

# Bigby's Baleful Bayonets

## Rules for Early Modern-Era D&D • By Shane Ivey

These rules incorporate a number of 18th-century weapons into the standard *Dungeons and Dragons* rules, with an eye toward easily adding elements of steampunk and Napoleonic-era action to your game.

The design philosophy was simple: New technologies ought to shape D&D characters' tactics and behavior just as they changed historical warfare, and the rules for these new technologies should not substantially change the official game rules.

In large part these rules are concerned with new equipment, particularly firearms and cannons, but they also offer new options for characters in a world changed by those weapons—a world that emphasizes strategy and scientific training over sturdy armor and heavy blades.

Nevertheless, these rules do not deal much with D&D races and classes. It is up to each DM to define which D&D races and classes are available in his or her game setting.

## Classes

In a firearms-heavy setting there is little call for shields and armor, and characters are likely to spend time on other forms of training instead. Depending on the setting, the DM may make part or all of this variant mandatory.

### Starting Skills and Feats

With the spread of literacy and standardized military training even among uneducated lower classes, all classes gain Knowledge and Profession as class skills.

Any character whose class starts with the Armor Proficiency, Shield Proficiency or Tower Shield Proficiency feat may take bonus skill ranks instead. The character gains one extra class skill (DM's option) and +1 skill rank per level for each feat given up.

Also, any character whose class starts with Armor Proficiency, Shield Proficiency or Tower Shield Proficiency can trade them for the following feats on a one-for-one basis: Combat Expertise, Dodge, Mobility, Skillful Parry, or Toughness. The prerequisites for Combat Expertise and Dodge are waived if they're gained as class feats in this way. The usual prerequisites apply for the other feats.

A multiclass character cannot trade feats in this way in one class and then gain the same armor or shield feats "free" in a second class—he must take armor or shield proficiency as a separate feat.

**Example:** Patrick wants his character, a fighter, to be a navy officer. For his class Knowledge skills Patrick selects navigation, the seas and shiphandling, and as his class Profession skill he picks navy officer. Navy officers don't bother with armor, so in exchange for the three Armor Proficiency feats he gains +3 skill ranks per level and selects Diplomacy, Spot, and Use Rope as his three extra class skills. Instead of Shield Proficiency and Tower Shield Proficiency he starts with Combat Expertise and Skillful Parry.

## Skills

New technology entails changes in society, and that means new skills and new professions. The following additions should help flesh out characters and define their roles in the game world.

### Craft (Int)

New crafts available in an early modern-era game include cartmaking, clockmaking, barrelmaking, coppersmithing, drafting (maps and plans), embroidery, foundry (cannons and bells), glazing (glass), gunnery, gunsmithing, hatmaking, instrument-making (telescopes and other navigational aids), lensmaking (spectacles and telescopes), lutherie (wooden stringed instruments), apothecary (medicines), powdermaking (gunpowder), printing (books and broadside sheets), sailmaking, silversmith (silver cutlery and tablewear) and turning (bowls, cups, candlesticks and objects carved with a lathe).

## Knowledge (Int)

Major new bodies of lore available in an early modern-era game include:

- **Law** (the philosophies of law, legislation, courts, justice and government)
- **Military** (strategy, tactics and the structure, formation and maintenance of armies and navies)
- **Navigation** (using charts, landmarks, the stars and mathematics to plot a course)
- **The seas** (weather, ocean currents, sea life and seaside communities)
- **Shiphandling** (sailing and maintaining ships and boats)
- **The streets** (urban life and culture, including crime, criminals and criminal groups)

## Profession (Wis)

New professions available in an early modern-era game include administrator, architect, army officer, astrologer, cartographer, cavalryman, clergy, footsoldier, lawyer, merchant, navy officer, physician, scholar and servant.

Note that having skill ranks in a profession is not the same as having a closely-related class: Not every character with high ranks in clergy is a high-level cleric, and without ranks in Profession a high-level fighter won't likely find work in the army as anything other than a private.

## Feats

These new feats reflect advances in the medical sciences—particularly for culture's that either cannot or choose not to rely on clerics for healing—and the scientific, disciplined study of fencing and hand-to-hand combat in a setting with little to no armor.

### Physician [General]

You have extensive education in the medical arts and are skilled at treating wounds and facilitating fast recovery.

**Prerequisite:** Surgeon, Heal 5 ranks, Knowledge (nature) 5 ranks, Profession (physician) 5 ranks, Int 12.

**Benefit:** When giving a patient long-term care, you may make a Heal check once per day at DC 15. If successful, the patient heals 1d8 hp in addition to the extra recovery allowed for long-term care. A patient with ability damage also recovers one extra ability point. For each trained assistant—one with at least four ranks in Heal—you can treat an extra six patients per day.

### Riposte [General]

You are skilled at making quick counter-attacks.

**Prerequisite:** Skillful Parry.

**Benefit:** If you deflect an attack with the Skillful Parry feat, you gain an immediate attack of opportunity against the attacker.

**Special:** A fighter may select Riposte as one of his fighter bonus feats (see PHB page 38).

### Skillful Parry [General]

When lightly encumbered and wielding a quick, handy weapon you are skilled at deflecting melee attacks.

**Prerequisite:** Combat Expertise.

**Benefit:** As a move action you can parry melee attacks that would otherwise hit you. To parry an attack, make an attack roll against the attacker's attack roll. If you succeed, you take no damage from the attack. (Essentially, this attack roll becomes your armor class if higher than your regular AC.) Unlike ordinary attacks, the armor check penalty applies to all Skillful Parry attempts.

You can parry any number of attacks in a round, but each parry after the first in the same round is at -2. This penalty is cumulative: -2 for the second parry, -4 for the third, -6 for the fourth, and so on.

When you parry an attack, your weapon automatically takes damage from the attack as if from a sunder attempt, unless your successful parry is a critical "hit"—a natural roll in the weapon's threat range with a successful confirmation roll.

