**Bullet Points**

# All About the Tech

*by Owen K.C. Stephens*

In this installment, I look at some questions raised by *d20 Future Tech*. The most important thing to remember about this book is that it's not designed as a laundry list of technology a GM is required to include in a campaign. It's a book of options, allowing a GM to add things appropriate to a given campaign. Just because you're running a PL 8 game does not mean you're required to allow players to buy hoverpacks and psychoreactive triggers. Choose equipment that feels right for your campaign, and ban the rest.
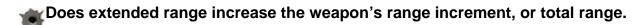
**What's the attack bonus of a weapon with the automated gadget? What initiative does it go on?**

As long as at least one crew member is actively operating the automated weapon (which may occur if a weapon requiring a crew of three is automated down to a crew of one), use that crew member's attack bonus. If the weapon is fully automated, assume it has a Dex of 10 and no base attack bonus but is proficient with itself. This basically means an attack bonus of 0, modifed by range, maneuvers, other gadgets, and so on.

**Can I add the electrified gadget to an electric catch-all pole? If I do, does it deal 4d6 electricity plus another 4d8 that allows a DC 16 Fort save for half, or 8d6 with a save for half? And how many charges can I get out of the battery on that, anyway?**

Yes, you can add the electrified gadget to an item that already identifies itself as electric, but the damage doesn't stack. Instead, you just take the better of the two, so an electrified electric catch-all pole deals 4d6 electric with no save and adds it to the 1d4 normal damage instead of having to choose between one or the other and allowing a save for half.

The battery for an electrified weapon or the electric catch-all pole is good for 80 attacks.

**Does extended range increase the weapon's range increment, or total range.**

Both. It doubles the weapon's range increment, which doubles its total range (which is based on range increment).

**How do you determine if the trigger of a mine with the grappling sheath gadget will or won't explode if you try to remove it?**

You decide when you add the gadget.

**Do you apply the effects of advantages before flaws or flaws before advantages?**

As a general rule, apply advantages before flaws. However, don't give an item flaws and advantages that cancel each other out, even partially (the same item should have both increased weight and reduced weight).

**What's the cost for a box of charge pistol or charge rifle ammo? How many rounds come in a box?**

You get 50 rounds of either with a purchase DC of 5. Use this value any time you're unsure what a weapon's ammunition cost is. If you want more variety as a GM, look at Table 4-5: Ammunition on page 103 of the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game*, and base your costs on appropriate entries there.

For weapons that use a battery, assume a purchase DC of 8 for one battery.

**If a flechette weapon does most of its damage due to blood loss and shock, does it have less effect against things like walls or metal vehicles?**

That's up to the GM. It falls under the same category as trying to cut a rope with a hammer. If a GM feels an object is unlikely to be damaged by a flechette weapon, he can halve the damage, quarter the damage, or declare the weapon has no effect.

**Is a wyrm immune to the knockout effect of a sleep grenade?**

Yes. To keep things simple, any effect that requires a saving throw with failure resulting in unconsciousness for a set period of time is a sleep effect and doesn't apply to creatures immune to *sleep*.

**I have serious problems with the level of description given for the microphone round in *d20 Future Tech*. How do you know if it has stuck to an object it's fired at? What range increment does it have? How hard is it to spot? What's its transmitting duration? If you actually shot someone with it, how much damage does it do?**

A successful attack roll indicates the microphone round has struck its target squarely enough to stick to it. It has the same range increment as the weapon it is fired from. It takes a DC 20 spot check to notice it casually but only if it isn't observed when fired (which is a Spot check made against the firer's Hide check). It takes only a DC 15 Search check to find. It can transmit for up to 24 hours. Because it is designed to

adhere to even soft targets, it does no significant damage even if fired at a live person.

The same rules apply to similar specialty, non-damaging ammo types.

### Does a stun shield work against natural attacks, like from a werewolf?

Yes.

### If you put both the armorflex and voice-activated gadgets on a suit of armor, can you change its Defense rating as a free action?

Sure. However, a suit of armor's Defense and max Dexterity/armor check values can only be changed once per round, even though it's a free action.

### If a jumper pack can carry you at a speed of 50 feet and has enough fuel for 10 jumps, why does the description say it can carry you a maximum of 250 feet? Isn't 50 feet times 10 jumps 500 feet?

The jumper pack can be used for 10 total jumps before refueling. In this case, a 'jump' qualifies as one flight (from the time your feet leave the ground until you touch down again). Each jump acts as a 50 ft. fly speed, with a maximum flight distance of 250 feet. Thus the total distance a jumper pack can carry you, over the course of 10 jumps, is 2,500 feet. However, if you made 10 jumps of just 30 feet each, you'd still be out of fuel.

### As written, the microtorch is the most powerful melee weapon in the whole book! It deals 2d10 points of damage (as much as a render rifle!!), is size Tiny, only requires a touch attack (bypassing armor), and appears to have unlimited uses (no ammunition value is given). What gives?

Becauselit's not designed for combat, a microtorch is an improvised weapon. This means you take a -4 penalty to attack rolls (which cannot be overcome with a weapon proficiency feat), and every time you damage someone with it in melee there's a 50% chance it breaks. Dangerous, sure, but not real reliable.

Assume a microtorch has enough fuel for five minutes of constant use.

### What is the DC of the Balance check needed to leave a square coated with superlube?

It counts as a slippery surface, DC 10. While that seems low, keep in mind that the check is required for every square you leave. You may be forced to make numerous checks each round.

### What happens if I add a holographic display to a wrist comp? Do I get the +2 bonus, or am I still at a -1 penalty?

Both. You take a -1 penalty for a small display and gain a +2 bonus for the display being holographic. The net result is a +1 bonus.

### Can I inject myself with energize chemicals multiple times in a row?

You can, but the effects don't stack -- they overlap. The maximum number of temporary hit points you can have from energize chemicals is 10. If you inject yourself and only roll 5 temporary hit points, you can inject yourself again and hope the total is higher, but you use the best of the two rolls rather than adding them together.

### A sanguinizer doesn't list needing an attack roll, deals Constitution damage, and nauseates you even if you make your Fort save. Does the fact it's basically a melee weapon really balance out? Wouldn't everyone just carry a gun in one hand and a sanguinizer in the other?

The sanguinizer is a tool of torture, not a weapon, which is why it's listed with equipment. Like the microtorch, if used as a weapon, there's a -4 attack penalty and a 50% chance it breaks. Although it's not listed, it does require a ranged attack roll with a maximum range of one square. Using it provokes an attack of opportunity as with most ranged attacks. The device is designed to be used on a restrained target, not as a weapon of war.

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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!

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**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 freelance 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.