



2013

**SKIRMISH AIRSOFT BASIC
GUIDE HANDBOOK**



**SKIRMISH AIRSOFT
EAST ANGLIA**

Airsoft – Not for softies!



Some of the team and players at our Plumstead, Norwich site.

Introduction:

This information booklet has been put together to introduce you to the basics of Airsoft and what it is all about. We have included details about the type of weapons you will come across and use, as well as the basics on uniforms and equipment to help answer many, if not all of your questions about Airsoft, and will steer you through some of those most commonly asked, as well as lay to rest some of the misconceptions surrounding the sport. It also includes all you need to know about the law and legal requirements relating to Airsoft weapons and how to get registered on to the UKARA database.

We have tried to keep it as informative as possible but also short, so as not to overload you with far too much technical jargon. That aspect of the sport you will soon, and easily, pick up as you attend events. *We have repeated some sections just to emphasise a point.*

If after reading this booklet you still have more questions, please feel free to contact us direct.

Full contact details at end of booklet.



About Airsoft

What is Airsoft?

Airsoft is a sport that was developed by the Japanese in the late eighties to replace the popular sport of paintball, which had long been criticised for a lack of realism and apparent high cost of the associated equipment (especially ammunition). Note: We love paintball and both sports have their advantages and disadvantages! Airsoft tried to offer an answer to all of these concerns: Airsoft replica weapons are legally described as 'toys' and have been manufactured to closely resemble their real counterparts, both in size and weight, with most of them working on both single shot and fully automatic using a simple piston driven by a battery powered electric motor.

Due to the forces required to fire a .68 cal diameter paintball, bruising is hence a common side effect from the impact. Airsoft BB's are only 0.20g in weight and therefore the force required to fire them is considerably less, hence the effects of impact are negligible (an Airsoft BB will not break human skin even at close range through clothes unless it hits bare exposed skin). These pellets do not cause any lasting damage, other than you feel a stinging sensation, but it soon fades; unlike paintball! Consequently the game relies on personal honour prevailing in order to keep things running. No surprise there, as the game started off in Japan.

Is it dangerous?

When Airsoft replica weapons are used properly under supervised conditions the answer is quite simply no. Of course common sense precautions such as eye protection are essential and our sites most certainly enforce this vigorously. Of course Airsoft weapons are also classed as replica firearms and all care should be taken in accordance with the current law. As in not walking around in public with them or taking them out of the boot of your car to take indoors without being covered. It's like anything; it's only dangerous if you're stupid. Think of it as Darwinism in action. First thing you should have is protective gear. If you've got a set of goggles then the worst you're going to get is a wounded pride. Naturally you need to be careful when playing, woodland sites are full of places to trip up, trees to run into and the like, but we're all adults here.

An extensive safety briefing is ALWAYS given before players set off. No matter how many times they have heard it. This is all basic stuff. No magazines in weapons in the safe area, goggles on at all times except when in the safe zone, etc. The magic word if you have any problems whilst playing is "Marshal!"

Airsoft is fun, or it should be if you're doing it right. Usually Two opposing teams, sometimes more, attempt to complete various mission objectives (such as search and retrieval, attack and defend and rescue missions, i.e. downed pilot etc.), which invariably end up with them shooting the opposing team. The shooting in question is done by Airsoft weapons which use either spring or air power to fire the small plastic pellets at the opposition. Added bonus about Airsoft is:

- It's cheaper. (Once you have bought all your kit).
- The weapons are more realistic.
- Tactics usually work as the weapons are quieter .

Some paintball markers vaguely resemble realistic weapons. They look like a hand gun with a long barrel and have the added obtrusion of a large hopper of paint balls on top and a gas bottle at the rear. A few new versions do look more realistic it has to be noted. An Airsoft weapon (model) looks like a gun. In fact it looks 'exactly' like a gun. The trademarks, the selector switches, accessories, magazines, etc. are all identical to the real thing. In many instances the real steel equipment fits on the Airsoft weapons.

With this level of realism, tactics become a lot more important. Whereas in paintball you can rush to a position and sometimes get through, if you try the same stunts in Airsoft you'll get cut down in a hail of automatic fire before you've made ten yards. This adds another level of thought to the game and brings into play things such as fire and movement, sniping, camouflage, radio communications and building clearance. All these skills are taught on site and you soon pick them up. Plus, with Airsoft (at selected Skirmish Airsoft sites) you can just turn up, pay and play on our walk on days. Simply check our events page on line for dates.

Can an Airsoft replica weapon be converted into a real weapon?

Absolutely NOT! Although they look the same as their original counterparts, they are produced as toys from either hard ABS plastics or mild metal alloys.

Internal parts are not even remotely the same as real weapons and original gun parts cannot be made to fit.

Games and Scenarios:

These vary from battlefield to site. Each battlefield scenario however is fully explained prior to the mission starting. They are run along the lines of a genuine military operation that starts with a briefing giving the Ground, Situation, Mission, Execution, Service Support, Command and Signal etc. See example at rear of booklet. Each mission can be varied according to time, weather, amount of players and skill level of the players. Corporate and team bonding day packages can be tailored but invariably run along the lines of the group signing in, being issued with clothing, equipment and introduction to weapons handling and some practice shooting for those who have never fired before. In some cases a brief team building exercise and command task is carried out. This warms up the group as well as giving us the chance to assess you as well as enables you to adjust your kit and clothing before the main events.

All of our marshals wear the same MTP combat clothing so as not to give away a team's position as they crawl through the undergrowth. They get down in the dirt with the rest of them. Sometimes a marshal will simply marshal the



game and is clearly marked with two yellow stripes on their right arm. If they are working as a player marshal, they will only have one yellow stripe. All marshals carry a sidearm pistol. This enables them to shoot a player suspected of cheating and see if the offending player does honour the hit and calls it out correctly. Thankfully, as Airsoft relies heavily upon the honour system, this rule and engagement is very rarely used.

Missions can range from a full days planning, team tests, target take down exercises, reconnaissance and final assault mission to several multi missions in a day. Scenarios range from your team having to enter enemy territory, either woodland, or built up areas, locating the enemy and neutralising them. Or it could be to establish where the enemy is, and report back full details of numbers, equipment and their positions without being spotted. Rescuing of a downed Pilot to the full planning and rescue of hostages all within a time limit so the pressure is on. Some missions will involve a live enemy made up from an opposing team, or the odd mad marshal in full gear just waiting in hiding for you, as well as target recognition and 'Take down' scenarios. 'Take down' missions involve complex scenarios where you will have a lot of information to take in about drone locations, positions of mines, booby traps, enemy locations, friendly forces locations, call signs and fire support as well as find targets and engage them stealthily within mission limits. Please note: We run a policy whereby the opposing forces or targeted enemy have NO political or religious affiliation or country related or specified. All scenarios involve purely fictitious countries and forces. Some scenarios involve locating a 'Dirty Bomb' within a time limit whilst either engaging the enemy or stealthily locating it. If the time runs out, the bomb detonates in a huge plume of blue smoke and its mission failure.

Airsoft equipment

For the majority of games organised, individuals will turn up to play with their own weapons, uniforms, webbing and equipment etc. Please see site rules for further details on this. For those games that are booked as a team event or corporate day, full clothing, all equipment and weapons required will be supplied. Individual issue of weapons and equipment can be arranged via our booking office but have to be made in advance and paid for at time of booking – not on the day unless otherwise agreed upon in advance.

