

# The Assassins' Guild: Michaelmas 2004 Weapon Rules

The Umpire

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## 1 Introduction

The following gives an outline of the various weapons which can be used against enemies. It is not an exhaustive list and players are encouraged to use their imagination; however, the Umpire may make any kills carried out with an unauthorized weapon invalid, so do come and check before using your latest creation in the heat of battle. In general, all weapons must be completely *safe* (for both people and property) and actually *do* something, to indicate to the victim that he/she has been killed. All non-obvious weapons must be clearly labelled; if you

were carrying a real knife, you wouldn't be able to convince your target that it was a pencil by holding your thumb over the label, so don't do that either.

Messy weapons and water weapons should be used sensibly; where the rules state "with care", no large-calibre water weapons (larger than a Supersoaker XP270 or a Storm Force 2)<sup>1</sup> should be used, smaller water weapons should be carefully aimed and not used to excess. Don't use messy or water weapons against people carrying something expensive or wearing formal clothes; they might get annoyed.

Weapons should be specific to the victim – killing bystanders is to be avoided even when the effect is harmless.

Members of the police force are only permitted to use direct attacks (using guns, knives, etc.) and bombs in the course of their duties; other indirect methods such as poison or letterbombs may not be used, and police should take extra care not to use any weapon which may endanger innocent civilians. Kills made by police using illegal methods will be invalidated and the officers in question disciplined appropriately by the Chief of Police or the Umpire.

Except where noted below, most weapons will kill the target instantly if they strike any part of the head or torso. If a limb is hit then it can no longer be used for the duration of the encounter for any game-related purpose, including to fire, reload or hold a weapon, to open a door or window or to run away (although if you have to run away the Umpire will probably be lenient should you use an injured limb to take your weapons with you rather than leave them behind, as long as you don't use such weapons again in the encounter). Any assassin who continues to use a limb which has been injured will find that any associated kills are invalidated and possibly that the exertion is deemed to have caused death from blood loss.

## 2 Direct Weapons

### 2.1 Guns

Rubber band guns, Nerf weapons, pea-shooters, toy pig catapults and rubber bands fired from the fingers may be used as guns. Other similar weapons may also be allowed, but you must contact the umpire before using one so it can be approved. A direct hit is required; projectiles rebounding off walls, etc., do not count. BB guns are *not* allowed; do not even bother asking. If your weapon looks *in any way* like a real weapon you *may not* use it. You may consider it perfectly safe, but the law on this issue is quite strict and the Guild has no desire to see its members arrested.

Try to avoid head shots with all projectile weapons.

**If you are found to be using a realistic-looking gun any kills made with it will be invalidated and you will be made wanted or removed from the game.**

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<sup>1</sup>If you're not familiar with these guns, a sensible rule of thumb is: If it's meant to be held in two hands, it's too big.

### 2.1.1 Point Blank Shots

If you have a *clear* shot from less than a metre you may say “bang” rather than actually firing your weapon to claim the kill. You cannot do this if your gun has run out of ammunition, is jammed or is otherwise unusable (although if you only discover later that the gun is not working then the kill stands). Players should always do this if possible to avoid unnecessarily shooting people (and it’s for your own good, since you avoid wasting ammunition or risking a misfire).

Cap guns or other toy guns which produce a noise without actually firing anything may also be used to kill people from less than a metre. In the case of cap guns, the cap must go off for the shot to count. You may also use these weapons by saying “bang” just like any other.

### 2.1.2 Water Weapons

Any water pistol or water gun may be used as a weapon. You must get a definite hit with the main jet for it to count - if you just splash the target with the edge of the spray or at extreme range then the hit does not count. (This means that with larger water weapons such as CPS Super Soakers it is actually possible to get quite wet without being hit by the main jet of the blast and therefore killed.)

Players may decide whether they wish to allow water-based weapons to be used in their own rooms or not; this information should be supplied to the Umpire at the start of the game. The default state is No Water, which means that no player may fire a water weapon into, inside or through your room. If your room is a no-water area remember that you cannot fire water weapons inside it, into it *or out of it* either.

You may also request that your room be a Water With Care area, in which case small water weapons may be used inside it, but not larger weapons such as water bombs or CPS Super Soakers, or a Full Water area, in which case anything goes. You may also inform the umpire of any equipment inside your room which may be damaged by water; this information will be passed to your assassins.

