

GURPS<sup>®</sup> Fourth Edition

# GUN FU™



By S.A. Fisher, Sean Punch,  
and Hans-Christian Vortisch

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

# A BALLET OF BULLETS

In a world . . . where the line between evil and honor is drawn by a bullet, only one supplement dares to lay down the law of the gun: *GURPS Gun Fu*. This volume has everything you need for action-packed cinematic *GURPS* gunplay:

- A description and explanation of what the gun fu genre is and how to emulate it.
- Rules for tricky shooting and “impossible” firearm feats.
- A half-dozen styles and over 50 new perks for gunfighters.
- Dozens of new shooting techniques. Master the Dual-Weapon Attack, or use the Instant Arsenal Disarm to thwart your enemies.
- Information on new weapons, gunsmithing, and cool-looking accessories.
- A packed appendix on inspirational fiction, including tips for how to emulate some of their tricks.



*GURPS Gun Fu* requires the *GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition*.  
*GURPS Martial Arts* is recommended for additional information about styles and techniques.

By S.A. Fisher, Sean Punch, and Hans-Christian Vortisch

Edited by Jason “PK” Levine and Nikola Vrtis

Cover Art by Camp1994, Tithi Luadthong, Presslab, and SimpleB

Illustrated by John Hartwell and Dan Smith



**STEVE  
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**GURPS**

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*Give a guy a gun, he thinks he's  
Superman. Give him two and he thinks  
he's God.*  
– Superintendent Pang, *Hard-Boiled*

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# INTRODUCTION

In the real world, gun battles are an excellent way to get maimed, crippled, or *dead*. Veteran soldiers and cops – and all but the most deranged career criminals – go to great lengths to avoid shootouts. When they can't, they stack the deck with more personnel, heavier firepower, and better cover; they regard an ambush as *sensible*, not dishonorable. Done right, there's no gunfight, because the other guys don't get a chance to shoot; they're just shot. This is the reality that the **GURPS Basic Set** and **GURPS High-Tech** tend to favor.

Action movies and comics work nothing like this, though! There, gunmen with a beef will shoot up the scenery at the drop of a hat, and a big enough dose of lead and cordite can resolve almost any conflict. Gun-toting heroes prevail against superior numbers and weapons by being better, frequently more honorable, and inevitably *cooler*. The resulting gunfight might be a bloody massacre – but just as often, it's a ballet of bullets – kung fu with guns . . . *gun fu*.

**GURPS Gun Fu** bridges the gap between the deadly realism of the **Basic Set** and the "reality" of shoot-'em-up fiction. It delves into **GURPS Martial Arts** for rules that make movement and style as potent as caution and tactics, adapts them for cinematic shootists, and adds numerous *new* options. It is primarily intended as support for cinematic TL4-9 campaigns involving the use of firearms.

## PUBLICATION HISTORY

Some rules for weapon handling, and several perks and techniques, were adapted and expanded from **GURPS High-Tech** (2007), by Shawn Fisher and Hans-Christian Vortisch. Other material originally appeared in a different context in **GURPS Martial Arts** (2007), by Peter Dell'Orto and Sean Punch. Still other rules were introduced in Hans-Christian Vortisch's **GURPS Martial Arts: Fairbairn Close Combat Systems** (2008). Further concepts originated in Sean Punch's **GURPS Action 1: Heroes** (2008) and **GURPS Action 2: Exploits** (2008).

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

S.A. Fisher is currently pursuing a doctorate in history. A former teacher and infantryman, he has over a decade of experience in private security and is a certified law-enforcement firearms and defensive-tactics instructor. His previous works include **GURPS High-Tech**, **GURPS WWII: Dogfaces**, and **GURPS WWII: Hand of Steel**. Shawn has been an avid gamer for nearly 25 years; he devotes his spare time to camping and recreational shooting. He lives in Searcy, Arkansas, with his wife, Jennifer, and their two daughters, Elizabeth and Rachel.