Our uniforms are all British DPM or latest issue MTP (Disruptive Pattern Material/Multi Terrain Pattern) Combat Smocks, with hoods, Combat trousers, bush hat and Assault vests. Weapons issued are mission specific per scenarios and events booked. These will range from the very latest issue SOCOM

(Special Operations Command) Gen III FN SCAR-L CQC, FN SCAR-L, SCAR-HB DX, to H&K G36C's and H&K G36K's, Glock 17 pistol and the AEG MP5 SD6 for Close Quarter Combat and Hostage Rescue events. Personal Role Radios can also be supplied mission specific. All players must wear at all times protective goggles. Issued goggles are the full wrap around full face type. 'Clear Protection Goggles' (SKU: SP1203MA) are recommended. You will look like mean soldier even if you have never worn a uniform before. Whether you can cut the metal is down to you on the day.

AIRSOFT NORWICH/NORFOLK NECTON/IPSWICH

With many varied battle zones at each location, Norwich Airsoft is a professionally run site with experienced marshals. The games are full Milsim (Military Simulation) with scenarios and tactics adhering to as near to the real thing as possible – without real casualties of course! Some of our Marshals are ex forces and former SF (Special Forces) to ensure an unforgettable experience. From rescuing downed pilots, toxic dirty bomb location and destroy, to satellite retrieval, hostage rescue to close target observation reconnaissance exercises, you will find them both mentally and physically challenging. This is not for the faint hearted or armchair warriors as we don't do simple run around shoot em ups. You will be challenged. So are you tough enough?

Game Rules:

1. Kill Shot:

- Airsoft relies on each player being honest. We call this the 'Honour System'. Paintballs leave marks, as well as make the player scream, usually in pain, but Airsoft shots rarely leave any marks. Up close and personal they can. Nothing ruins an Airsoft event faster than players not taking shots when hit. So please help us to provide the very best in realistic Milsim Airsoft by making sure the players adhere to this rule.
- A kill shot occurs when a BB fired directly from a gun, launched by a grenade or spring operated trap, strikes a player anywhere about their person, uniform or webbing.
- Gun hits and definite ricochets count as kill shots, as do all other areas (head, equipment, mask, fingers, feet etc) do.
- When you are shot, shout 'HIT' and raise your arm above your head, better than just your hand waving hello, and leave the battlefield keeping your arm still raised above your head to indicate to other players that you are out of the game. With your weapon covering your groin region pointing downwards keep waving other hand above head. This also stops you firing off a sneaky shot as you pass your opponent. Do not linger in the battlefield.

2. Cheating:

- The '3-strikes and you're out' rule system is used for cheating.

- At the start of the day, each player is given a coloured arm band in their teams colour. Red or blue and a marker pen number written upon your hand.
- If a marshal is told by other players, or notes it personally, that a player is not taking kill shots, their number is marked down on a blackboard hung back at the base 'Safe' staging area. (For all to see).
- The first strike is a friendly warning, the second strike is a formal warning and the third strike leads to your being escorted from the site.
- Players can look at the board at any time to see if any 'strikes' have been issued. ABOVE IS SUBJECT TO SITE MARSHAL DISCRETION.
- Other actions which may earn you a strike are: blind firing, goggle lifting (removing protection in the game area), persistent overly aggressive play, as in using butt of weapons, bayonet charges and stick and stone throwing etc. This is not an exhaustive list.

3. *Surrender rules:*

- We play a 'surrender' or 'bang' rule. If you are likely to shoot a player at very short range, please give them a chance to surrender, or alternatively touch them and say 'bang' – this will count exactly the same as a kill shot with a BB. It hurts less, and makes you more popular.
- Use common sense in the application of this rule - do not try and 'sniper-bang' players whom you could quite safely shoot.
- The surrender rule is best used where you have caught someone completely by surprise and they are, for example, facing the other way.

4. *Grenades and smoke:*

- BB grenades and blank firing grenades will count as a kill shot if they explode within 5 metres of you outside, or within the same room if inside.
- If you can get hard cover (like a wall, door or sandbags) between you and the grenade then you are safe. A bush is not hard cover. Marshals have final word.
- Blank firing grenades must only be used with 9mm blanks - 12 guage blanks are not permitted as they are too loud in confined spaces.
- Due to their weight, blank firing grenades should only be thrown underarm - use common sense to avoid injuring other players; it's not a real war. Doing so will result in a 'strike' being issued against the offending player.
- Blue coloured smoke (which will only be issued by Marshals and used in certain scenarios as part of the game plan) counts as toxic gas/dirty bomb. If used, then the opposing team to the user must evacuate the smoke immediately or remove themselves from the field.
- Any other coloured (non-blue) smoke has no effect other than obscuring.
- Thunderflashes count only as a distraction, they have no effect in eliminating players. MK5's ONLY TO BE USED AT SITES.

5. *Ammo limits:*

- In order to prevent 'spray-and-pray' tactics which ruins realism and causes games to bog down, we impose realistic Milsim restrictions as would be in real combat, as in you don't fire off all your ammo in spray and pray fashion as you make your shots count, so an ammo limit of 600 rounds per player per game is standard operating procedure with our scenarios. Some games may be less such as on the Close Target Reconnaissance mission.
- Magazines for gas or spring powered pistols do not count toward your allocation of rounds. If you want to carry three tonnes of GBB (Gas Blow Back) mag's, that's up to you. Magazines explained later.
- Standard magazines for the new Marui MAEG pistols are not counted toward your allocation - hi capacity magazines for these pistols will be counted however.
- Shotgun shells do count toward your allocation of rounds.
- Moscart shells, being single shot, do not count toward your allocation of rounds.
- Each team may take out one support machine gun (a large fully automatic weapon such as an M60 or M249, (not an MP5K with a drum mag!) with 3000 rounds maximum per game.
- Infringements to this rule will be counted as cheating and will earn you a 'strike' under rule 2.

6. *Marshals decisions are final.* If you disagree with the decision of a marshal, take up the matter with a head marshal or with the organisers. Please, no fisty cuffs or hair pulling!

7. If you are unclear on any of these rules, or you have any questions about them, just ask one of our friendly, experienced marshalling staff. If in doubt, shout!

8. *Please put safety above any game constraints. If you or the marshals view and deem what you or any other player is doing is dangerous, then simply don't do it*

Site Rules:

1. *Arrival and departure:*

- As we do not operate an open site all places will need to be booked in advance via our online booking system informing us of the date you wish to attend.
- Follow the directions as given on our website and upon arrival wait in the holding/parking area outside the main buildings. Sign your disclaimer forms, which are located in the small disclaimer hut, until you are escorted into the main site and issued with your kit.
- Airsoft players arriving with their own weapons MUST ensure ALL guns are covered or boxed during arrival and departure. We do not want to see players removing guns from their cars whilst waiting outside. The temptation to show off the weapons and maybe even fire the odd friendly fire shot at your mates whilst waiting around can often prove too tempting. Please use common sense.

- Players will not bring onto the site any real, deactivated or bladed weapons or inappropriate (non-Airsoft) pyrotechnics. Bayonets, samurai swords and machetes have no place in Airsoft games. ONLY Airsoft weaponry is acceptable. NO EXCEPTIONS. If in doubt, ask us. We don't bite.
- At the end of the day all players must wait to be discharged from the site after ensuring all equipment, clothing and weapons have all been returned. Should you do so and we subsequently discover items missing, it is to you that we shall look for recompense! Remember, we will have your address but we are of course confident no one would ever do such a thing – would they?