Corridors and other indoor areas in colleges are considered to be Water With Care areas unless otherwise specified. You must not use any water weapons in non-players’ rooms, shops, or any other neutral areas containing anything which may be damaged by water. If a non-player wishes to have the water status of their room changed from No Water, they should contact the Umpire.

If small water pistols are used, it is a good idea to confirm the kill immediately with the victim who might not have noticed the hit if wearing thick clothing. This avoids arguments later, when the water has evaporated.

Bottles of water, hosepipes, etc. may be used to represent flame-throwers. These should only be used outdoors in warm weather. Shaken-up bottles of lemonade or similar should not be used as the drink becomes sticky and unpleasant as it dries.

## 2.2 Coshes And Clubs

Represented by a cardboard poster tube or a newspaper rolled up and stuck with Sellotape. Either should be clearly labelled “Cosh”. The effect of a cosh depends upon the location of the hit:

Head	Unconscious for 5 minutes
Body	Immobilised but conscious for 5 minutes
Limb	The limb is immobilised for 5 minutes

### 2.3 Knives, Swords, Rabbits And Other Melee Weapons

Knives made of foam, rubber or cardboard, plastic knives with retractable blades, pens and pencils may be used as knives. Anything which is not very obviously a knife should be labelled “KNIFE”. Please be careful when attacking people with pencils or anything else vaguely pointy. Be extra-careful when throwing knives.

Arbitrary objects may *not* be turned into weapons simply by writing “KNIFE” on them; this may only be done to vaguely knife-shaped objects. No metal objects including cutlery knives may ever be used as knives.

Plastic or cardboard swords may be used as swords; cardboard ones must be labelled “SWORD”. Toy lightsabres may also be used. Rolled-up newspapers or cardboard poster tubes are coshes, not swords.

Latex LARP swords and knives may also be used, providing:

- You know how to use them safely: particularly, pull your blows, and *never* stab anyone; slicing attacks only
- The weapon is in good condition

Fluffy animals may be used as attack animals as long as they are labelled “KNIFE”, “ATTACK ANIMAL”, “KILLER RABBIT”, etc. Ideally all attack animals should be presented to the umpire first as the umpire likes to see what embarrassing fluffy animals assassins keep in their rooms.

### 2.4 Garottes

Toilet roll or other soft tissue paper may be used to garotte an enemy. You must *not* use as a garotte anything which will not tear in half easily; particularly, handkerchiefs and ties must not be used as you could really strangle someone with them.

### 2.5 Grenades

Confetti in bags made from tissue paper or water bombs may be used. You may *not* employ snowballs. Use common sense with all of these. They will kill if they strike any part of the head or body. If they hit a wall and splash your head or body appreciably (ie. if you’re wettish) you are dead. If you are only slightly splashed, you survive. Being splashed on the arms or legs will disable the limbs in question as normal.

### 2.6 Boulders, Safes, Pianos, Fridges

An empty (large) box, or lump of expanded polystyrene may be labelled ‘safe’, ‘fridge’, ‘anvil’ or similar, and then dropped. It can kill if it falls at least a meter before impact. A beachball (or similar very light ball *only*) at least the size of a football may be labelled as a boulder and then rolled, dropped or thrown as

a weapon (not kicked, however – that would break your leg). any impact with significant speed may kill, including from rebounds (most weapons do not count on the rebound). You may also rig traps in which a boulder is positioned to fall on the victim, such as when opening a wardrobe.

## 3 Indirect Weapons

### 3.1 Contact Poison

Represented by Vaseline, jam, mustard, toothpaste or similar goeey substances, or by powder such as talc. This will kill immediately after contact with the skin even if it is wiped off. This sort of contact poison is deemed to be no longer effective if it has dried enough that the victim does not notice it (be honest, please). Gloves or anything else which prevents the poison from coming into contact with the skin will protect you.

As contact poison is dangerous to anyone else who might touch the surface in question, anyone using it in a public area will be put on the wanted list. This includes a target's door handle. That's worth repeating; **contact poisoning a target's doorhandle will make you wanted**. Ask the Umpire for further clarification. The umpire will take a dim view of anyone felt to be overusing contact poison, even if they are already on the wanted list.

Paper planes with contact poison on the tip may be used as poisoned darts if they are appropriately labelled. Please be careful with these, as they can quite easily cause injury at close range.