Sean "Dr. Kromm" Punch set out to become a particle physicist in 1985, ended up the **GURPS** Line Editor in 1995, and has engineered rules for almost

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Hans-Christian "Grey Tiger" Vortisch, M.A., began writing for **GURPS** as a freelancer in 2001. He was author or coauthor of **GURPS Covert Ops**; **GURPS High-Tech**; **GURPS Modern Firepower**; **GURPS Special Ops, Third Edition**; **GURPS WWII: Motor Pool**; and several PDF publications on martial topics. He wrote additional material for numerous other **GURPS** books; authored, translated, edited, or contributed to several German **Call of Cthulhu** products; and published many articles in American, British, and German gaming magazines. Hans has been an avid gamer since 1983. His nongaming interests include science fiction, shooting, history, and punk rock. He's watching movies in Berlin.

## About GURPS

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Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition**. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

# HIGH-SPEED SHOOTING

**GURPS** offers mechanics for several mutually exclusive ways to exceed a weapon's listed RoF – mostly for single-action (RoF 1) revolvers. Full details are in *High-Tech* (pp. 83-84), but here's a quick recap.

## FANNING

To fan a single-action revolver, hold down the trigger and strike the hammer repeatedly with a free hand. The attack roll is at Guns (Pistol)-4, and you can't Aim; learn the Fanning technique (p. 27) to buy off the -4. This improves RoF to 2. You can increase RoF to as high as 5, but each +1 to RoF gives another -2 to skill that you *can't* buy off. At RoF 5, add 2 to Rcl, too. A critical failure when fanning means you fire no shots and must roll 1d: On 1-3, you drop your gun; on 4-6, you bruise your hand, causing moderate pain (p. B428) for minutes equal to margin of failure.

## FAST-FIRING

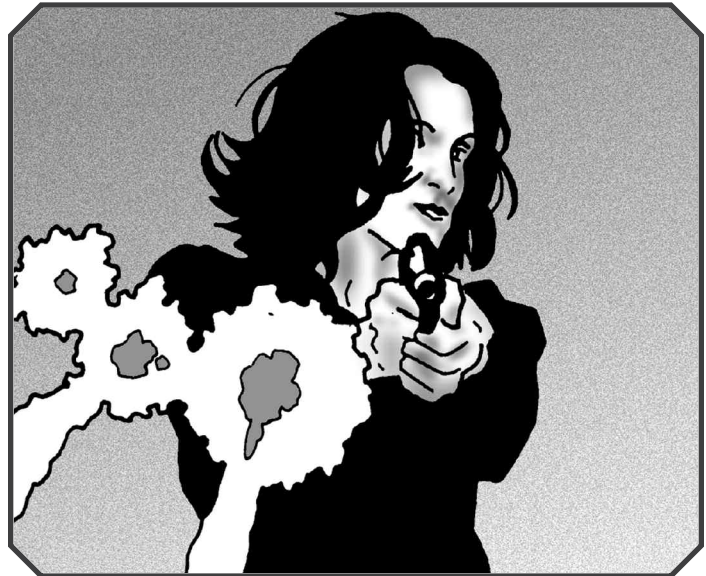
When using a weapon with RoF 2 or 3 (any double-action revolver, any pump- or lever-action firearm, and any semiautomatic weapon), you *can* pull the trigger and/or operate the lever or pump faster, increasing RoF by 1-3 (to 5 or 6). The attack roll is at shooting skill-4; learn the Fast-Firing technique (p. 27) to buy off the -4. Rcl is unchanged at +1 to RoF, rises by 2 at +2 to RoF, and increases by 4 at +3 to RoF. At RoF 5+, you can't use spraying fire (p. B409) except with a full-automatic weapon, but you *can* use suppression fire (p. B409).

*Fast-Firing Energy Weapons:* This rule *might* apply to beam weapons, Gauss guns, etc., depending on the technological assumptions. In quasi-realistic settings where such weapons must charge an accumulator before each shot and dissipate heat afterward, you can't fast-fire them. In worlds where superscience blasters ape conventional firearms – or where energy weapons use (and eject) disposable power cartridges – maybe you can!