2. *Site weapon limits:*

- The site limit is 350fps for all weapon types (AEG, gas, spring), measured with .20g BB's.
- All guns will be chronoed each day, with .20g BB's - we will provide magazines loaded with 0.20g ammo.
- Guns that fail by any significant margin will not be able to be used.
- Velocity reducers are not permitted since they only reduce the velocity of the first couple of shots of a burst, beyond that the membrane is unable to close fast enough to catch the BBs and therefore many subsequent rounds go through at whatever the uninhibited power of the gun is.
- There is no limit to BB weight except for when chronoing. However, only 6mm Biodegradable BB's can be used on site (Excel or equivalent or our own BB's).
- 8mm BB's may not be used. This is due to the lack of 0.20g 8mm BB's for use in chronoing. (Unless otherwise agreed in advance or on special scenarios).
- Worth noting if you are upgrading an AEG; a 1 joule spring should keep you well within these limits, whilst an M100 or equivalent may fall either side of the 350fps limit. Worth bearing in mind.
- Two-tone guns which have been spray-painted or otherwise converted so that they become realistic imitation firearms (RIFs), as opposed to imitation firearms (IFs), are not permitted. This is regardless of your site membership or UKARA registration status. **Unmodified two-tones are allowed.**

3. *Safety:*

- A full safety briefing will be given each and every day – if you have any questions, please ask a marshal who will be happy to help. Even if you have been to our site many times, or are an Airsoft veteran and heard the safety briefing over and over, please remain quiet so that the new players around you can hear. It could be you who suffers if you prevent others from hearing the safety rules.
- We have 'Dead Box's' on each battlefield zone but these are often mistakenly named as 'Safe Zones' at other Airsoft sites. They are clearly designated within each battlefield zone but we stress ours are termed 'Dead Box's' as it is not safe as you still have your weapons and other shots could still inadvertently enter the area.

- Prior to entering the 'Dead Box', magazines should be removed, actions cleared (fired to empty chamber of any BB's) and weapons made safe. This includes removal of moscart shells.
- All games are marshalled by dedicated and knowledgeable staff who will be wearing hi-visibility yellow stripes or body vest. Listen to their instructions, and please follow their orders.
- Approved safety masks or glasses must be worn at all times entering, leaving and within the battlefield areas and whilst walking to and from the zones and main base area. If your own eye protection is not considered appropriate you will be issued with a full face mask. Your eye protection should be on before you pass through the safe zone area of the base camp, where we have a nice big sign which says 'Goggles on' and stay on until you are back inside. 'Goggle lifting' during games is not acceptable and will count as a strike under the three strikes rule. See rule 2 again. If you are steamed up, speak to a marshal. You will be allowed to return to the game after clearing your goggles in the 'Dead Box' if agreed by the marshal at the time.
- We strongly recommend the wearing of an approved full face mask, though approved goggles or glasses can be worn by players aged 16+ at the wearers risk.
- Plastic framed Oakley glasses are not approved eye protection Metal framed Oakley glasses designed to protect from the eyes from high speed impacts are acceptable.
- Any discharging of guns in safe areas may result in immediate expulsion.
- Only pyrotechnics approved or provided by us can be used on the site. Pyrotechnics (smoke and BB grenades) can only be sold to and used by players aged 18 or over, it's the law - if you look young and want pyro, bring ID. Homemade or home-modified pyrotechnics are illegal; anyone found to be using such items will be escorted from the site and permanently banned.
- Areas of the site of potential risk, such as the building roofs etc are out of bounds. These areas will be identified in the safety briefing; one of the reasons it is important that everyone is able to hear it. You may receive a strike under the three strikes rule if you are found to be obviously out of bounds.

4. *Miscellaneous:*

- We welcome anyone over 16, or 14 if they have an accompanying guardian or a signed consent form to our events. If you appear to be below the age limit we will ask you for suitable ID, so please bring some. If you cannot provide ID and we believe that you are below the age limit, you will be escorted from the site. This is not negotiable and we are not willing to void our insurance by operating outside of its terms. *If you look younger than you need to be to play, bring appropriate ID.*
- We can hire out all the equipment needed (AEG, mask, coveralls), but insist that people bring their own sensible footwear – boots or supportive trainers are a must. Some bookings and packages include full equipment and weapon hire.
- Whilst on the site you agree to being photographed, video recorded or having your image captured by any other means. These images may be published and

distributed via the internet or in any other medium for promotional purposes unless expressly requested not be photographed prior to arrival.

- Smoking is not permitted within any structures on the site. Smoking is permitted in open areas back at the base camp in designated areas only.
5. By booking your place with us you are signifying that you have read and agree to be bound by these rules. These rules may be changed without notice and all changes will appear on this page.
 6. *Safety and security will always take precedence over gaming.*

Membership requirements clarification

There has been some confusion amongst players recently about the qualification requirements for Skirmish Airsoft Norwich/Norfolk/Ipswich and UKARA membership. Anyone who has played at three events at our Skirmish Airsoft sites over any period is able to get Skirmish Airsoft membership to enable fast-track booking and priority access to certain events, but only players who have played at three events over not less than two months within the last year will be able to get their UKARA forms stamped by Skirmish Airsoft upon production of the appropriate proof of ID - we have a list of all players this applies to at each event. *In order for a booking/event attendance to count toward UKARA registration you must have booked on in your own right with full name and address details, ie. not as an additional player on another person's booking.*

The New Laws: The VCRA (Violent Crime Reduction Act)

What are these new laws? / What is the VCRA?

The Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006 or VCRA as it is often shortened is a recent piece of legislation created by the Government to help combat crime. Unfortunately it threatens Airsoft by banning the sale, importation and manufacturer of Realistic Imitation Firearms (RIFs) in the UK. All true Airsoft replicas fall under this RIF definition. The laws that affect Airsoft replicas came in to effect on the 1st of October 2007.

Who does it affect?

All UK based customers who wish to purchase Airsoft replicas. Customers not located in the UK, such as those in the Republic of Ireland are completely unaffected. It also doesn't affect customers making non-replica purchases, so the sale of everything else, parts, accessories, magazines, consumables will continue as normal.

Does it affect ownership?

No, the VCRA only bans the sale, importation and manufacture of Realistic Imitation Firearms (RIFs) in the UK. Therefore all Airsoft replicas you currently own are as legal to keep as before.

But Airsoft has an exemption?

Yes, the UKARA (United Kingdom Airsoft Retailers Association) of which Airsoft Direct is a member, along with other groups such as the ABA (Association of British Airsoft) have fought successfully for an exemption. This exemption protects the sport of Airsoft by giving players a workable defence, allowing them to continue to purchase RIFs if they meet certain requirements.

What are these requirements?

In order for any retailer to sell a UK customer an RIF under the exemption that Airsoft as a sport has been granted, the customer must be 18 years old or over and be an Airsoft Skirmisher. To qualify as a 'Skirmish Airsoft Player' you must be a regular player at a named skirmish site that has 3rd party insurance and attend no less than 3 times in 2 months.

How does the UKARA player's scheme work?

The scheme we currently use is to establish that customers purchasing Airsoft replicas are 18 years old or over and are Airsoft skirmishers/players. The scheme is fairly simple, as it is the seller's responsibility to prove that the customer meets these requirements so it was necessary to setup a database that allows the retailer to quickly and easily check that a customer has the right to purchase Airsoft replicas. This UKARA player's database is accessible by UKARA retailers allowing them to check that a customer is legally entitled to purchase.

