

FORCE-ON-FORCE POLICE TRAINING USING AIRSOFT

A MANUAL FOR THE
LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINER
ON THE USE OF AIRSOFT
NON-LETHAL TECHNOLOGY



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Force-On-Force Police Training Using *Airsoft*

2008

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**Outskirts Press, Inc.
Denver, Colorado**

◇ 9780113011008

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Outskirts Press, Inc.
<http://www.outskirtspress.com>

ISBN: 978-1-4327-2684-3

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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Chapter 2

Airsoft Pistols

The hobby of *Airsoft* has been around the Far East, the United Kingdom, and the United States long enough to allow manufacturers to develop a large and varied list of products. A casual visitor to one of the many US suppliers' website (see list of suppliers in the Appendix) would be surprised by the large number of pistols, rifles, and even shotguns marketed at the *Airsoft* aficionado.

Many of these pistols sit at the high end of the price spectrum, with users paying as much as \$150 for a top of the line pistol. On the low end, the spring-propelled pistols can be purchased for \$20-\$30 and make good entry-level weapons for those not sure if they wish to engage in the hobby. The pistols are remarkable 1:1 imitations of real semi-automatic pistols and revolvers and, if one ignores the orange tip, can be indistinguishable from their non-lethal versions when placed side by side.

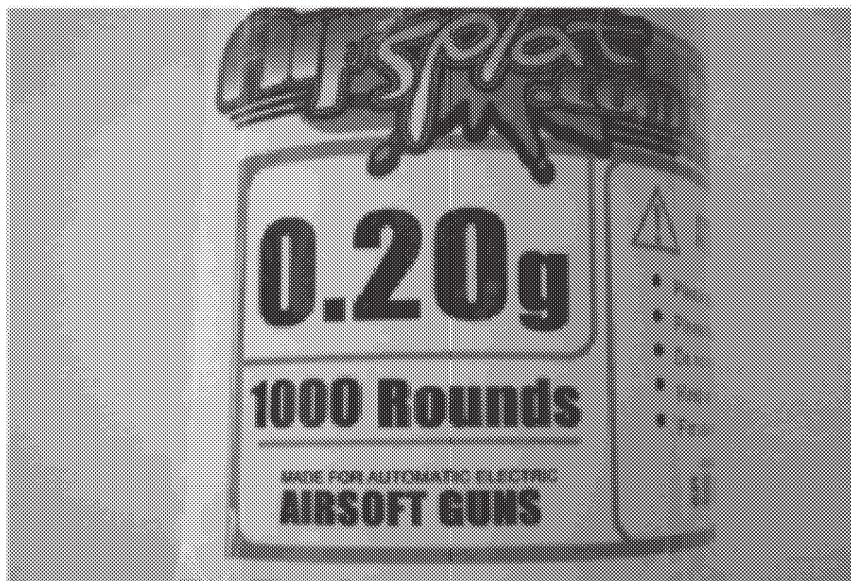


Figure 3- Most commonly used BB size for *Airsoft* is the .20 gram, 6mm size. A canister of 1,000 goes for about \$4.00 each.

They fire a polystyrene plastic pellet of various weights and sizes, but the most common and closest to a “standard” in the *Airsoft* business is the 6mm (.23”), .20 gram plastic BB (see figure 3). The guns available can be broadly separated in three categories; the simple, and cheaper, spring pistols, the gas or CO₂ (carbon dioxide) powered blowback pistols, and the automatic electric guns, or AEGs.

Spring Pistols

The cheapest and most commonly found models of *Airsoft* are the spring-powered pistols and revolvers. Cheap versions of these can sometimes be found in toy and department stores, among the other toy guns, while the higher quality, more expensive pistols are used by hobbyists and war gamers. The spring pistols fire the same plastic pellet, or BB, as their big brothers albeit in a single-shot manner and utilizing a simple mechanism. They tend to be effective as entry level training weapons for very inexperienced persons.

These guns are not able to perform true semi-auto blowback action, as their more advanced brethren. A major advantage of spring pistols is the fact they need no external source of power (gas or batteries) and can be operated indefinitely, unless there’s an internal malfunction.

These devices are very simple in their operation, maintenance free, and they make an excellent entry-level for police instructors to introduce the trainees to the concept. The operation of these guns is simple; just pull on the slide or cocking mechanism on top of the gun and this action charges the weapon and prepares it for firing. A cylinder device inside the gun draws and compresses the air