

# Hand-Held Weapons

Pistol- and rifle-type weaponry.

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# The Proto-Cyclotron Blaster

This is the principal weapon of a Division One agent, commonly called a blaster in daily parlance. As the name suggests, it is based on a miniaturized particle accelerator; the particles are impelled into a spiral trajectory by a static magnetic field, while a high- frequency varying electric field provides acceleration. The radiation released by the accelerating charged particles (typically protons, hence the 'cyclotron' in the name) within the weapon is captured and the energy funneled back into the electric field, allowing for an extended lifetime of the power pack, though entropy is always a consideration.

# The Winchester & Tesla Mark II Death Ray

The Winchester & Tesla has two modes of operation: beam and grenade. It is based on Nikola Tesla's 'teleforce ray,' and was miniaturized for the Agency by a descendant of the Winchester family, a clan which originated on Chesharil. It is a directed x-ray beam, essentially an x-ray laser, but because x-rays are much more difficult to deflect than standard visible-light lasers, it is far harder to counter. An agent using a Winchester & Tesla therefore must be very aware of the downrange environment, to avoid collateral damage. Like any beam weapon, however, it is affected by the inverse-square law—beam intensity will diminish inversely with the square of the distance.

# The Mark IV Tachyon Splitter Rifle

The Mark IV is the latest version of this rifle, first developed on Emdali. This is one of the more common weapons in use by the Agency; it is utilized when higher power and/ or longer distances are needed than can be had from the proto- cyclotron blaster. The rifle configuration allows for a larger power pack and considerably more energy, as well as increased lifetime and targeting capability at longer distances.

It initially produces the tachyons near the speed of light, then feeds them into a resonator, which basically acts as a tachyon laser, and is highly disruptive. Some disruptions can be highly explosive in nature, depending on the materials targeted.

# Plasma Rifles

Originally these were standard hydrogen plasma rifles, shooting jets of ionized hydrogen in a slightly- more- sophisticated variant on a gas- fueled flamethrower, and those are still available to agents who want them. But the danger of the hydrogen fuel igniting in what more than one agent has termed 'a *Hindenberg*' was high, especially in combat conditions.

Recently Alpha One Agent Omega, a scientist in her own right, applied her inventiveness to this perennial wallflower of the armory, and with the help of Weapons Lab chief Madrid, modified the rifles, replacing the hydrogen tanks with helium, and adapting the weapon to run on the standardized power packs used in other weapons. Further miniaturization was brought about when Weapons Design chief Madrid substituted pelletized fuel.

# Lasers

Before the introduction of the proto- cyclotron blaster, lasers of various sizes and powers were in common issue to agents. This included the laser pistol and the more powerful laser rifle. Such weapons are still available and useful under certain circumstances, though there are relatively easy countermeasures to laser beam weaponry, such as mirrored shielding.

# The Colt- Westinghouse Projectile Pistol

This is, in essence, a hand- held rail gun. It is useful in places where a blaster's particle beam would be contra- indicated; the higher muzzle velocities, with magnetically- imparted spin, are also more accurate at much longer ranges. The powerful electromagnetic field is contained inside a full Faraday cage, and that inside a miniaturized force field.