The UKARA has approved lots of Airsoft skirmish sites located in the UK, ensuring that they have the required 3rd party insurance and then issuing them with a validating stamp. Players are then validated by these sites, they check each of them to make sure they are registered skirmishers, therefore having attended no less than 3 times in 2 months and making sure they are 18 years old or over. This is done through a player's membership form, which the player fills out and then gives to the site along with the required forms of ID. The site checks and stamps this form, issuing the player with a membership number, the player is then required to post it off to a UKARA retailer who uploads the player's details onto the database. Once this has been done all the

player needs to do is quote this membership number when they place an order with a UKARA retailer for Airsoft replicas. The retailer checks the order details and membership number against what is held on the database and if they match the order is processed and shipped.

Where can I see a list of UKARA Registered Gaming Sites?

On the UKARA website there is a page with a list of UKARA Registered Game Sites. This list is being updated all of the time as sites register with the UKARA.

Once you have your membership number and your details have been uploaded to the player's database by a retailer, you can then place an order for Airsoft replicas. Once you've decided what you want from a retailer and have added it all to the cart simply click the Purchase button, you will be asked to register or log in if you have previously registered. Once done you will reach the Checkout section and it is on this page at the bottom where you enter your membership number. Please remember that all orders containing Airsoft replicas are manually checked before being processed, so without a valid membership number your order will be flagged and you will be contacted.

Are there any requirements once I'm on the database?

Yes, in the first 12 months after you are registered you must make one purchase of an Airsoft replica, otherwise your entry will be removed. After this you must place one order every 12 months in order to stay on the database.

Can I have my Airsoft Replicas sent to a different address?

No, your order details including your name and postal address must be the same information you supplied on your players application form, so that it matches what is held on the database.

Are mail order and other distance selling like online purchases still allowed?

Yes, because of the way that the UKARA scheme works all mail order and online purchases will continue as normal as long as the customer can provide proof that they meet the requirements. This is done by supplying a valid player membership number, a membership number which is currently on the player's database.

What about Collectors and Target Shooters?

Unfortunately the exemption only protects Airsoft as a sport, so if you wish to continue purchasing you must play at a skirmish site that holds 3rd party insurance, even if you are 18 or older. If you do meet the age requirements we would suggest you visit the UKARA Registered Game Sites page and visit your local site. Airsoft is a great sport to get into and once you are registered you can purchase as many Airsoft replicas as you want.

Are any other Airsoft products affected?

No, only the replicas themselves fall under the RIF definition, everything else from accessories such as magazines, parts and consumables such as gas and BB's are all unaffected. They can all be purchased as normal as they do not resemble a realistic imitation firearm and therefore are not covered by the VCRA.

The Act & other exemption's

On the Government website you can view The Act. Part 2, section 36 onwards deals with Realistic Imitation Firearms. You will also be able to see what the other exemptions of ownership are

My Question is not Answered Here.

If you have a question and you cannot find the answer here please contact us direct and let us know, we will be happy to help and answer any further questions you may have.

Airsoft Field Clothing:

In field scenarios people tend to wear camouflage to try and blend into the environment better. By being better concealed it is much easier to sneak up onto the enemy or into enemy territory. Below are some of the most common camouflage patterns used in field scenarios, mainly Milsim (military simulation) type games.



ACU (Army Combat Uniform)



CRYE(c) MultiCam



MARPAT Desert



MARPAT Woodland



US ("Chocolate Chip") Desert



US Woodland

There are really only two main types of Airsoft Milsim, CQB or woodland. If you're doing CQB (Close Quarters Battle) or FIBUA (Fighting In Built Up Areas, or OBUA as its now known. Operations In Built Up Areas) then by all means go for the ever popular basic black. However, given that most of the sites in the UK are based in woodland then what most players require is DPM or the newer MTP/ATP (Multi Terrain Pattern/All Terrain Pattern).





Disruptive Pattern Material (DPM/MTP/ATP)

To the rest of us, this means camouflage gear. The basic premise of DPM/MTP/ATP is to break up the body shape that you normally present, by fooling the eye and making the brain fail to recognise that there's someone there. This lets you vanish in the undergrowth. The table on previous page is a selection of some of the various camouflages. Again, there are variations on these patterns, as well as snow and desert camouflage.

Our personal choice is the new issue British Army MTP. ATP is identical but one shade darker in contrast to MTP and is a civilian made version. That is the only difference and once washed a few times looks identical. It comes with many features such as Gortex lining, ripstop material.

You can also get specialised kit such as that for snipers (pockets located on sides rather than front so it's accessible while lying down), or para gear.

If you wish to water proof your kit, and you may have to do so yourself, then proof it with Fabsil or Nikwax TX10 Cottonproof. Believe me it makes a difference when the rain comes down. Medium showers are pretty much ignored by it, but if you're going to be in a lot of rain then you'll want to get proper waterproofs. Our Marshalls have been issued with a waterproof Gortex MTP jacket. Always have one handy if possible.

Under & Lower Layers

Common sense. Start with T shirt, then jumper, then fleece etc. Basically make sure you can take off or put on items. One minute you could be standing around freezing, the next overheating as you have just run across the entire training area.

Headgear

As you might imagine, headgear comes in a large number of shapes and styles. Berets, helmets, boony/bush hats, baseball caps, etc. You name it, it's probably been worn at some point. (Below are just three styles typically worn). Whilst the scrim net makes you look like you're trying out for Guns & Roses or a wannabe pirate, it does do a good job of protecting your head from stinging pellets that will undoubtedly hit your head at some time. If you think that looks silly, to the right is an Arctic cap. Ideal during the winter months but not practical in spring and summer. For Airsoft, the most practical, cheapest and by far the most easily obtainable is the classic Bush hat as shown on the far right. You can attach foliage to it, it shades you from both the rain and sun and stops that stinging sensation when hit in the head by a BB.



Simple bandana type.



Full head and ear cover.



More sensible and practical

Helmets:

Are a personal choice but the most popular are the US Fast SF types as below. They are not Ballistic protective. So only buy the copy versions as the real ones are basically a military



specification safety helmet anyway. You can pay up to £300 for a genuine one where as a copy will cost from £35 to £70 and looks and does exactly the same job. With these helmets you can attach a variety of night vision and video accessories. Popular as many players affix head cams during games these days. It also helps wearing a helmet when doing close quarter battle (CQB) in buildings to protect from knocks.



Boots

Sturdy footwear is the order of the day when skirmishing. Numerous foxholes, branches, uneven terrain and vast swampy bits mean that you really don't want to be wearing trainers. You also probably don't want to be wearing your lovely expensive timberland hiking boots. What you want is a nice pair of combat boots. These come in a massive range of sizes, types, countries and prices. You can get a second hand pair for as little as £10 or you can buy a new pair of Matterhorn's for £200. As with everything else, go for something that suits your budget. They should have good ankle support and leather boots should be free from splits, as this will let water in.

Simple tip after years of living in the field. Buy a decent pair of Seal or gortex socks. No matter what boots you are wearing, your feet will stay dry as long as you do not exceed the length of the sock up your shins.



Magnum Sympatex
Boots



British Army Proboots



German Para Boots

Body Armour/Vests:

This is a personal choice by you but in essence, make up your mind what 'Load Out' gear and uniform you wish to dress like. Research the equipment and clothing you intend to wear and purchase accordingly. Best advice is to keep it simple and best is 'Light is Right' is a bench mark to aim for. You want to be comfortable after all and not weighed down by half a hundred weight in gear.



