



Bullet Points

Gear and Equipment

by Charles Ryan

Welcome to the twentieth installment of *Bullet Points*. I'm Charles Ryan, one of the designers of the **d20 Modern Roleplaying Game**. I'm here to answer your questions about the game, offer advice on tricky issues, and give you a little peek into the minds of the designers. You'll be hearing from me every couple of weeks.

If you've checked out the earlier installments of *Bullet Points*, you know the format. Every two weeks I pick an issue that's provoked a lot of questions or comments, begin with a general discussion of the topic, and then answer specific questions related to it. If there are any unrelated but pressing questions in my mailbox, I might tackle them at the end of the column, but only if there's room and they can't wait for an appropriately themed column.

Gear and Equipment

Can you believe we're already up to twenty installments? Time sure flies when you're chasing down bad guys, driving off creatures of Shadow, and doing all the other things heroes do in **d20 Modern!**


This time around, the questions concern gear and equipment. I don't have anything new to say in the way of introductory remarks on this subject, so let's get right to the questions!

Questions and Answers

We covered this topic once before in [Bullet Points #13](#), so if you don't see your question here, you might want to go back and have a look at that installment.

 **In the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*, the katana is a Large exotic weapon. But the *Urban Arcana Campaign Setting* classifies the bastard sword as a Medium-size exotic weapon. Can that be correct?**

Yes. The statistics for both weapons are correct.

 **The katana has the same statistics as the greatsword (described in the *Urban Arcana Campaign Setting*), except for weight. So you can choose between a 6-pound sword and a 15-pound sword with otherwise identical statistics. Is that correct?**

Yes, but there's one other difference -- the proficiency feat required for optimum effectiveness. The greatsword is a 15-pound weapon that requires the Archaic Weapons Proficiency feat. The katana is a 6-pound weapon that requires the appropriate Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat.

 **Cars are so dang expensive! Why can't my character buy used stuff? A cheap old clunker to get around in would suit him fine.**

Used items, including cars, are definitely allowed in the game. You'll find rules covering that option in the sidebar on page 112 of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*. You may, however, wonder why the benefit for buying used is limited to a 1-point reduction in the purchase DC.

First, remember that a 1-point drop in purchase DC is nothing to sneeze at -- it represents a 25%-30% reduction in dollar value. For example, a purchase DC of 28 (typical for a new car) represents a dollar value of up to \$20,000, whereas an item with a purchase DC of 27 is worth up to \$15,000. The difference is \$5,000, or one-fourth of the higher value. That's a pretty big savings! Furthermore, a 1-point drop in purchase DC often makes the difference between losing 1d6 points of Wealth and losing only 1 point of Wealth on the purchase.

More importantly, the prices of all equipment (as given in Chapter 4) assume that the gear is of high enough quality to withstand the rigors of adventuring life. That principle applies to used items as well. So the rules on page 112 assume that, aside from difficulties in repair, used items are in excellent shape. A price of \$15,000 may seem like a lot for a used car, but it really isn't so bad for a used car that runs just as well as a new one.

So what do you do when a character wants to drive around in a beat-up old clunker -- something that gets him around but isn't very reliable? The rules don't officially address that issue, but let me suggest the following house rule.

You can reduce the purchase DC for used equipment still further than the rules on page 112 indicate. For each additional point by which the purchase DC drops, a -1 penalty applies to all checks that involve that item. The minimum purchase DC, even for a used item, is 10. All the standard rules for buying used equipment (increased time to purchase, increased difficulty for repairs, and so forth) still apply normally.

Let's look again at that car with a normal purchase DC of 28. The standard rules for buying used reduce the DC to 27. A character might be able to find a beat-up version of that same car for a purchase DC of 23 (a further reduction of 4 points), but it imposes a -4 penalty on all Drive checks made with it.



How would you alter the statistics of a weapon that uses modified ammunition, such as armor-piercing ammo?

Check out the *Urban Arcana Campaign Setting* for rules on alternate ammo types. You might see a few new rules in forthcoming products as well!



Would steel-toed boots add to the damage for a kick attack?

Regular old steel-toed work boots wouldn't. Small variations in the design of weapons (or footwear, in this case) aren't generally sufficient to warrant different statistics. Now, if your hero had a handy pop-out blade like the one Rosa Klebb used in *From Russia with Love*, that would be a different story!



How long does it take to get into and out of armor?

The time required to put on or take off armor depends on the armor type, according to the table below.

	Don	Don Hastily	Remove
Shield			
Any	1 move action	N/A	1 move action
Impromptu Armor			
Light	1 round	1 attack action	1 move action
Medium	1 minute	5 rounds	1 minute*
Concealable Armor			
Light	1 round	1 attack action	1 move action
Medium	2 rounds	1 round	1 round
Tactical Armor			
Light	2 rounds	1 round	1 round
Medium	4 rounds	2 rounds	2 rounds*
Heavy	1 minute*	4 rounds	4 rounds*
Archaic Armor			
Light	1 minute	5 rounds	1 minute*
Medium	4 minutes*	1 minute	1 minute*
Heavy	4 minutes**	4 minutes*	1d4+1 minutes*

*If the character has some help, cut this time in half. A single character doing nothing else can help one or two adjacent characters with armor. Two characters can't help each other don or remove armor at the same time.

