 to hit, I'd unofficially recommend capping the gadget at +3 to attack rolls for +6 purchase DC.

 **Does the improved damage gadget add +1 point of damage or +1 die of damage? It seems a bit cheap for a die of damage, but who cares about just one point of damage? Can you buy it more than once, like the improved accuracy gadget? Is there some magic reason it can't be applied to chainswords and other powered melee weapons?**

The gadget adds just +1 point to the total damage dealt. You can't buy it more than once. A GM may decide to allow the gadget to apply to powered melee weapons if desired, but the official ruling restricts it to projectile and energy weapons.

While +1 damage may not seem like much, the ability to add any damage at all is a real benefit, considering you can't Power Attack with a firearm. In particular, that +1 gives you a better chance of exceeding a target's massive damage threshold. If the gadget added too much damage, it would overshadow the Double Tap feat and tilt the game from being about what characters can do to what they own. (Besides, you *can* get another die of damage if you take the improved stopping power gadget -- it just costs a *lot* more).


 **What attack bonus does a motion sensitive weapon use?**

Unless combined with a robotic gunner or some other device, a motion sensitive weapon has a +0 attack bonus. For exactly this reason, most motion sensitive weapons are set to make an autofire attack. The same is true of all automated weapons that don't state otherwise.


 **If my gun has both thermal targeting and voice-activation gadgets, and I decide to switch from one thermal targeting range to a different one, is that a free action?**

Technically, what temperature your targeting system is set at doesn't qualify as a firing mode, so the voice activation gadget doesn't do you any good. While it's reasonable for a GM to allow the gadgets to work together, that's a house rule, and only the GM can decide how they interact.

Unofficially, I'd recommend allowing both gadgets to function, but the thermal imaging still takes a round to change. In other words, it's a free action, but the new targeting range isn't active until the round after you give the voice command.

 **Why would anyone ever take any of the flaws in *d20 Future Tech*? The money you save isn't worth the massive drawbacks!**

Ignoring that some people might think it is worthwhile to stack enough drawbacks on an item to make it easier to buy (especially if it can drop the DC below 15), there are lots of reasons to use the flaws, especially for a GM. They can be used to represent prototypes not yet fully functional or damaged items bought used at a reduced cost. A GM might allow gadgets into a campaign but limit them to no more than a total +6 to the normal purchase DC. Thus, if a player wants improved stopping power, which is +10, he is required to take at least -4 worth of flaws (perhaps increased size and increased weight to represent a heavy version of the base weapon).

 **If a 2d6 firearm has reduced stopping power so it deals only 1d6 damage, how much damage does it add when you Double Tap? Do I add +1d3, or does the feat suddenly allow me to have Double Tap deal double damage?**


Reduced stopping power doesn't change how double Tap works, so you still add a die of damage. In this case it's not so much that Double Tap is suddenly dealing double damage but that the effect of reduced stopping power is mitigated somewhat by taking multiple shots.

 **If I give my armor the tough gadget, do I get to reduce all damage I take by 2 (the increased value of the hardness)?**


Nope.

 **Is there any game benefit to a softscreen monitor?**


Sure. When attempting to conceal a computer with a softscreen monitor, treat it as if it was one size smaller. This is an official rules change.

 **Does the ZPE gadget apply to the weapon or the battery you use as a clip?**

It applies to the battery, which you buy like ammunition. A weapon can use a standard battery or a ZPE battery without any modification on the weapon's part.

 **Do the bonuses from a gravlight system stack with the benefits from increased range of motion and segmented?**

Yes.

 **Can any energy weapon be equipped with an induction inversion adapter gadget?**

Yep. Think of it as a second firing mode that just happens to use an energy pack. In many ways, it's the underslung grenade launcher of PL 8.

 **Does the DR from absorptive armor apply to all energy attacks or just untyped energy attacks such as those of the disintegrator? I thought DR didn't apply against fire or other standard energy types.**

The absorptive armor gadget is badly described. It applies against cold, electricity, fire, sonic, and untyped energy damage.

 **Can you wear multiple bracelets for multiple weapons with the digital storage gadget? Can non-weapon equipment take a digital storage gadget?**

You can't wear more than one digital storage bracelet per limb. They must be precisely placed for the item to materialize in your hand, and if you wear a second one, it will be slightly 'off' when it brings out your weapon.

Otherwise, as long as it follows the weight and space requirements for weapons, I see no reason not to allow other gear to use this gadget.

Do you have a rules question about the **d20 Modern** Roleplaying Game? Send it to bulletpoints@wizards.com. For the quickest possible answer, please put the topic of your question in the subject line and keep the question as succinct as possible. If you have more than one question, feel free to send two or more emails -- but for best results please include only one question per email unless your questions are very closely related to one another. Please don't expect a direct answer by email. Check the **d20 Modern** website for *Bullet Point* updates.

About the Author

Owen Kirker Clifford Stephens was born in 1970 in Norman, Oklahoma. He attended the TSR Writer's Workshop held at the Wizards of the Coast Game Center in 1997 and moved to the Seattle area in 2000, after accepting a job as a game designer at Wizards of the Coast, Inc. Fourteen months later, he returned to Oklahoma with his wife and three cats to pick up his freelancer writer/developer career. He has author and co-author credits on numerous **Star Wars** and *Everquest* projects, as well as *Bastards and Bloodlines* from Green Ronin. He also has producer credits for various IDA products, including the Stand-Ins printable figures.

© 1995-2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc., a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc. All rights reserved. Wizards is headquartered in Renton, WA.

Based on the original **Dungeons & Dragons**® game by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and on the new edition of the **Dungeons & Dragons** game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison. **D&D** and **Dungeons & Dragons** are registered trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All Wizards characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This material is protected under the laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction of or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. This Wizards of the Coast game product contains no Open Game content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without written permission. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 System License, visit www.wizards.com/d20.

Visit our website at www.wizards.com/d20modern