Above is a typical Chest rig in a Molle configuration which allows you to attach other pockets, pouches and equipment. Above version is in the new MTP/ATP pattern but can be purchased in a multitude of colours.

Airsoft Masks and Goggles:

Mask or goggles? It has to be a personal choice based upon comfort and practical use. Plus type of image you are trying to convey. Some will opt for a multi cam full face mask to a simple pair of goggles. Some will even wear customised face masks with skulls printed upon them. Whatever you choose, you must always wear eye protection whilst playing Airsoft. Not negotiable. Always! Full face masks or a mixture of both goggles and mesh face covers are highly advised as getting hit in the face could mean you lose your front teeth.



All masks and goggles will steam up fogging your view. Better a little inconvenience until you get back to base and clear them, than lose an eye permanently. A lot of Airsoft players are using a mesh goggle system; these do not have standard plastic lenses but a fine metal mesh lens. It does not interfere with your vision but stops BB's from hitting your face. As there is no lens it does not impair vision. Some wear a full wrap around mask that also protects their ears also. Tactical mesh goggles combined with a full face mesh cover are



proving to be the best choice for Milsim players of Airsoft. The Mesh mask can be moulded by hand to fit your own face more comfortably. When players do full milsim, a lot will be wearing ear piece radios or ear covers so do not require full wrap around cover masks over their ears. Points to keep in mind when making a final decision on what to purchase.

Airsoft Rubber Knife:

Rubber knives are generally used in CQB. Some people use the “BANG BANG!” rule when they engage an opposing force closer than the gun engagement distance (10ft). Others like to “stab” their opponent with a rubber knife. Please check your CQB facility with the rules regarding melee weapons as they might have different rules or not be allowed at all in the facility. NEVER take a ‘Live’ real bladed weapon into the field. May look good but the temptation to pull it may one day present itself if a dispute gets too heated. If we see a live blade on our sites, we immediately confiscate it and will only return it to the player as he or she leaves the site at the end of the day.



Airsoft Radio:

Radios are used to keep in communication with your team. This is very useful in field scenarios as your squad can get split up easily to cover more ground. There are a multitude of radios that can be used in the field. Some good and some utterly useless for field operations. This subject would fill volumes so we have kept this brief but with the recommendation that you research your own radio first. What you will require is a radio that is legal and does not require an operator’s licence to use in the United Kingdom. You will also need to make sure that it is compact enough to attach to your equipment securely, has attachment facilities to connect both an ear piece and throat microphone which are readily available upon the market. More importantly insure you have enough range on them. No point purchasing a radio that is great in an open field, but utterly useless within woodland environments. You will realistically have to spend at least £60 to £80 minimum for a single decent radio that will work. Better to save and purchase one that will last and serve you well rather than rush to buy a set or one that is cheap now. Some Airsoft players purchase military mock up radios to add to the overall realism, but those type of radios do not function. Check before you purchase one. Ask someone on site who has a radio and experience for advice.

Airsoft weapons:

There are some features that are standard across the different types of gun. HOP up and ammo being the most obvious. More details on weapons are covered in the later FAW (First Air Weapon) section.

High Operating Power up, or hop-up as its known, is a rather clever system that lets your gun shoot further. Essentially, as the BB travels through the barrel it passes by a little rubber "bump". The bump causes the BB to have backspin. The backspin does something clever with the Bernoulli principle, meaning it imparts uplift to the underside of a BB, in much the same way a plane's wings do. If you adjust the hop up to be just right the amount of lift will negate the effect of gravity, at least until the power begins to drop off. In this way the BB's will travel the maximum distance before dropping off. The exact method of adjusting hop-up varies from gun to gun, so check your manual. If you don't have enough hop-up set, your BB's will drop short, and if you have too much they will travel straight before mysteriously flying skywards. It should be noted that the backspin is put on relative to the gun being upright. If you fire it on its side your shots will curve round.

BB's come in the same shape and size (hopefully!) but differing weights. The selection is, 0.20g, 0.25g, 0.30g , 0.34g, 0.43g. As standard most people fire 0.20g's. Some go with 0.25 and anything above that is reserved for sniper rifles. The heavier the weight, the less distance they travel. However, they are less affected by wind and travel straighter. You pays your money, you takes your choice. You set your hop up according to the weight of the BB, so it's not a good idea to mix ammo types or you'll end up with wildly varying shots.

YOUR FAW!



Choosing your FAW (First Airsoft Weapon).

When choosing an Airsoft weapon, there are a few basics you should consider before making any purchases. Get it wrong and it will prove financially costly. Ultimately it is all down to you and your personal preferences as unlike real warfare and soldiering, your life and the lives of those who would depend upon you, will not be adversely affected if you choose a low powered cheap end weapons system that will fail you mechanically or look like a plastic child's toy.

Some players like to be snipers hidden in the bush but with a very expensive and heavy M240 GPMG (General Purpose Machine Gun), which is not exactly mission specific but appeals to the individual as being what he or she wants. Some teams or clubs may insist you only attend with certain weapons in order to join in, this is especially important within re-enactment groups, so make sure you research them before purchasing a weapon prior to joining. That rule works equally well with Uniforms and equipment. If totally new to Airsoft, try out a couple of sites to get the feel of the club/team and what you find best fits with what you are looking for.

Your choice of FAW (First Airsoft Weapon) must be based upon why you want one and what you will be using it for. Is it for target shooting, posing for photos only or actually playing in a game with others? Once you have made that first decision, you can then decide what best works for you. As I'll keep emphasising, the choice should be yours and yours alone; not one based upon what other people have told you. Anyone who tells you that you must have this or that item is either trying to impress you, or impress their will upon you.

The next step of buying your FAW is to decide the role you would like to play. Do you want to be the player up close in the thick of the action or do you want to be a silent player in the background, supporting your team. Determining your playing role is essential to figuring out your choice of FAW that will fit your needs and fulfil the accuracy and size required.

What role?

If you simply wish to do target practice in your back garden or alone in the woods, that is fine but if you intend to play or attend events and sites, you need to establish in your own mind, your preferred choice of role. These are the typical standard roles within Airsoft.

Team Leader/Section Commander: You will need an automatic weapon, preferably an AEG (AEG explained later) battery powered, rapid fire system that allows you to fire both semi automatic and fully automatic that shoots accurately when aimed properly. Any assault rifle looking gun should work well for this role.



Rifleman: For your FAW, this role is best suited for the beginner. Riflemen make up the bulk of a squad and deal with a multitude of ranges from up close and personal to 150 feet. They use weapons such as the M4, AK47, AUG's and the G36.



Marksman/Sniper: A weapon that is very accurate, long barrellled and looks like a sniper rifle. An AK47 is NOT a sniper rifle though in some game scenarios it may be necessary to designate a player as a sniper with an AK47 if no one has a dedicated sniper weapon on the day. These players can either provide support for the squad, or go solo. While it is a very interesting role, it can cost a lot of money to purchase and upgrade your FAW sniper rifle. Snipers tend to use spring or gas Airsoft rifles such as the VSR-10, Bar-10, PSG1, and L96.

Playing the role of sniper is an expensive one, your options on the field are extremely limited and at this stage I can confidently state that a sniper rifle for your FAW is an unwise choice.