**The wearer must have help to don this armor properly. Without help, it can be donned only hastily.

Don: This column indicates how long it takes a character to put the armor on (1 minute equals 10 rounds). Readyng a shield (that is, strapping it on) requires only a move action.

Don Hastily: This column indicates how long it takes to put the armor on in a hurry. The armor penalty and equipment bonus for hastily donned armor are each 1 point worse than normal when this option is used. For example, if Russell donned his light-duty vest hastily, it would take him 2 rounds, but the vest would provide only a +4 equipment bonus to his AC (instead of the normal +5), and his armor penalty would be -5 (instead of the normal -4).

Remove: This column indicates how long it takes to get the armor off. (That's an important fact to know if the wearer is suddenly submerged; see the rules for drowning in Chapter 7 of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*).



No statistics are provided for the M203 grenade launcher, a common attachment for the M16A2 assault rifle. What should they be?

The M203 is very much like the M79. In fact, as far as game statistics go, the two are identical except for weight (see below). The differences are as follows.

The M203 is an attachment to the M16A2 that allows the weapon to fire grenades in addition to its normal function. The M203 is, effectively, an M79 grenade launcher that attaches to the rifle. Attaching the M203 to the M16A2 requires a full-round action and increases the rifle's weight by 3 pounds. The M203 allows the

user to launch a grenade instead of firing the rifle when making an attack with the weapon. The rifle and the grenade launcher cannot both be fired as part of the same attack, and the M203 cannot be used alone (that is, unattached).

As I've mentioned once or twice above, you might see more complete statistics for items such as this one in upcoming products!

 **I think a character should be able to use a scope with a handgun. Can you provide some rules for doing so? Also, which of the guns described in the equipment chapter come with scopes?**

A weapon must have a scope mount to accommodate a scope. A scope mount has a purchase DC of 10, and adding it to the weapon requires a DC 10 Repair check and 1 hour of time. If a weapon comes with a scope, that fact is indicated in the weapon's description.

All other rules for using scopes are given in the Scope entry on page 120 of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*. The rules for using such items with handguns are no different.

 **The *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* mentions bipods and tripods for Huge or larger guns, but no statistics are provided for them. Can you please give more information?**

Each of the three Huge weapons in Chapter 4 of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* comes with a bipod or a tripod (a bipod in the case of the Barrett Light Fifty and M-60, and a tripod in the case of the M2HB).

Setting up a bipod requires a move action, and you must set it up so that you can use the weapon at roughly shoulder level. You can set the bipod on a stable surface such as a table, but the most common method of use is to place the bipod on the ground and lie down beside it to fire the weapon. Lying down is a free action, but getting up from prone is a move action.

A tripod takes a full-round action to set up. It must be set up either on the ground or on a very stable surface. Again, you must use the weapon at roughly shoulder level. Thus, if you set up the tripod on the ground, you must sit on the ground to fire the weapon.

 **What is the range of the darkvision provided by night vision goggles? Is there even a range?**

Yes there is -- it's 120 feet. Also, the infrared illuminator functions as a standard flashlight (that is, it illuminates an area 30 feet long and 15 feet across at its end).

 **Do you follow a formula for determining firearm damage? That is, do all 9mm pistols deal the same damage? Is there some guideline that a GM can use when creating statistics for a weapon not covered in the game?**

Absolutely. Generally, a weapon that fires small-caliber handgun ammo (.22 caliber, .25 caliber, .32 caliber, or .380 caliber) deals 2d4 points of damage. A weapon that fires a mid-range caliber ammo (.38 Special, .357 Magnum, .40 caliber, .41 AE, .45 caliber, .9mm, or 10 mm) deals 2d6 points of damage. A weapon that uses large-caliber handgun ammo or light-to-medium-caliber rifle ammo (.44 Magnum, .50 AE, 5.56 mm, 7.62mm Russian, and so on) deals 2d8 points of damage. Large-caliber rifle ammo (7.62mm, .30-06) deals 2d10 points, and heavy machine gun-caliber ammo (.50 caliber, 12.7mm Russian) deals 2d12 points.

Obviously, the above list includes only a fraction of the ammunition calibers in use around the world, and I might not have covered the specific calibers that you're interested in, especially if you're creating statistics for really oddball weapons. So just set your damage by comparing your weapon to other similar ones. When in doubt, you're reasonably safe in assuming that a "typical" handgun deals 2d6 points of damage, whereas a "typical" longarm deals 2d8 or 2d10 points of damage.



The description of the sawed-off shotgun states that the weapon is illegal. Yet on the weapons table, it is not indicated as illegal. Can you clarify this issue, please?

The entry on Table 4-4 is incorrect. The sawed-off shotgun should be listed with a restriction of Illegal (+4).

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 back here every other week for the latest batch of answers!

About the Author

Charles Ryan was one of the designers of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*. He has been designing and editing games for more than twelve years. His other credits include such diverse titles as the *The Wheel of Time Roleplaying Game*, *Deadlands*, *Millennium's End*, *The Last Crusade*, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, *Dune: Chronicles of the Imperium*, and *Star Trek: Red Alert!*, to name just a few. Charles served as Chairman of the Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts & Design, the professional organization of the games industry, from 1996 through 2001. He lives in Kent, Washington with his lovely wife Tammie, three cats, two rats, and a dog. He works for Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