## THUMBING

To thumb a single-action revolver, hold down the trigger and use the thumb on the same hand to fire the gun by manipulating the hammer. The attack roll is at Guns (Pistol)-2. Learn the Thumbing technique (p. 29) to buy off the -2. Success lets you fire at RoF 2. Failure means you can't fire. Critical failure means a dropped gun or a wild shot (GM decides what it hits).

The main advantage of thumbing over other techniques is that it lets you fire *two* revolvers!



## TWO-HANDED THUMBING

Alternatively, hold your single-action revolver two-handed and use the thumb of your off hand to operate the hammer. This increases RoF to 2 at *no* penalty. You can increase RoF to 3 or 4; the attack roll is then at Guns (Pistol)-2. Learn the Two-Handed Thumbing technique (p. 30) to buy off the -2.

# TRICKY SHOOTING

Tricks like Feint and Deceptive Attack needn't be limited to melee. They *might* work at a distance – and this *might* be realistic. However, the GM may reserve these options for Gunslingers, or simply forbid them.

## PREDICTION SHOT

Ranged combat involves "leading the target": following his motion and shooting so that the shot will intercept his path. Many marksmen even claim to be able to read a target's body language, deduce his reaction to seeing or hearing a weapon, and shoot where he'll jump or weave. To simulate such strategies, allow Deceptive Attack (p. B369) with ranged weapons.

The attacker's effective skill after all modifiers must be at least 10, making this option most useful at short range. The defense penalty reduces Dodge only.

## RANGED DISARMS

Cinematic gunmen often shoot weapons from their enemies' hands. To do this, attack the weapon as usual (pp. B400-401) and declare your intent beforehand. On a hit, roll damage as usual . . . but instead of harming the weapon or your enemy's hand, your enemy must make a ST roll at -1 per 2 points of damage rolled. Failure means he's disarmed!

## Reloading With Double Trouble

Dual-wielding semiautomatic pistols or machine pistols is a flashy shtick in cinematic campaigns, but reloading can be troublesome in games that are more realistic. A slow method to reload two pistols is this: Holster a pistol (one second or free action with Quick-Sheathe), use the free hand to reload the pistol being held (three seconds or free action with Quick Reload), then switch the process by holstering the loaded gun (one second or free action with Quick-Sheathe), drawing the empty gun (one second or free action with Fast-Draw), and reloading it (three seconds or free action with Quick Reload).

A faster method is to place both guns in one hand (one second or free action with Quick Swap) and reload both guns simultaneously (three seconds or free action with Quick Reload). In this case, the GM may allow a version of the Double-Loading technique for loading two magazine-fed weapons at once.

The Akimbo perk (p. 17), however, allows reloading to be conducted as if the shooter had one hand empty the whole time. Thus with Akimbo and Quick Reload, the whole process is a free action! This is not realistic of course, but it is in keeping with the aesthetics of Double Trouble in high-cinematic action.

*Disadvantages:* Bloodlust; Impulsiveness; Overconfidence.

*Skills:* Armoury (Small Arms); Connoisseur (Guns); Guns Art (Pistol or SMG); Holdout; Jumping.

*Techniques:* Behind-the-Back Shot (Pistol or SMG).

*Perks:* Cinematic Knockback (Pistol or SMG); Cookie Cutter (SMG); Fastest Gun in the West (Pistol or SMG); Hand Cannon; Pistol-Fist (Guns); Recoil Rocket (Pistol or SMG); Supplier (Any).

*Techniques:* Dual-Weapon Attack (Pistol); Fast-Firing (Pistol); Flank Shot (Pistol); Immediate Action (Pistol); Precision Aiming (Pistol); Quick-Shot (Pistol); Targeted Attack (Pistol/Skull).

*Cinematic Skills:* Blind Fighting; Body Control; Breaking Blow (Guns); Flying Leap; Invisibility Art; Light Walk; Mental Strength; Zen Marksmanship (Pistol).