Please take care not to use any substance likely to cause allergic reactions as a contact poison - the umpire will inform you if any of your targets have such allergies, but err on the side of caution in all cases.

### 3.2 Poisoned Food And Drink

Strongly-flavoured substances added to a victim's food or drink count as poison and will kill the victim as soon as they notice the taste. If the poison is dilute enough not to be tasted it will not work. Note that experiments to establish the required dose may well end up killing the guinea pig. Be careful not to use as poison any substances which may cause allergic reactions, especially almond essence.

Food which normally tastes strong or spicy does not count as poison on its own. Buying your victim a Pizza Gamberi from Pizza Express does not count as a poisoning, nor does leaving an extra-strong Phileas Fogg tortilla chip in their pigeon hole.

### 3.3 Special Letters

Cards, letters and parcels may contain contact poison or detonators. Musical birthday cards are a particularly useful type of premade letterbomb as they already come with a detonator. Poisoned letters should usually be signed, eg. A. Sassin and must always have a disclaimer reading something like:

This is a letter for the mock assassination game run by the Cambridge University Assassins' Guild. The substance contained within

is [insert name of substance] and is completely harmless. Queries should be addressed to this term's Umpire, Martin O'Leary of St John's College ([assassins@srcf.ucam.org](mailto:assassins@srcf.ucam.org)).

Anyone failing to replace the text '[insert name of substance here]' with the actual name of the substance in question will be made wanted for extreme stupidity.

Powdered contact poison (talc, flour, etc.) *must not* be sent through the Royal Mail. Cards, letters, parcels, etc. that are sent through the mail service (University or Royal) or are handed to porters, and have leaked their contact poison, are deemed to have killed innocent victims. Remember: **Careless Talc Costs Lives.**

'Blackmail' letters must be individually approved by the umpire before use. These are poisoned letters which offer a poisoned victim the chance of an antidote in return for promptly killing a player chosen by the sender. The receiver will be made wanted if the killing breaches normal targetting rules, but at least he won't be dead ... perhaps a legal method of killing could be contrived. Note also that an inappropriate choice of target by the sender (e.g. a non-player) may end up making the sender wanted too.

### 3.4 Bombs

Fake explosive devices may be constructed in order to blow up other players. It should go without saying that attempting to actually blow up other players with real bombs is strictly prohibited.

All bombs should be clearly marked with the words "FAKE BOMB" (the word FAKE must not be smaller than the word BOMB) and a disclaimer to the effect of:

This is a harmless imitation bomb constructed for the purposes of a game played by the Cambridge University Assassins' Guild. Please do not touch. Any queries should be addressed to the Umpire, Martin O'Leary of St John's College ([assassins@srcf.ucam.org](mailto:assassins@srcf.ucam.org)).

The disclaimer should be on the outside of the bomb, visible as soon as the bomb is seen. If you know what a real bomb looks like, ensure that your imitation bomb does not look like one. In particular, avoid leaving electrical wiring poking out of the bomb.

The basic component of any bomb is the detonator. This can be anything which, when triggered, emits some sort of loud noise as a signal that the bomb has gone off. Cap detonators, party poppers, balloon-and-pin arrangements and battery-powered buzzers are all suitable for use as detonators.

A detonator which goes off will kill anyone touching it, and may therefore be sufficient as a letterbomb or pigeonhole bomb. Most bomb-makers, however, will also want to include additional explosives, so that the target can be killed when not touching the detonator. Many substances may be used as explosive; good examples are water, plasticine, styrofoam packing chips or cotton wool, all held in a closed container such as a bottle or a box. Air only counts as an explosive if contained in balloons. If you are not sure whether something can be used as explosive, ask the Umpire.

It is not permissible to merely label something found at the scene as a bomb; all components must be brought by the bomb-maker. Thus, merely writing “FAKE BOMB” on someone’s bin is not allowable.

Explosives must be attached to the detonator either directly or, for example, with a piece of string. When the detonator is triggered, all explosives attached to it will explode. It is worth noting that if you can separate the detonator from the explosive without triggering the bomb, the explosive will become harmless (the detonator can still kill you, however).