Skillful Parry can be attempted with a shield or any handy, well-balanced weapon: a light weapon, a one-handed slashing or piercing weapon, or a two-handed piercing weapon that does

not have the “reach” special quality. (When in doubt, the DM decides.)

With the DM’s permission you may “borrow” a move action from your next turn to use Skillful Parry before your initiative turn; your next action can be only a single move or standard action. You may not parry attacks against which you are flat-footed. You may not parry any attacks from an opponent more than one size category larger than you. If you are unarmed you may parry only unarmed attacks.

**Special:** A fighter may select Skillful Parry as one of his fighter bonus feats (see PHB page 38). A monk may parry any melee weapon attack when unarmed and takes no damage from successfully parrying a critical hit.

## Surgeon [General]

You have training in the medical arts and are skilled at treating wounds.

**Prerequisite:** Wis 10, Heal 4 ranks.

**Benefit:** You can use first aid, supplemented by medicines and surgeon’s tools, to tend a patient’s wounds and reduce bleeding, shock and pain. With a successful Heal check at DC 15 you heal the patient of 1d8 hp and an equal amount of nonlethal damage. You can use Heal on this way on yourself at a –4 penalty. Attempting to use first aid in this way takes five minutes, and it requires the right medicines and other supplies—if you don’t have a healer’s kit, you can heal only 1d4 hp. You may also attempt to amputate a badly-wounded body part. See **Grievous Wounds**, below.

## Equipment

The sharpest change these rules make to official D&D rules is in the effects of firearms. The official rules give damage ratings and ranges for sample Renaissance and modern guns (DMG page 144), but they fail to account for one fundamental fact: bullets are so fast and dense that they punch right through any armor thin enough for a man to wear. These rules replace the DMG treatment of firearms.

The presence of guns on the battlefield has a profound effect on the use of armor, and therefore on the use of other weapons. Modern cultures that use muskets and cannons—which simply punch right through any armor light enough for a man to wear—tend to face enemies who likewise use powder weapons or who very quickly learn to use them. That fact shapes the tactics and other equipment they adopt in warfare.

## Firearms

Flintlock small arms are all loaded in much the same way: pour powder into a chamber at the base of the gun barrel, followed by a lead ball and a wad of paper or cloth, and tamp all of it down with a ramrod. Pull back and half-cock the striker and pour a tiny amount of fine powder into the flashpan. Close the flashpan. Pull the striker back to fully cock it. Aim. Pull the trigger. The striker pushes a small piece of flint against the frizzen, a piece of steel on the flashpan lid, which opens the flashpan. Sparks from the flint hitting the frizzen ignite the powder and fire the gun in a roar of sparks, flame and black smoke.

Powder is often stored in a powder horn, which holds enough for 12 shots. However, many armies issue powder cartridges to their troops. A cartridge is a greased paper envelope containing a ball and enough powder for one discharge; the paper itself serves as tamping. Using a prepared cartridge reduces loading time for a carbine, musket or rifled musket by one full-round action.

All musket, pistol and rifle attacks have the following features.

**Armor piercing:** Heavier and moving far faster than an arrow or crossbow bolt, a bullet ignores worn armor—treat it as a ranged touch attack. However, it does not ignore natural armor, damage reduction or magical bonuses to armor class.

**Faster than the eye:** A firearms attack gains a +2 circumstance bonus if the target is not moving. If the target’s last action was to move—this requires some kind of movement action, not just a five-foot step—the bonus does not apply.

**Grievous Harm:** Firearm attacks cause devastating injuries. See **Grievous Wounds**, below.

**Loading:** Loading requires from one to four full-round actions, depending on the gun. It requires no skill roll, but without proficiency loading takes twice as long. Each round spent loading provokes an attack of opportunity.

The Rapid Reload feat reduces the loading time by one full-round action for any firearm. Armor interferes with loading a firearm. After spending all necessary actions, roll the armor's arcane spell failure chance to see if the loading goes wrong—you fumble the powder, bullet, ramrod or wadding. If loading goes wrong it must be repeated before the weapon can fire. Any firearm may be deliberately loaded with less powder than usual. This reduces the total damage by half (round up).

**Misfire:** Any attack roll of a natural, unmodified “1” is a smoky misfire that fouls the firearm. (This occurs on natural 1 or 2 if you don't have proficiency in the weapon.) A fouled firearm must be thoroughly cleared and cleaned, requiring proficiency in the weapon and two full-round actions, before it can be loaded again.

## Matchlocks

Most early modern-era firearms are flintlocks, but older and less reliable matchlock weapons are sometimes still used by the poor or desperate. For a matchlock firearm, increase the misfire chance by 1, reduce the damage by one die type (e.g., from 2d6 to 1d10, 1d10 to 1d8 or 1d8 to 1d6), reduce the critical threat range by 1, and increase loading time by one full-round action.

## About the Loading Times

Historically, professional soldiers could load and fire a flintlock musket about twice a minute and a rifled musket once. That averages to once every 30 seconds for a musket. So why does our musket reload in two rounds instead of four? Simple playability. Compare it to the crossbow. Historically, a heavy crossbowman could fire about three times a minute. In D&D a heavy crossbow can be reloaded in one full-round action. Two full-round actions for a musket using prepared cartridges seems about right.

## Cannons

Cannons typically fire one of four types of ammunition: solid shot, grape shot, chain shot and bar shot. Cannon attacks have the following features.

**Armor piercing:** All cannon ammunition ignores armor worn by characters and natural armor—treat it as a ranged touch attack. However, it does not ignore damage reduction or magical bonuses to armor class.

**Bludgeoning and piercing:** Cannon attacks always have both the bludgeoning and piercing attack types, at the same time. Damage reduction must block both types to apply.