*Cinematic Techniques:* Timed Dodge; Whirlwind Attack (Pistol).

*Perks:* Area Defense (Pistol); Bank Shot (Pistol); Bend the Bullet (Pistol); Cinematic Knockback (Pistol); Cool Under Fire; Cross-Trained (Pistol); Deadeye; Early Adopter (Pistol); Gun Whisperer (Pistol); Infinite Ammunition; Off-Hand Weapon Training (Fast-Draw); Off-Hand Weapon Training (Pistol); Pistol-Fist (Guns); Quick Reload (Pistol); Weapon Bond.

## FUTURE KILL

4 points

The **Gun Kata** treats the gun as a total weapon, each fluid position representing a maximum kill zone, inflicting maximum damage on the maximum number of opponents while keeping the defender clear of the statistically traditional trajectories of return fire.

– DuPont, *Equilibrium*

To you, the laws of nature are merely propositions. Your marksmanship is a force of will that produces the impossible. In your hands, there is no entropy, no tentative probabilities. You shoot from a mountaintop, and those below can only weep.

The Future Kill style is a full-on science-fiction combat style used by gunmen such as Neo in *The Matrix*, the scientifically trained “clerics” of *Equilibrium*, or the legendary assassins from the film *Wanted*. The style’s major shtick is not just highly cinematic gun tricks, but *impossible* feats, such as semi-guided bullets, inhuman accuracy, and blindingly fast draws.

Future Kill requires liberal point totals to access its key advantages such as Enhanced Dodge and Enhanced Time Sense (Bullet Time is a must!), as well as Extra Attack, Gunslinger, and perks such as Area Defense, Bend the Bullet, and Infinite Ammunition. Cinematic skills such as Blind Fighting, Breaking Blow, and Zen Marksmanship are highly recommended. Without these traits, little distinguishes Future Kill from bog-standard shooting.

The Whirlwind Attack technique is common in Future Kill, as are the Flank Shot technique and Bank Shot perk. High skill and these attack forms, along with the cinematic skills and advantages listed above, constitute major elements in this “impossible” style.

*Skills:* Fast-Draw (Ammo); Fast-Draw (Pistol); Guns (Pistol).

## Optional Traits

*Secondary Characteristics:* Improved Basic Speed and Per.

*Advantages:* Acute Vision; Ambidexterity; Combat Reflexes; Enhanced Dodge; Enhanced Time Sense; Extra Attack; Gunslinger; Signature Gear.

*Skills:* Acrobatics; Armoury (Small Arms); Breath Control; Connoisseur (Guns); Gunner (Any); Guns (Any); Guns Art (Any); Holdout; Jumping; Meditation; Observation; Stealth.

*Techniques:* Immediate Action (Any).

*Perks:* Armorer’s Gift (Pistol); Supplier (Any); Walking Armory.

## ONE-MAN ARMY

5 points

*Jack:* Meet “Hamilton.”

*Murphy:* I said get a couple of guys, Jack. A couple of guys.

*Jack:* He is a couple of guys.

– 3000 Miles to Graceland

You are the lone commando, a super soldier, a master of mass-destruction; you maim and kill with heavy weapons; your enemies perish in a fiery blast or a “pink mist.” You deal death with big guns, big arms, and lots of explosions and mayhem. Outfitted with an arsenal of weapons, including machine guns, rocket launchers, grenades and grenade launchers, etc., the One-Man Army practitioner is a formidable opponent.

# GUNSMITHING

*It'll shoot the fleas off a dog's back at 500 yards, Tannen, and it's pointed straight at your head!*

– Dr. “Doc” Emmett Brown, *Back to the Future Part III*

Gun fu stylists will often use guns modified to their specifications – anything from a sawed-off shotgun to a pistol tricked out with every accessory in the book.

Note that all rules below are *generic*. They may not apply to every particular firearm. Individual weapon descriptions may give indications whether specific modifications are either common or can't be done at all. If nothing is specified, use common sense. For example, it is obvious that bullpup weapons can't have their shoulder stock removed or replaced by a folding stock, or that the magazine capacity of a weapon with a tube magazine below the barrel may be reduced if the barrel is shortened.