Section Gun Group/Support Gunner: Requires a weapon that fires on fully automatic but also has a massive magazine capacity to sustain the rate of fire demanded. In Airsoft, only bursts of two seconds should be the maximum. Any longer and you will hurt an opponent. Gunners use a lot of ammo and something called ‘Spray and pray’, a tactic thus named because you spray at your target and pray one or two will hit, is a tactic not appreciated in the field and should be avoided. Deliberate aimed bursts will earn you respect and be more accurate. Look for weapons clearly designated as SAWs (Squad Automatic Weapons) such as the Minimi M249 SAW, RPK, M240 GPMG and FAMAS. But as a FAW, very expensive and heavy. These players support the squad with large volumes of firepower and use their large and heavy weapons to suppress the enemy while the rest of the team moves forward. This too can be an expensive role, and may not be a good choice for your FAW.



Having decided upon your role, the best way to choose your FAW is to view a large Airsoft retailer website, and check out what you feel visually appeals and can see yourself with, then short list them. Remember, a good quality Airsoft weapon is going to cost the better part of £180 to £200 absolute minimum. Anything below that price will leave you disappointed.

Preferably choose a FAW that has upgrade potential such as Tokyo Marui, Classic Army, ICS, G&G, and KWA. Then narrow the choices down further to just three named brand weapons and compare the statistics on them. Research them and research them again for reviews, demos and forum comments. Put the time in to do your research and it will pay dividends. Do not be lazy!

Crucially, when you have finally made your FAW choice, double check it comes supplied with its own magazine, battery and charging unit if it is an AEG. If it does not, order them at the same time as you place your first order. Nothing more disappointing than having your great new item arrive and you cannot fire it as you have zero power! ONLY use high quality BB's, (Ball bearings) NOT cheap ones or your weapon will soon seize up as its internal mechanism is ruined. Final word of caution on placing your first order for your FAW. Check out the credentials of the retailer you are making the purchase from. Once it arrives, be sure to keep your FAW in tip-top shape by cleaning it often and kept in the box it came in unless you also purchased a carry case for it.

How much should I spend?

If you don't have much money then the best advice is to *save up*. Will take longer to get what you require, but it will save you more in the long run. Do not be impatient. You can pay an absolute fortune on a weapons system but all you will get for that ridiculous extra amount of money, is the maximum of 15%, maybe even 20% better performance. And ultimately you can have the best that money can buy, but it still boils down to the skill, tactics and determination of the player on the day in the field, i.e. the end user! Boasting and bragging about how expensive your weapon is will only generate hostility in most cases towards you and you may intimidate new players to the sport. You will also invariably find yourself being actively sought out as a priority target! Ideally be prepared to spend in the region of £200 minimum to £300 for your FAW.

Weapons Choice Basics.

There are three types of Airsoft guns available; Gas, Electric and Spring, each with different versions and added features or extras.

Types of Airsoft weapons:

1: Spring Airsoft Guns or Rifles. These are the easiest type to use, pull back the slide which compresses the spring and the gun is ready to shoot. Great for target practice, cheap to buy and no need for gas or charging it up. The downside is that it has to be cocked and reloaded for every shot you fire. Not practical in the middle of a fire fight!

2: Airsoft Gas Guns/GBBs (Gas Blow Backs). Generally for the more serious enthusiasts, they operate by a gas driven mechanism powered by carbon dioxide and, or green gas. Downside is that they have to be refilled each time. These guns have realistic recoil so that every shot you shoot, the gun recoils like a real gun. *In very cold conditions, gas guns do not always work.*

3: Electric Airsoft Guns and Electric Powered. Known as AEG's or AEP's, these are the most popular and by far the most common as well as being of higher quality and the greatest

variety. A rechargeable battery drives an electric motor that works an internal mechanism to load and then discharge the BB's. The advantages of this type of weapon system is that you can fire on single shot semi automatic (i.e. a pellet/BB is fired every time you pull the trigger) or in bursts on full automatic. The majority also have high capacity magazines that can hold hundreds of BB's. ***So all round the ideal system for players.*** The most common battery used is an 8.4v. Most beginners should ideally opt for an AEG weapon as they are reliable and upgradeable when compared to GBBs (Gas Blow Backs).

Selecting your final choice of FAW:

Durability.

How durable and tough do you want the weapon to be? Does it simply have to look good, but is fragile or do you want it to last whilst it's subjected to being thrown around in the field and within buildings?

Durability depends upon the quality of the gun and the material it's made from. Some will argue that plastic will not last as long as metal. This is no longer strictly true as some of the new plastics are incredibly strong and durable; neither do they rust, apart from the internal parts and metal pins etc, nor does the paint or coating scratch off as is the case on most metal weapons. Remember that even real weapons now incorporate a lot of plastics. Take the G36 as an example. Both Metal and Plastic works well for Airsoft games and NEITHER is unbreakable! Metal bodies do bend and dent with use. A plastic gun can last a long time with the right player. Some guns that start out with a plastic body, like Tokyo Marui, can be modified with a metal body when you have more money available.

Accuracy.

How accurate do want the weapon to be? Precision is decided by the bore, length and quality of the inner barrel. Precision inner barrels can be purchased in a variety of lengths and bore diameters in order to improve the accuracy and fall of shot. Check if the weapon has Hop Up. This is the mechanism that enables you to put back spin on the pellets/BB's and helps them to sustain a longer trajectory thus increasing accuracy. Different weights of pellets/BB's require a different Hop Up setting, so you really need an adjustable one.

Spares.

Can spares be easily purchased? If the gun is damaged it can prove costly to replace it so consider whether parts can be replaced inexpensively or even upgraded thus improving the quality of your gun at a fraction of the cost.

FPS, MPS & ROF.

Note the FPS speed, (Feet Per Second) and now MPS, (Meters Per second), is the speed at which pellets/BB's leave the weapons barrel. The higher the FPS, the faster the pellet/BB

travels. Thus the faster the pellet/BB, the more impact it will have on contact with a part of the body. Roughly at 200 to 300 FPS, if the pellet/BB hits someone within a ten to fifteen feet distance, it can cause some very painful bruises. From 500 FPS upwards, pellets/BB's can penetrate the skin. But be warned, the higher the FPS, the more pressure is exerted upon the weapons internal mechanisms, thus the potential for damaging other parts of the weapon, if they aren't built as well, is higher! Generally, the faster the speed the further the pellet/BB will travel, but if the weapon has problems with accuracy then these could be increased with a higher FPS.

ROF is the Rate Of Fire. This is the amount of pellets/BB's that can be fired from the weapon in a certain amount of time. Automatic weapons have the highest ROF. This feature is often hyped up as the more pellets/BB's aimed at the target the greater the chances of a hit increases! However in practice it only leads to using far more ammunition instead.

Basic Types of Weapons:

Remember, select your model based on YOUR preference, not what other people tell you.

M4/M16: Are almost the universal standard weapon within the Airsoft world as they come complete with an almost absurd abundance of both external and internal upgrades for this type of weapon. For woodland play, any variant is fine, but if you plan on playing CQB, avoid a full length M16 and opt for the shorter M4 variants.



MP5 & Variants: Very popular weapon. Not as many options for external upgrades as M4/M16's, but plenty of internal upgrades available. Ideal for CQB, where the small size makes a big difference.



AK-47/ AK-74: Many different body styles to choose from, ranging from the standard AK-47 to a compact AK-74U. Not as many external modifications as M4/M16's, but plenty of internal upgrades.



G36 & Variants: Not quite as popular as the M16 and AK47 family, though now gaining a considerable following. One big advantage is the availability of magazine well adapters. These can be a god send since G36 magazines aren't as widely available as other types. The G36C is beginning to come into its own as a practical and thoroughly reliable and durable weapon system. It has the range for field operations yet is short enough for CQB. An up and coming serious contender and makes for an *ideal FAW*.