**Grievous Harm:** Cannon attacks cause devastating injuries. See **Grievous Wounds**, below.

**Loading:** In combat a cannon must be loaded by a team of trained, agile artillerymen. To be in a cannon team a character must have at least one rank in Craft (gunnery), and may not wear any armor. Each action spent loading a cannon triggers an attack of opportunity.

For each man missing from the team—or who has no Craft (gunnery) skill, or is wearing armor—add one full-round action to the gun's loading time. There is no benefit to adding extra men to the team—they just get in the way.

For every member of the team who has five or more ranks in Craft (gunnery), reduce the loading time by one full-round action.

The Rapid Reload feat has no effect on loading a cannon.

**Firing:** Once loaded, the cannon is aimed by a gun captain, who then gives the order to fire and watches to see the effect while the team reloads. Aiming a cannon is a full-round action which triggers an attack of opportunity. The cannon's attack roll equals the gun captain's base attack bonus plus his Wis modifier.

**Misfire:** Any attack roll of a natural, unmodified “1” calls for a second attack roll, just like confirming a critical hit. If the follow-up roll is higher than the target's AC, the attack is a smoky misfire that fouls the cannon. (This occurs on natural 1 or 2 if the gun has too few men on its team.) A fouled cannon must be cleared and cleaned, requiring two full-round actions, before it can be loaded again.

If the follow-up roll is lower than the target's AC, the misfire is a breech burst. The ball is slightly too large or is incorrectly cast and the gun captain overlooked its deformity. It jams in the barrel and the gun explodes. Each member of the gun crew takes triple the gun's normal blast damage. No Ref save is allowed.

**Solid Shot:** Solid shot is the basic cannonball. Solid shot is typically fired into formations of opponents or at structures, not targeted at individual characters. Cannonballs get a blast radius even though are not loaded with powder and they do not explode. They're usually cast from iron and their purpose is simply to smash structures. Their deadliness is in the shrapnel they produce on impact—splinters of wood and shards of stone and metal fly everywhere after a cannonball smashes home, not to mention the risk of a roof falling on your head if a wall takes one hit too many. If a cannonball hits open earth or water, or some other substance unlikely to produce much shrapnel, ignore the blast radius altogether.

A direct hit on a specific target is rare. If a cannonball is fired directly at a character and hits, the target gets a Ref save at DC 10. If it succeeds, the cannonball hits nearby for normal blast damage. If the Ref save fails, the cannonball hits the target square for full damage.

After a direct hit on a character, the cannonball keeps going (exception: a target of huge size or larger stops the cannonball altogether; it's lodged in the victim's body like a bullet). If the victim was standing in front of a wall or door, it does the usual blast damage from shrapnel; the victim takes this damage, too. Otherwise the cannonball keeps going in a line (see PHB page 176) beyond the victim. Any character standing in a square along the line must make a Ref save at DC 10 or likewise take a direct hit for full damage. And so on.

A cannon on level ground firing solid shot directly at a formation of characters must beat AC 10 to hit the target square at the correct elevation. After it travels two range increments past the target the cannonball touches ground and gradually bounces and rolls to a stop.

**Grape, Chain and Bar Shot:** Grape shot—also called cannister—is a bag of musket balls fired directly at enemy combatants. Aimed at a target square, it blasts everything between the cannon and the target square in a cylinder with a radius of 10 feet, or four squares across (see PHB page 175). Each potential target gets a Ref save at DC 10 for half damage. Grape shot does blast damage only.

Chain shot is a pair of solid cannonballs linked together by a metal chain. It's most often fired at a ship's rigging, where it can tear through ropes and tackle. Against living targets it does half the blast damage of solid shot, but does the same damage as solid shot on a direct hit.

Bar shot is a pair of cannonballs welded together with a solid bar. In game terms it's equivalent to chain shot.

## Explosives

Gunpowder burns, and when it's confined it explodes. That's all it's good for. If you want to destroy something and you don't have a cannon handy, it's relatively easy pack a container of powder, light a fuse and stand back.

Mixing up such a bomb, on the other hand, is an art and a science. Doing it wrong can yield a bomb with too little blasting power, or far too much. Or, even worse, a fuse that fails or lights too quickly.

Creating a bomb such as a grenado requires a Craft (powdermaking) check at DC 10. The DM must make this roll and keep it secret from the players. If the roll succeeds, the bomb goes off as it should. If it fails by 1 to 5, the fuse takes twice as long as it should but the bomb does go off. If the roll fails by 6 to 10, the fuse sputters out and the bomb does not go off at all. If the roll fails by 11 or more, the fuse sparks too fast and the bomb goes off in half the expected time.

If for some reason a musket's powder cartridge explodes while you're carrying it, you take 1d6 damage. Roll 1d20 to see if the explosion touches off the cartridge next to the one that went off—if you roll 10 or less, it explodes, too. Repeat until the blasts stop or you run out of cartridges.

## Military Arms and Armor

Armies quickly abandon armor and shields altogether, spending their money on firearms, cannons and ammunition instead. Armor and shields are very effective in hand-to-hand combat, but with guns on the battlefield they serve only to slow troops down and make them clumsy at loading their weapons.

In some cultures, wearing armor into battle is seen not only as outdated but as a sign of cowardice.

## Soldiers and Sailors

Modern military weaponry is rigidly standardized. The common footsoldier carries a musket and

a bayonet. Infantry sergeants typically carry halberds to distinguish them from ordinary soldiers and from officers. Cavalrymen carry lances, sabers, and pistols or carbines. Artillerymen typically carry no personal weapons beyond daggers or handaxes.

Ships' armories carry pistols, cutlasses (shortswords), boarding pikes (spears) and boarding axes (battleaxes). Every sailor carries a knife, and clubs are readily available in the form of belaying pins. Marines are equipped as footsoldiers, with muskets and bayonets, and marine sergeants sometimes carry halberds just like the infantry.

In most armies, weapons are only issued to common soldiers and sailors just before action or when on the march. They aren't allowed to carry them around while in garrison or in peacetime.

