MODERN ARMOR

Armor	Armor Class (AC)	Strength	Stealth	Properties	Weight
Light Armor					
Heavy coat	11 + Dex modifier	—	Disadvantage	—	6 lb.
Leather jacket	11 + Dex modifier	—	—	—	4 lb.
Light undercover shirt	11 + Dex modifier	—	—	DR/2 ballistic	2 lb.
Kevlar-lined coat	12 + Dex modifier	—	—	DR/2 ballistic	8 lb.
Undercover vest	13 + Dex modifier	—	—	DR/2 ballistic	3 lb.
Medium Armor					
Concealable vest	13 + Dex modifier (max 2)	—	—	DR/3 ballistic	4 lb.
Light-duty vest	14 + Dex modifier (max 3)	—	—	DR/3 ballistic	8 lb.
Tactical vest	15 + Dex modifier (max 2)	Str 10	Disadvantage	Resistance: ballistic	10 lb.
Heavy Armor					
Special response vest	15	Str 10	Disadvantage	Resistance: ballistic	15 lb.
Land Warrior armor	17	Str 13	Disadvantage	DR/5 ballistic/slashing	10 lb.
Forced entry unit	18	Str 13	Disadvantage	Resistance: ballistic/slashing	20 lb.

As you can see from the table, many of the heavier armors grant damage reduction (DR) or resistance to several damage types, including a new damage type: ballistic damage. In game terms, ballistic damage is the type of damage that firearms inflict, and is a subset of piercing damage. This means that all ballistic damage counts as piercing damage, but not all piercing damage counts as ballistic damage. Magical effects or creature properties that grant resistance to piercing damage also apply to ballistic damage, but effects or properties reducing ballistic damage do not automatically apply to piercing damage.

(Armor in my game currently has no price because my modern ruleset uses a wealth system for characters, similar to that used in d20 Modern. Characters gain equipment based on their wealth, rather than tracking income and expenses. I won't get into the full system here, but it might make a good topic for a later installment of Behind the Screens.)

WHO GETS WHAT?
Because of the high potential damage granted to firearms, it was also necessary to introduce a complication or condition in order to balance their use with more traditional modes of attack. In my campaign, a character proficient with a firearm does not automatically add any proficiency bonus to the attack roll. Rather, proficiency with a firearm allows a character to use a bonus action to take the aim action, which adds the character's proficiency bonus to the attack roll. Without taking the aim action (or if a character is using a firearm without proficiency), the shooter receives only the benefit of a Dexterity bonus on the attack roll.

When it came to weapon proficiencies, I decided that several classes would enjoy proficiency with firearms, while others would have to earn their proficiency with multiclassing or by training through the use of downtime days (see the Player's Handbook). I divided firearms Hold up! City Domain? School of Technomancy? I'll get into those next time!

FIREARM PROFICIENCIES BY CLASS

Class	Firearm Proficiency
Bard	Sidearms
Barbarian	Long arms
Cleric	None (though possibly granted through domains such as City or War)
Druid	None
Fighter	Long arms and sidearms
Monk	Sidearms
Paladin	Long arms and sidearms
Ranger	Long arms and sidearms
Rogue	Long arms or sidearms (chosen at character creation)
Sorcerer	None
Warlock	None (though sidearms and long arms can be created through the Pact of the Blade class feature)
Wizard	None (though sidearm proficiency might be granted through the School of Technomancy)

About the Author

Daniel Helmick is a contractor attached to the Dungeons & Dragons R&D department, formerly of the D&D Insider studio at Wizards of the Coast. He has contributed numerous articles and adventures to Dungeon and Dragonmagazines, as well as the Tyranny of Dragons and Elemental Evil Adventurers League programs. He's thinking about getting a cat, but he's torn between the names Trapspringer and Dragonbait.into two basic classes: sidearms (for anything up to a submachine gun) and long arms (for anything up to a light machine gun.) Anything heavier—such as a heavy machine gun, a rocket-propelled grenade launcher, or a flamethrower—is given special dispensation according to the in-game situation. In my own campaign, I created a feat called Heavy Weapon Specialist that allows proficiency in all modern weapons heavier than a medium machine gun wielded by an unassisted individual on foot. I also made this feat available as a fighting style for the fighter class.