Consider also that there are two main types of weapon layout and configuration. Standard regular configuration and bullpup. Bullpup weapons have the magazine situated behind the trigger, so the weapon has an overall shorter length yet still retains a long barrel. Because of this, bullpup weapons can be used as snipers, field guns, and CQB guns all at once if push came to shove.

DONT BUY THE CHEAPEST

Once you have established both your **Role** and **FAW** choice, you must now establish your actual price limit. Your FAW will seem very costly, and it is important to decide how much you are able to spend on it. If you aim to get serious about Airsoft, you will need to bite the proverbial bullet and look to spend, as stated earlier, at least the absolute minimum of £180-£200 for a high quality FAW. If you cannot afford that, then initially hire on site weapons as you save until the day you have enough. Long term it will save you a fortune. You need a weapon you can afford but not at the expense of being under powered and under-armed because you tried to save your funds. What are the considerations? First, you need an accurate weapon. The object is to hit the opposing player, and you'll have to engage them at quite a range unless you want to get hit early in every game. So, adjustable Hop Up is a requirement. A long barrelled weapon is better for accuracy, so long as you can aim it properly in the first place. Pistols and grenades are fine in some situations, but long barrelled weapons are the principal tool of an Airsoft player in the field. Again it all depends upon personal choice. Try and strike a balance and get a weapon that functions well out in the field and for CQB (Close Quarter Battle) within buildings etc. M4's and G36's tend to fit this range perfectly. Most times you will not engage targets out in the woods or fields at distances in excess of 100 meters so why buy an expensive long ranged system in the first place. Snipers are a different matter but as many will discover, playing in games where snipers are in play, they tend to dominate the dynamic of the event and can even ruin the game play for all the other players as they get constantly picked off by a sniper they never see.

£0 - £100: If you don't have at least £100 to spend on a FAW you really should just keep saving. **DO NOT** buy a random Chinese LPEG (Low Powered Electric Gun). They are not for Airsoft games. You will only hit the inside of a barn door if standing almost next to it.

£100 - £150: This price range covers most of your standard entry level weapons. The primary manufacturers in this price range are Classic Army Sportline, Echo 1 and G&G Affordable Series. (Note, there has been some recent rumour that Classic Army have been suffering from manufacturing problems and consequently some retailers are no longer offering these for sale through their outlets as a temporary measure but ours are still working perfectly).

£150 - £200: This price range contains upgraded/ metal body versions of the entry level guns from the same manufacturers and is really the absolute minimum budget level you should be looking at. Most of the upgraded versions are not a whole lot better than the basic versions in this category so seriously hold back and save until you can afford the higher level.

£200 - £250: This is a problematic price range to be in. Many clone manufacturers, most notably A&K, market specialised weapons in this area such as SR-25's and custom M4/M16's. Although the metal bodies are enticing at this relatively low price point, the internals could best be described as not up to the job considering the cost. The one exception is the Classic Army MP5's. If you are looking for an MP5 and this is your price range, they are definitely a sound investment.

£250 - £300: This price range is the start of the true high end models. Most of the guns you will find in this range are Classic Army M4/M16's. You really can't go wrong with a Classic Army, despite present rumours and most people choose an M4/M16 variant. ***This the recommended entry level funding for your FAW.***

£300+: This is where you will actually get your monies worth as well as durability and accuracy. Classic Army, Tokyo Marui, G&G, KWA, and ICS are all excellent manufacturers. This price range really is all about personal preference. Note that Tokyo Marui bodies ARE plastic, although the internals are excellent. Once again, you really can't go wrong if you buy from one of these manufacturers, and your choice should be based on personal preference at this level.

Try and avoid brand loyalties. Meaning, don't listen to those that say, "You must get a Classic Army weapon or a Tokyo Marui only". A non biased review is that Tokyo Marui makes very high quality but expensive weapons, and then next comes Classic Army or G&G, then the Echo 1/Star/Jing Gong. Remember, you won't be getting better than you pay for by much. Also, trust the general idea of the reviews. Avoid guns without reviews.

Power.

Power is not the Holy Grail of a weapons system. It may be good for a sniper to hit an opposing player a 100 yards away, but the typical player won't be engaging targets that far. So at your initial choice stage, do not be concerned with future upgrades before you actually have the weapon. A weapon that handles at least 0.20-gram BB's and 0.25-gram BB's is a good bench mark to aim for. But keep in mind you don't need a 400 FPS weapon in the beginning. A player with a 300 FPS M16 can use it immediately and will have a lot more fun than waiting to buy the weapon he can later upgrade to 500 FPS!

Sights.

For your FAW, do not even start to consider weapon sights as these will become a serious item issue best left until you have experience under your belt after you have been in the field and got down and filthy in the muck several times. No point purchasing a semi decent sight, fixing it to your weapon, it looks good, but then you cannot get a target acquisition eye line through it because your mask is too pronounced, the weapons sight fixing rail is too far forward or the weapons stock is too long etc, or, as is frequently the case, during your first fire fight you spend too much time trying to acquire your target through the site with one eye, and miss all the other players heading for you out of view. So start with open battle sights

whereby you can immediately look forward with both eyes open, see your targets then aim fast. Some scope sights become loose very easily, or are not correctly zeroed so the cross hairs do not match up anywhere near to where your pellets/BB's are actually hitting. Let the snipers use scopes; you save your money for gear, BB's and game time. If you feel that you really must have one, go for a red dot sight.



It is different as they are quick target acquisition and do not cost as much as a scope.

We shall not go into player strategy as that is a whole different matter but keep in mind that new players tend to waste so much ammo. Make your shots count, do not be a total amateur and do the classic Spray and Pray syndrome, especially as most proper games limit ammo per scenario.



Magazines.

Magazines (or clips) are containers that hold your pellets/BB's and push it up into your weapon. If you are a sniper, you are in no rush and will not fire many pellets/BB's, so one or two low-capacity clips should suffice. Remember, bring extra pellets/BBs. If you're a support gunner, your magazines will be sizable but you will still want a few.

For TeamLeader/Section Commanders, ideally you will want a few magazines of high capacity that hold more pellets/BB's than normal. Many sites limit the amount of pellets/BB's you can use per game scenario/mission so you will not need a shed full of magazines strapped to your chest other than for visual effect.

CQB (Close Quarter Battle). For players dealing with ranges less than 40 feet and for clearing buildings and rooms, preferably use short rifles so they can go around corners and through doors easier. Use Airsoft weapons like the MP5, P90, and G36C's.

Of course, you'll need a magazine to hold these in, and they come in two basic styles. The standard magazine, which you load with a loading rod, usually holds 40-70 rounds. These are generally only used by people who enjoy realism. The rest of us opt for High-Capacity magazines, or high-caps for short. These have a trapdoor in the top for pouring bb's into and a clockwork mechanism which is wound up and keeps the bb's feeding into the barrel under pressure. They need to be wound for a few minutes initially until they click, and then at periods during the game. Rumour has it that Tokyo Marui are working on a high-cap that only needs to be wound once and will empty its entire contents from there. We live in hope.

Accessories

If you bought a weapon with fixing attachment rails, such as Picatinny or RAS/RIS, (they are the bumpy looking sections on the weapon you attach things to) you have room for improvement. If you like to fight at night, you can attach a flashlight. If you are not a very good aimer of shots you can attach a red dot sight. You can also attach forward hand grips, bipods and laser pin point target markers so think about the accessories you might want to add later. Are they reasonably priced? What kinds of extra magazines can be bought and what are the costs for these?