## **Officers on Land and Sea**

Officers of every sort carry pistols and swords. The sword is usually a smallsword or a saber, although in some cultures infantry officers carry traditional weapons such as broadswords or claymores (longswords or bastard swords). In some navies, midshipmen—gentlemen still training to be officers, often quite young—carry long dirks (shortswords) rather than actual swords.

The officer's sword is part of his uniform and should always be worn when he is properly dressed. Officers are almost always gentlemen. They can be—rarely—promoted from the ranks for extraordinary service, but they are usually of aristocratic birth even if not directly in line for a wealthy inheritance. They remain socially distant from the common soldiers.

Modern weapons are very particular to a fighter's station. A gentleman would never walk into battle with a commoner's bayonet or halberd, and a footsoldier or sergeant riding in battle or carrying a pistol or sword can usually expect to be punished for it. Not only are most cultures very sensitive to social class, but in the heat of battle a man's weapons are the most obvious sign of his role, and having ordinary soldiers mistaken for officers—and vice versa—can cause great confusion.

## **Modern Armor: Trenchers and Heavy Lancers**

In some cultures old-fashioned armor is still used, most often by raiders who primarily or exclusively engage in hand-to-hand combat meant to disrupt infantry formations. Two examples are trenchers and heavy lancers.

Heavy lancers are armored cavalry that can be maneuvered quickly so as to avoid excessive musket or rifle volleys as they approach. They are armed like other cavalrymen but wear chain shirts or breastplates, whichever is required by a particular army. Thanks to their expensive armor—which they must provide themselves—they are usually drawn from the wealthier classes, such as landed gentry or successful merchants. Most are gentlemen who due to lack of influence or money could not obtain officers' commissions. They tend to be just as socially exclusive as officers, and fraternization between heavy lancers and officers is usually acceptable. Promotion from the ranks is much more common among heavy lancers than any other service.

Trenchers approach the enemy from the cover of earthworks before charging. They come in two types. Some are simply footmen who carry armor and hand weapons instead of muskets—typically scale mail, a greataxe or heavy flail for clearing enemy formations and a battleaxe or heavy mace for close quarters.

Others add armor to a footsoldier's musket and bayonet, with the expectation that they'll launch one volley at close range and then charge without reloading. Such armored musketeers are very expensive to equip—they can't be drawn from the gentry, who supply their own equipment but invariably favor cavalry—and require high levels of discipline. That makes them rare and elite in most armies.

## **Uniforms**

Modern military uniforms are rigidly defined for officers, cavalrymen and footsoldiers. The uniform typically calls for a white wig (usually powdered to conceal dirt and stains) and a long, brightly-dyed wool coat over a long-sleeved shirt and breeches. In some armies a footsoldier must wear a leather stock that forces the soldier's head to remain upright. Military uniforms are as uncomfortable as they sound, especially in hot and humid environments. The ability to tolerate wearing one despite long labor is considered a sign of good discipline.

Ordinary sailors usually have no uniform—they are lucky in this if little else.

## Civilian Arms and Armor

In the civilian world, openly wearing weapons in public is almost always suspicious behavior. In public no gentleman bothers to carry a weapon. A walking stick is fine, and a greatcloak can come in handy in a pinch, but a sword or a brace of pistols is unacceptable. An officer at a ball or ceremony wears a ceremonial sword or saber, but it's probably a showpiece, no good for fighting. Any good fighting sword would almost certainly be unfashionable.

If travelling a gentleman might carry pistols for protection in a saddle bag or, more likely, in his servant's bags, but certainly not a sword. A gentleman who goes about a civilized land armed for battle invites public ridicule and finds his influence fading fast.

It is much the same for the lower classes. Apart from a coachman's musketoone or a hunter's musket, a commoner is unlikely to even own a gun, and anyone carrying one in public invites interest from the watch and magistrate.

A commoner cannot carry a sword—that's the province of gentlemen—but a good knife is likely enough, and a trusty staff or walking stick draws no attention. A shadier character might carry a hidden sap for waylaying unsuspecting travelers. Commoners roused up to riot or fend off some threat likely sport clubs, scythes, pitchforks, an occasional musket or musketoone and an assortment of ancient weapons—guisarmes, spears, ranseurs, glaives and billhooks.

Law enforcement—the town watch or bailiffs—almost always carry clubs that can be tucked into their belts.

No respectable lady of any stripe would carry weapons, but a surprising number carry easily-concealed stilettos, especially when traveling.

## Weapon Descriptions

Most melee weapons change little over the years, but in an early modern-era game a few melee weapons have developed alongside the increasing emphasis on musket warfare and the increasingly sophisticated study of combat, such as the bayonet, the smallsword and the cavalry saber.

**Bayonet:** A bayonet is a long dagger with a socket instead of a handle. The socket is fitted snugly over the barrel of a musket (this takes one standard action and provokes an attack of opportunity), turning it into a spear.

**Cannon:** The quintessential artillery piece fires a devastating 42-pound cannonball. It is a very heavy gun used strictly on land, typically wheeled and drawn by a team of draft horses. It requires a team of six trained gunners and takes 18 full-round actions to reload.

**Cannon, light:** A light cannon fires a six-, nine- or 12-pound ball. It is found on small vessels such as cutters and ship's boats. It requires a team of three trained gunners and takes nine full-round actions to reload.

**Cannon, long:** A long cannon fires a light cannonball over great distances. It requires a team of four trained gunners and takes 12 full-round actions to reload.

**Cannon, medium:** A medium cannon, the type found on most ships, fires an 18-pound ball. It requires a team of four trained gunners and takes 12 full-round actions to reload.

**Cannon, short:** A short-barreled cannon fires a heavy ball but has much shorter effective range. It is meant for close combat and is useless for long-range engagements. It is about one-third the weight of a demi-cannon, and many small ships carry several short cannons to help ward off larger attackers. It requires a team of four trained gunners and takes 12 full-round actions to reload.