## ACCURIZING

Improving the Acc of a firearm – making it fine (accurate) or very fine (accurate) – usually involves a combination of modifications (*High-Tech*, p. 79). A match barrel is the most important feature; the original barrel will generally need to be replaced by a precision-made, often heavier barrel optimized for accuracy. The trigger is reworked for an easier squeeze and a clear breakpoint. Fully adjustable sights with well-defined foresight and rear sight usually replace the old sights. Finally, all the components are fine-tuned to each other so that optimum accuracy results.

Accurizing takes a lot of time and money. Add 75% to cost for +1 to Acc, or 375% to cost for +2. The weapon needs a base Acc 2 or better to be accurized, and it must have Acc 4 or better for +2 to Acc. The former takes two Armoury (Small Arms)-4 rolls and two days' work. The latter takes four Armoury (Small Arms)-4 rolls and at least four days' work.

## ADDING ACCESSORIES

See *Firearm Accessories* (pp. 41-43 and *High-Tech*, pp. 153-161) for many examples of gadgets that can be added to a firearm. Most require no or only minor modifications of the weapon – especially if accessory rails (*High-Tech*, p. 161) or similar mounting points are used. In general, an IQ-based Guns or Armoury (Small Arms)+4 roll is required to correctly fit a new accessory to a firearm.

Things get a bit more complicated if, for example, a new, slightly longer barrel has to be fitted with a thread cut into it to mount a detachable sound suppressor (*High-Tech*, p. 159), or if a pistol stock (*High-Tech*, p. 160) is to be added to a pistol

that is not designed to mount one. Such small gunsmithing jobs can be done by succeeding with an unmodified Armoury (Small Arms) roll.

## CONVERTING A LONG ARM INTO A BULLPUP

Most ordinary long arms can be modified into the so-called bullpup configuration, that is a shape in which the trigger is moved forward of the action. This changes the balance of the weapon and reduces the length. However, it also means that the weapon can no longer be used left-handed (or right-handed, if so constructed), as the cases will be ejected into the face of the shooter. Also, a conversion requires extensive modifications and often means a net weight gain.

A complete gunsmith conversion of an ordinary long arm needs three Armoury (Small Arms) rolls and materials worth 30% the cost of the weapon. The firearms market has also developed ready-to-install bullpup conversion kits, for example for the Ruger Mini-14 (*High-Tech*, p. 117). These conversions cost 25% the cost of the weapon and require only one Armoury (Small Arms) roll. In either case, improve Bulk by one step (to not better than Bulk -3) and increase weight by +1 lb.

Note that the bullpup configuration is effectively a TL7 development. It works best with semiautomatics and full-automatics, but it can also be applied to bolt-action and pump-action guns.

## CONVERTING A SEMIAUTOMATIC TO FULL-AUTOMATIC

Any semiautomatic weapon – regardless of whether it is a pistol, shotgun, rifle, etc. – can be converted to full-automatic fire. In fact, one of the problems of semiauto design is to *keep* them from firing bursts (runaway semiautos are a discomfiting and somewhat common occurrence on shooting ranges!). The first gunsmith and prototype manufacturer conversions appeared in the years between 1900 and WWI, a mere decade after the introduction of the first self-loading weapons.

Converting semiautos to full-auto fire requires an Armoury (Small Arms) skill roll. Assign a penalty depending on the weapon's basic design (which the GM may need to determine through research). For example, converting a Winchester M1 carbine (*High-Tech*, p. 113) or certain open-bolt pistols such as the original semiautomatic Intratec TEC-9 (*High-Tech*, p. 101) is a *favorable* task, with a +1 difficulty modifier (p. B345).

*I got the idea from a French gunsmith named LeMat. Think of it, Johnny – a seven-shooter! One extra bullet that'll make all the difference.*

– Cason Thomas, *Johnny Ringo #1.1*



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