Explosives must, in addition to the disclaimer, be marked with the volume of explosive they contain and the corresponding blast radius. The blast radius should be clearly displayed to someone seeing the bomb. The blast radius (in metres) is determined by the formula  $r = 2.4 + 2.6 \ln V$ , where  $V$  is the volume of explosive in litres. The radii for some common volumes of explosive are given here:

Volume in litres	Radius in metres	Volume in litres	Radius in metres
0.5	0.6	5.5	6.8
1.0	2.4	6.0	7.1
1.5	3.5	7.0	7.5
2.0	4.2	8.0	7.8
2.5	4.8	10.0	8.1
3.0	5.3	12.0	8.9
3.5	5.7	14.0	9.3
4.0	6.0	16.0	9.6
4.5	6.3	18.0	9.9
5.0	6.6	20.0	10.2

When an explosive goes off, anyone within its blast radius (as measured from the centre of the explosive, should anyone use an explosive large enough that this is an issue) will be killed. However, objects between you and the explosive will decrease the effective blast radius:

- Doors, windows, cupboards and plasterboard walls will reduce the effective blast radius by 1 metre.
- Larger structural walls will reduce it by 3 metres.

It is possible for a sufficiently small explosive to have a blast radius of zero or less, but any explosive will still kill you if you are touching it when it goes off.

In general, bombs can only be triggered by some action of the victim; you may not detonate your own bombs by remote control, timer or any kind of “dead man’s trigger”, and you may not arrange that the bomb will be set off by neighbours or bedders. You may, however, still be killed by bombs set off by the incompetence of your companions or yourself. Bombs with timers that delay detonation for a short while *after* the victim triggers the bomb are allowed, if you manage to make one. Additionally, any kind of trigger may be used if the bomb is wholly within the target’s room, because any assassin foolish enough to give you the opportunity to plant bombs in their room deserves it. If any of this is not clear, ask the Umpire to explain.

Bombs planted on a target's door which go off when the door is unlocked or the doorhandle is turned are not allowed as there is no reasonable defence against them.

Bombs may be dealt with either by disarming them, or by detonating them from a safe place outside the blast radius. Bombs cannot be destroyed by other bombs. For people with smaller rooms worried about being able to get out of the blast radius of a large bomb, you may contact the umpire concerning the building of a bomb shelter/barricade/bunker in your room.

Whenever you construct, disarm or detonate a bomb, please describe the bomb's construction as fully as possible in the report you send to the Umpire. In addition, if you have any components of a detonated bomb (particularly electronics), please keep hold of them and the Umpire will arrange that they are returned to the original owner. None of the explosives or detonators used in a bomb which has gone off may be re-used within the same game by any player, but if you are able to disarm the bomb without setting it off you may keep it and attempt to use it yourself as long as it is returned to the owner at the end of the game.

You will find it difficult to do so because of the volume of explosive required, but building a bomb to destroy, for example, an entire college is in any case not permitted. (Attempting to do so will probably make you wanted anyway.)

It is suggested that any players wanting to construct particularly clever or unusual bombs check with the Umpire before doing so to be sure that their invention is legal.

## 4 Miscellany

### 4.1 Other Weapons

It is possible to use many other weapons not in this list. However, you *must* contact the umpire to register any other weapon first so that the umpire can decide whether it is fair and safe. Any kills you make with an unlicensed weapon may be disallowed. Examples of previously-licensed novelty weapons include poisoned umbrellas (such as that used to kill Georgi Markov), double-decker buses and poisoned lipstick.

### 4.2 Shields

There are no shields in this game, and clothing, bags and weaponry will not block incoming shots. This means that if you are hit in the back while carrying a rucksack, and the shot would have hit your body had you not been wearing it, you are dead. Weapons may likewise not block shots and so hits to your weapon may count as having hit your arm or body as appropriate if they would otherwise have done so.

### 4.3 Disallowed Weapons

None of the following weapons will be allowed. Please don't try to license them.

- Body armour

- Shields or tanks
- Poison gas
- BB guns, air pistols or any kind of “real” weapon
- Edison Giocatolli rubber pellet guns
- Thrown CDs or playing cards
- Poisonous baby rubber hedgehogs/noxious infantile latex porcupines/any other synonym thereof

## 5 History

The history of this set of rules is fairly short:

- Adam Biltcliffe (amgb2) split the weapons rules off from the main ruleset. For previous history, see the main rules.
- Martin O’Leary (mewo2) tightened things up slightly for Michaelmas 2004.