**Carbine:** A carbine is a short-barreled, lighter version of the musket, most often used by cavalry who find it easier to handle and aim from horseback. It requires three full-round actions to reload (two with a prepared cartridge).

**Cutlass:** A slightly shorter version of the saber, in game terms a cutlass is equivalent to a shortsword with +1 damage but which can be used for slashing attacks only.

**Demi-cannon:** A three-ton demi-cannon fires a 32-pound ball. It is the heaviest cannon used on the sea and is found only on the largest ships. It requires a team of five trained gunners and takes 15 full-round actions to reload.

**Grenado:** A grenado is simply a small container, usually a pot, loaded with enough gunpowder to cause a small explosion. Lighting it is a move action. Anyone caught within the blast radius takes damage, but may make a Ref save at DC 15 for half damage.

**Mortar:** A mortar is a short, heavy cannon that fires bombs, hollowed-out cannonballs

filled with powder and equipped with a fuse. A mortar is usually fired on a high, arcing trajectory so the bomb drops onto the target from above before exploding. Bombs are less reliable than ordinary cannonballs. If an attack roll beats the target AC by 5 or less, the bomb either goes off too soon—harmlessly in the air before landing—or the fuse malfunctions and it fails to go off.

**Musket:** The standard infantry firearm is about five feet long and has a smooth bore and a wooden stock that can be used as a heavy club (1d8 damage, 20/x2). It requires two hands to use. A musket requires three full-round actions to reload (two with a prepared cartridge). A musket's stock can be used as a club inflicting +1 damage.

**Musket, rifled:** A new version of the musket with a longer barrel that is “rifled” with special grooves that raise shallow ridges the bullet as it is fired, which cause it to spin and stabilize in flight and increase its accuracy. However, the rifling cuts into the bullet as it is loaded into the barrel, too, which slows loading. A rifled musket requires greater training than an ordinary musket but is much more accurate in the hands of a skilled shooter. A rifled musket requires four full-round actions to reload (three with a prepared cartridge). A rifled musket's stock can be used as a club inflicting +1 damage.

**Musketoön:** The musketoön is a short, wide-barreled musket that fires a cluster of small balls rather than a single musket or pistol shot. Its effects depend on the range. Up to the first range increment it attacks a single target and inflicts 2d8 damage. Beyond the first range increment it attacks all targets in two adjacent squares. Roll a separate attack against each for 1d8 damage per attack. A musketoön requires three full-round actions to reload (two with a prepared cartridge).

A blunderbuss is an older version, in game terms equivalent to a matchlock musketoön.

**Pistol:** A pistol is about one foot long and meant to be fired one-handed. If turned and held by the barrel it can be used as a club. Pistols are usually worn in pairs, typically in a matching set called a “brace”. A pistol requires one full-round action to reload.

**Pistol, small:** A so-called “pocket pistol” is easily concealed in a man's or woman's clothing. It uses a slightly smaller bullet than an ordinary pistol and cannot be used as a club. A small pistol requires one full-round action to reload.

**Powder keg:** A powder keg is exactly what it sounds like, a cask of gunpowder. Its damage depends on its size.

**Rocket:** A rocket—essentially a thick cylinder of gunpowder propped up on a pole to keep it on course—is dreadfully inaccurate and unpredictable. Roll to attack normally, but if the attack roll is an odd number roll 1d6: the rocket either fails to launch (1–2), fails to explode when it lands (3–4), or flies harmlessly off course no matter how high you rolled (5–6).

**Saber:** A saber is a long, slightly curved sword meant primarily for slashing attacks but capable of thrusts as well. It is equivalent to a longsword. It is the favorite combat weapon of officers and cavalymen.

**Saber, cavalry:** The cavalry saber is a longer, heavier refinement of the saber, used exclusively for slashing attacks and more capable of dealing wicked cuts. It is usually considered a martial weapon when wielded from horseback, but its weight makes it an exotic weapon when used on foot, requiring a separate proficiency.

**Smallsword:** The smallsword is a refinement of the rapier, slightly shorter and slimmer but with excellent balance, used for quick thrusting attacks. In game terms it is treated as a rapier that has fewer hit points (2 instead of the usual 5) but thanks to its speed is deadlier when wielded well.

### Martial Melee Weapons

Cutlass (1d6+1, 19-20/x2, weight 4 lbs, cost 10 gp, S)

Saber, cavalry (1d8, 18-20/x2, weight 5 lbs, cost 30 gp, S)

Smallsword (1d6, 18-20/x3, 2 HP, cost 40 gp, P)

### Simple Ranged Weapons

Carbine (2d6, 18-20/x3, range increment 25 ft., weight 6 lbs, cost 40 gp, P)

Musket (2d8, 18-20/x3, range increment 40 ft., weight 9 lbs, cost 50 gp, P)

Musketoön (2d8 or 1d8, 18-20/x3, range increment 10 ft., weight 6 lbs, cost 40 gp, P)

Pistol (2d6, 18-20/x3, range increment 10 ft., weight 3 lbs, cost 75 gp, P)

Pistol, small (1d10, 18-20/x3, range increment 10 ft., weight 2 lbs, cost 100 gp, P)



### **Martial Ranged Weapons**

Cannon (5d6x4, 20/x3, blast radius 10 ft. (5d6), range increment 150 ft, B+P)  
Cannon, light (5d6, 20/x3, blast radius 5 ft. (2d6), range increment 240 ft, B+P)  
Cannon, long (5d6, 20/x3, blast radius 5 ft. (2d6), range increment 300 ft, B+P)  
Cannon, medium (5d6x2, 20/x3, blast radius 5 ft. (3d6), range increment 240 ft, B+P)  
Cannon, short (5d6x3, 20/x3, blast radius 10 ft. (4d6), range increment 100 ft, B+P)  
Demi-cannon (5d6x3, 20/x3, blast radius 10 ft. (4d6), range increment 200 ft, B+P)  
Mortar (5d6, 20/x3, blast radius 30 ft. (5d6x2), range increment 200 ft., B+P)  
Musket, rifled (2d6, 17-20/x3, range increment 80 ft., weight 12 lbs, cost 100 gp, P)

### **Explosive Weapons**

Grenado (2d6, blast radius 5 ft., range increment 10 ft., weight 1 lb.)

Powder keg

5 lb (5d6, blast radius 10 ft.)

10 lb (5d6x2, blast radius 15 ft.)

20 lb (5d6x3, blast radius 20 ft.)

50 lb (5d6x8, blast radius 40 ft.)

100 lb (5d6x15, blast radius 60 ft.)

Rocket (5d6x3, blast radius 20 ft., range increment 100 ft., weight 30 lbs)

## **Medieval Weapons in the Modern Age**

Many weapons commonly used in D&D have no place in an early modern-era world. Firearms and hunters' shortbows are available readily enough to be considered simple weapons, but some once-common medieval weapons are now so rarely used as to be considered exotic. Many exotic weapons are simply unavailable.

These are recommendations. Whether an item is simple, martial, exotic, or available at all in a given culture is always at the DM's discretion.

### **Simple Melee Weapons**

Bayonet (as spear)

Boarding pike (spear)

Club

Dagger

Longspear

Quarterstaff

Sickle

Unarmed strike

### **Simple Ranged Weapons**

Carbine

Musket

Musketoön

Pistol

Pistol, small

Shortbow

Sling

### **Martial Melee Weapons**

Axe, throwing

Billhook

Boarding axe (battle axe)

Broadsword (longsword)

Cutlass

Glaive

Guisarme

Halberd

Handaxe

Lance

Midshipman's dirk (shortsword)  
Ranseur  
Rapier  
Saber (longsword)  
Saber, cavalry  
Sap  
Scimitar  
Scythe  
Smallsword

### **Martial Ranged Weapons**

Cannon  
Cannon, light  
Cannon, long  
Cannon, medium  
Cannon, short  
Demi-cannon  
Mortar  
Musket, rifled

### **Exotic Melee Weapons**

Falchion  
Flail  
Flail, heavy  
Greataxe  
Greatclub  
Greatsword  
Hammer, light  
Kukri  
Pick, light  
Shield, light  
Spiked armor  
Spiked shield, light  
Shield, heavy  
Spiked shield, heavy  
Trident  
Warhammer  
All previously-listed exotic weapons

### **Exotic Ranged Weapons**

Crossbow, heavy  
Crossbow, light  
Longbow  
All previously-listed exotic weapons

## **Masterworks**

Advances in science and engineering have led to increasingly fine craftsmanship—for those who can afford it. Aristocrats and successful adventurers can pay extraordinary sums to acquire the finest tools. Impoverished soldiers pick through battlefields littered with the arms and armor of the fallen. Courtiers and potentates demand the finest garb and furnishings from all corners of the world to improve their standing with their peers and rivals. In each case, these people seek to own items of the highest quality they can lay their hands on, because they tangibly benefit from them. Such items also serve as trade goods, many being worth more than their weight in gold.

## **Levels of Quality**

Above-average items come in six levels of improved quality. Each level increases the number or degree of benefit the item's quality can provide. Each level adds one "benefit" to the item, increasing its usefulness or effectiveness. Higher levels of quality allow the same benefit to be

taken twice, or even three times, making the item much better for a particular purpose.

**Fine:** A not-uncommon example of extra care and effort being put into an item's manufacture. Fine items gain one benefit. They are often available for sale in towns and are almost always found in cities.

**Excellent:** Requiring much more time and care than average items, most excellent items are made by craftsmen wishing to create a showpiece to demonstrate their skills, or for a commission. Excellent items gain two benefits.

**Exceptional:** Always a major undertaking, an exceptional item requires the labor of an above-average craftsman and often a bit of luck. Only the most successful craftsmen have the time to lavish on such work—most exceptional items are the result of important commissions, and as a result such an item often has some small place in stories from its time. Unless newly made, this item can be identified with a DC 30 Knowledge (history) check.

**Superior:** Only possible for craftsmen whose skill far exceeds that of common artisans, superior items reflect a deep knowledge of how the item is to be used, combining many small improvements over typical examples. Unless newly made, this item can be identified with a DC 27 Knowledge (history) check.

**Superlative:** Some of the finest work a person can ever hope to see, often the culmination of a lifetime of practice and learning. Unless newly made, this item can be identified with a DC 24 Knowledge (history) check.

**Masterpiece:** Only craftsmen of legendary skill—and often supported by the work of years—are able to produce such items. The pinnacle of their type, masterpiece items are usually remembered in song and story, even if their original owner is forgotten. Unless newly made, this item can be identified with a DC 21 Knowledge (history) check.

## Crafting Masterworks

Crafting a masterwork item takes considerable skill and patience. The craftsman must commit additional time depending on the level of quality he hopes to achieve, as described on the **Masterwork Levels** table. The level of quality also sets the DC for crafting the masterwork component (see PHB page 71). If the craftsman fails the check to craft the masterwork component but succeeds in crafting the item itself, he creates merely an average version of the item.

### Masterwork Levels

Level	Cost	Rarity	DC	Benefits
Fine	+300 gp	no change	20	1
Excellent	+600 gp	+1 grade	22	2
Exceptional	+1,200 gp	+1 grade	24	3, may double once
Superior	+2,400 gp	+2 grades	26	4, may double once
Superlative	+4,800 gp	+2 grades	28	5, may double twice or triple once
Masterpiece	+9,600 gp	+3 grades	30	6, may double twice or double once and triple once

### Masterwork Benefits

Below are the various improvements and benefits an item could receive from being above average quality. Each benefit indicates what sort of item it can apply to, and comes in three levels: single (listed as the standard benefit), double and triple. Benefits that can only be applied to “gear” may not be chosen for weapons or armor. Quality bonuses do not stack with themselves.

#### Accurate (any weapon)

This weapon does what it's supposed to do—hit the target!

**Benefit:** The wielder gains +1 quality bonus to attack rolls with this weapon.

**Double:** The quality bonus increases to +2.

**Triple:** The quality bonus increases to +3.

#### Balanced (any weapon or shield)

This item's above-average balance makes it easier to move in combat.

**Benefit:** While this item is in hand and readied, the wielder gains a +1 quality bonus to his initiative total.

**Double:** The quality bonus increases to +2.

**Triple:** The quality bonus increases to +3.

**Concealable (any item)**

This item is particularly easy to secret on one's person.

**Benefit:** The bearer gains a +4 quality bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to hide this item on his person.

**Double:** The quality bonus increases to +8.

**Triple:** The quality bonus increases to +12.

**Crushing (any bludgeoning weapon)**

This weapon beats people senseless with ease.

**Benefit:** In addition to normal damage, this weapon inflicts 2 points of nonlethal damage with every hit.

**Double:** The additional nonlethal damage increases to +4.

**Triple:** The additional nonlethal damage increases to +6.

**Deadly (any weapon)**

Thanks to its perfect balance and weighting, attacks with this weapon are often decisive.

**Benefit:** Increase the threat range of a weapon with a x2 critical multiplier by 1. This bonus is applied after any feats or other modifiers.

**Double:** Increase the threat range of a weapon with a x3 critical multiplier by 1. This bonus is applied after any feats or other modifiers.

**Triple:** Increase the threat range of a weapon with a x4 critical multiplier by 1. This bonus is applied after any feats or other modifiers.

**Decorative (any item)**

This item is designed to impress with fine jewels and subtle but unmistakable marks of elegance and quality.

**Benefit:** This item costs five times normal. The owner gains a +1 quality bonus to Diplomacy checks while displaying ownership of the item, or +2 when it's given as a gift.

**Double:** This item costs 10 times normal. The quality bonus increases to +2, or +4 when given as a gift.

**Triple:** This item costs 15 times normal. The quality bonus increases to +3, or +6 when given as a gift.

**Forgery (any item)**

This item is intended to appear to be another similar (and often unique) item.

**Benefit:** The DC to determine this is not the genuine object is increased by +4.

**Double:** The DC is increased by +8.

**Triple:** The DC is increased by +12.

**Fortified (any armor)**

Extra attention has been paid to covering your vitals.

**Benefit:** There is a 10% chance that any critical hit or sneak attack damage is negated while wearing this armor.

**Double:** The chance is increased to 20%.

**Triple:** The chance is increased to 30%.

**Guard (any weapon or shield)**

This weapon or shield is easy to use defensively.

**Benefit:** The wielder may reduce his attack rolls by 1 for the entire round to gain an equal deflection bonus to armor class for that round.

**Double:** The wielder may reduce his attack rolls by 2 for the entire round to gain an equal deflection bonus to armor class.

**Triple:** The wielder may reduce his attack rolls by 3 for the entire round to gain an equal deflection bonus to armor class.

**Lethal (any weapon)**

A good hit always hurts with this weapon.

**Benefit:** The wielder gains a +2 quality bonus to any roll to confirm a critical hit.

**Double:** The quality bonus increases to +4.

**Triple:** The quality bonus increases to +6.

### **Light (any item)**

This item is carefully designed with no wasted material or bulk.

**Benefit:** The item weighs 10% less than normal.

**Double:** The item weighs 20% less than normal.

**Triple:** The item weighs 30% less than normal.

### **Mastercraft (any armor or shield)**

This armor or shield is lightweight and less cumbersome than usual.

**Benefit:** This armor reduces its armor check penalty by 1, to a minimum of 0.

**Double:** This armor reduces its armor check penalty by 2, to a minimum of 0.

**Triple:** This armor reduces its armor check penalty by 3, to a minimum of 0.

### **Poisoned (any melee weapon)**

This weapon has grooves and channels that allow it to hold poison more effectively until the weapon strikes.

**Benefit:** The number of strikes the weapon may make before the poison is rubbed off is doubled.

**Double:** The number of strikes the weapon may make before the poison is rubbed off is tripled.

**Triple:** The number of strikes the weapon may make before the poison is rubbed off is quadrupled.

### **Rugged (any item)**

This item is particularly resistant to wear and abuse.

**Benefit:** The item gains a +2 quality bonus to its hardness and break DC.

**Double:** The quality bonus increases to +4.

**Triple:** The quality bonus increases to +6.

### **Sharp (any slashing or piercing weapon)**

This weapon keeps a fine edge.

**Benefit:** Add a +1 quality bonus to all damage rolls with this weapon. This bonus is applied before any multipliers.

**Double:** The quality bonus increases to +2.

**Triple:** The quality bonus increases to +3.

### **Sturdy (any item)**

This item's robust design and quality material ensures it will last a very long time.

**Benefit:** The item gains a +50% quality bonus to its hit points.

**Double:** The quality bonus increases to +100%.

**Triple:** The quality bonus increases to +150%.

### **Thick (any armor)**

This armor is able to absorb more punishment than usual.

**Benefit:** A suit of medium or heavy armor provides Damage Reduction 1/– against melee and ranged weapons.

**Double:** A suit of light armor provides Damage Reduction 1/– against melee and ranged weapons.

**Triple:** Any suit of armor provides Damage Reduction 2/– against melee and ranged weapons.

### **Threatening (any item)**

This item is crafted and decorated to intimidate any who look upon it.

**Benefit:** The wielder or wearer gains a +2 quality bonus to Intimidate checks while displaying the item.

**Double:** The quality bonus increases to +4.

**Triple:** The quality bonus increases to +6.

### **Well-Crafted (any gear)**

This trait can apply to nearly any tool or device that is employed when using a skill. For example,

a well-crafted pair of shoes could provide an equipment bonus to Move Silently checks, or a well-crafted healing kit could provide a higher-than-usual bonus to Heal checks.

**Benefit:** Using this item provides a +1 quality bonus to one skill.

**Double:** The quality bonus increases to +2.

**Triple:** The quality bonus increases to +3.

## Combat

Most game aspects firearms and cannons are covered under Equipment, but there's one more important effect that we need to cover: the particularly grievous wounds that guns and cannons can inflict.

### Grievous Wounds

Bullets, musket balls and cannonballs are far more devastating to the body than medieval weapons. Any time a character is hit by a firearm or cannon attack and the damage either disables him or exceeds his Strength ability score, he must make a Ref save at DC 15 or suffer a grievous wound. Strength in this case represents physical bulk; the Ref save represents sheer luck.

If the Ref save fails, roll 1d20 on the **Grievous Wound Location** table. The indicated hit location is devastated by the attack. Whether it's a deep burn, a compound fracture or a horrible gash, the body part is ruined.

The victim is automatically dazed for one round, and must make a Will save at DC 20 or collapse in agony, effectively unconscious until he heals at least one hit point—although he may simply be screaming uncontrollably. Player's choice.

A grievous wound to a hand or foot causes one point of permanent Dexterity damage; a grievous wound to an arm, leg or eye causes two points of permanent Dexterity damage.

Furthermore, grievously wounded location cannot be used ever again. A grievously wounded hand or arm can hold no objects and a grievously wounded foot or leg cuts the character's base speed in half. If an eye is grievously wounded the character permanently suffers a -2 penalty to all Search and Spot checks.

Note that the table indicates only hits to limbs and eyes. This is deliberate. A target who takes a hit this serious to the skull or torso isn't grievously wounded—he's dead.

A *heal* spell cast during the battle in which the wound was inflicted heals the wounded hit location fully. Otherwise the grievously wounded body part must be removed to prevent infection: A surgeon must amputate the limb or enucleate the wounded eye. If the location is not removed, gangrene sets in.

#### Die Roll      Grievous Wound Location

1-2	Right hand
3-4	Right arm
5-6	Left hand
7-8	Left arm
9-10	Right foot
11-13	Right leg
14-15	Left foot
16-18	Left leg
19	Right eye
20	Left eye

### Gangrene

Gangrene is a disease that results from bacteria growing in grievous wounds, which causes the flesh to die and rot. Because early modern-era science doesn't yet grasp the concept of disinfection and antibiotics are in the distant future, gangrene is almost always fatal. Once it sets in, amputation of the affected limb before the disease spreads to the rest of the body is the only way known to save the victim's life.

A character who sustains a grievous wound from a firearm or cannon attack automatically contracts gangrene 24 hours after receiving the wound, unless the affected body part is amputated.

There is no saving throw.

Once infected, the character suffers 1d4 Dexterity damage per day for two days as the skin swells and blisters. The flesh begins to smell foul as the infection deepens. Anyone making a Heal check at DC 10 recognizes the signs of gangrene.

On the third day, the skin rot begins to kill the character. If the grievous wound was to the hand or foot, gangrene spreads to the arm or leg. It inflicts 1d6 Constitution damage per day until the character dies—the rot having spread to the vital organs of the torso—or the limb is amputated.

Gangrene can be cured with a *remove disease* spell. However, this does not save the grievously-wounded location. Only a *regeneration* spell can restore a mauled body part to health.

### **Amputation**

Amputation calls for a Heal check at DC 15. A character without the Surgeon feat suffers a –4 penalty to the roll. You cannot Take 10 or Take 20 with this check.

Whether or not the Heal check succeeds, the patient loses the wounded location. If the Heal check succeeds, the patient suffers 2d6 hp damage. The amputation stops the spread of gangrene—but after 24 hours the patient must make a Fort save at DC 15 to avoid gangrene setting in from the surgery itself.

If the Heal check fails, the patient suffers 3d6 hp damage and gangrene sets in again automatically after 24 hours.

If gangrene sets in from the surgery and the wounded location was a limb, amputation can be conducted yet again to give the patient another chance to avoid gangrene. But if the surgery causes gangrene and the wounded location was an eye, there's nothing more the surgeon can do. Only a *remove disease* spell will stop the infection and save the character's life.

## **Changes to Squad Combat**

Most of the Squad Combat rules can be used as-is with these rules, with two exceptions.

**Cannon Attacks:** When a cannon fires at squares occupied by a squad, consider each square to be occupied by one member of the squad. The squad loses hit points based on the number of members killed by the attack, not the total damage rolled by the attack; for each squad member killed, reduce the squad's hit points by that member's hit points.

**Firearm Attacks:** If a squad attacks with firearms, it inflicts +1 hit.

**Skillful Parry:** If most members of a squad have the Skillful Parry feat, each round reduce the hits inflicted by each single attacking squad in melee combat by 1.

**Survival:** Squad members who fall to firearm attacks must make a Fort save at DC 15, not DC 10, to survive. Squad members who fall to cannon attacks must make a Fort save at DC 20 to survive.

**Example:** A squad of 15 1st-level warriors (5 hp each, 75 squad hp) is arrayed in a square, three squares per side. A cannon fires solid shot in a line affecting three squares. Two squad members fail their Ref saving throws and are hit and killed by the cannonball, so the squad loses 10 hit points.

The next round, a medium cannon fires grapeshot at the squad. It fires in a cylinder 20 ft. (four squares) across, which encompasses the entire squad. Even on a successful saving throw the average damage is 5 or 6 hp, so the DM decides there's no real need for a dozen saving throws; even if there are one or two individual survivors, the blast wipes out the squad.

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