Scopes: These have magnification, zoom and reticule numbers to consider. Unless you understand these items, they become useless pretty fast. Look good but not effective unless used correctly. Keep in mind that having a very long zoom capability isn't always better, and it can get very frustrating if your AEG sprays shots randomly that go all over the place different from your scope's view. Also, you may need to get expensive mounts for some scopes.

Lasers: These can be useful but beware ones that veer off of your intended line of fire, can be very annoying. Also, NEVER EVER shine one in someone's eyes.

Flashlights: These can be very pricey so look at purchasing a Mini-Maglite or some lesser flashlight and simply buy a mount for it. The Mini-Maglite is good because of the adjustable cone angle and standard batteries and fits well in a scope mount.

Secondary weapon

It's always good to have a pistol as your secondary and back up weapon just in case. Whether it's a cheap spring version or a Gas Blow Back, try and get one. What you get depends on all the factors previously listed for your FAW.



Ammunition- Pellets/BB's

The pellets/BB's themselves are very important. The higher price you pay for them, the better they will be in general. This means fewer flaws in them such as moulded lines, dents, extra bits, and off sizes. This is more important with more expensive and accurate weapons, since they shoot harder and have smaller interior bore measurements in their barrels, hence the need for more perfect pellets/BB's.

Another concern is density. The heavier pellets/BB's are, the less they will be affected by wind and will not smash as easily in your weapon; this could lead to broken internal parts. If your AEG jams, STOP FIRING! In general, low end AEGs or springers should be okay with .12 gram pellets/BB's. As for a high end AEGs/sniper rifles, get very high quality pellets/BB's. Look for tolerances of ± 0.01 mm. You can get pellets/BB's up to around .3 grams, but I wouldn't recommend that except for sniper rifles.

Other points to learn and remember:

- *Batteries* - control both the amount of time you can power the gun for without recharging, and to a lesser extent the rate of fire. Some guns can only take small batteries, and these won't last as many shots before they go flat. If you do opt for a gun like this, a spare battery would be a wise investment. Batteries are rated both in

volts and Milliamp hours (MaH). In general, go for an 8.4v battery with the highest MaH that your gun can hold.

- *Motor* - There are 4 types of motor. The EG560 FAMAS, EG560, EG700 and EG1000. These are in order of speed. The faster the motor, the quicker you're going to throw out BB's and the more money you'll need for ammo. The EG560 FAMAS is a special high torque motor for the FAMAS and is not compatible with any other gun. The EG560 was the first generation, and isn't used these days. EG700 is the one you'll find in the majority of guns, with a few sporting the new EG1000 motor. The EG1000 really puts them out. Turns any gun into a BB hose.

Motors are an easy and obvious upgrade to do, but you have to be a little careful. Each of the three main gears of the AEG unit has a pair of white plastic sleeves at the ends of the gear axles. These serve as mounting and friction pads for the gear axles. Due to friction/heat build-up when firing the AEG at sustained periods, any one of them could literally snap - anytime. When that happens, whichever gear is affected will wobble out of alignment, jump its meshing with the adjacent gear(s), and most probably strip a cog (tooth) or two. It is better to replace the stock bushings with high-grade high-temp plastic or metal bushings, or better yet, with ball bearings, than have to replace gears too. Of course, if you can control your trigger finger then this isn't such a necessity.

- *Gearbox* – We are of the belief that they shouldn't be messed around with unless you know exactly what you're doing. The standard one is fine. Leave it alone. Possible upgrades on these are to replace the somewhat brittle metal gears with some Systema ones. These come in a variety of types, but standard or High Speed ones are best. The Torque Up gears are for seriously uprated springs, which you shouldn't be using.
- *Spring* - There are several ratings of springs, which determine the power of the gun. The higher the level of spring, more power you'll put out. Care should be taken when upgrading springs, both to stay within the legal limit (see section on site limits) and to ensure you don't fit a part that's too powerful and trash your gun. I believe M80 is equivalent to a standard spring, and M90 is about as high as you can go over here.
- *Barrel* - Barrels come in a variety of lengths. Obviously the size of the gun is a factor in this, but it is possible to fit a silencer and then run a barrel through that if you're desperate for more length. Needless to say this makes the silencer cosmetic only, as well as a permanent fixture. The reasoning behind increasing barrel length is that it enhances the accuracy of the gun. It won't make it shoot any further, but it will increase the *effective* range of the weapon. You can also fit tight bore barrels which do the same and also increase the power marginally. This is due to less air escaping around the BB as it travels along the barrel. Some people claim that a tight bore barrel causes jams, but this is only the case if you use substandard ammunition.

As might be expected, there's a huge after-market in accessories. Metal parts, laser sights, scopes, flashlights, magazine holders, tactical slings, Rail Interface Systems, stocks, handgrips... the list goes on and on.

In Conclusion:

Best advice for deciding and purchasing your FAW for Skirmish/Milsim is to Buy an AEG weapon within the £200 to £300 price band and save gas for sidearms where they work best. Go with your personal preferences, but don't be slack and silly about it. If you are going to be playing a lot of CQB, don't buy an M240 GPMG. Stick to the reliable manufacturers! You can't go wrong if you buy from the manufacturers that have been listed.

Recommended List of manufacturers:

Ares (Star) AEG

ASG

Classic Army AEG

FS Custom

G&G AEG

G&P AEGs and Kits

GBTech / VFC AEG / Umarex

ICS AEG

Inokatsu AEG and Kits

King Arms AEG

KWA AEG

LCT AEG and Kits

Magpul AEG

Marui AEG

Silverback

Systema PTW AEG (Very expensive custom weapons but worth it).

Note: Combat Machine have released a new entry level AEG, the G&G CM16 Rapier, an M4 variant that is cheap but very well made, reliable, accurate and designed for upgrades and accessories attachments galore. Highly recommended.

Mission Brief example:

Ground:

Mixed woodland, water filled trenches and several open and exposed tracks.

Situation:

Intel has confirmed an enemy stealth helicopter has crash landed at location A (A marked upon map). Predator drone confirms survivors. Enemy QRF (Quick Reaction Force) on route to recover. PJs (Para Rescue Jumpers) confirmed as already on the ground.

Mission:

*Primary: To infil (Infiltrate) crash zone, secure the area, capture pilots and neutralise all JPs.
Secondary: To retrieve stealth RABFITS (Random Bit Frequency Intelligence Transmitting System) unit and exfil (Exfiltrate) back to PUP (Pick Up Point).*

Execution:

To Tab in on foot as fast as possible from IP (Insertion Point B marked on Map) in Light order (Weapons, radios and body vests only – no bergens/rucksacks), recce (Reconnaissance) the crash site, move in and capture alive if possible the aircrew, neutralise the PJs and any other enemy forces that approach, locate and remove RABFITS unit, call in airstrike to destroy area once clear of blast zone and exfil to PUP (Marked C on Map). Mission is time critical so only have 50 minutes to implement and execute.

Service Support

CAS (Close Air Support) can direct bombardment upon area once called in. Streaming intel update on incoming forces movements by Predator. (Update by marshals on site). No other friendly forces.

Command & Signal:

Teams Call sign is: Alpha Zero One. CAS call sign is Angel Delta Charlie. Fire mission code for airstrike is 'Bravo November.' (Marshals will throw thunder flashes on target when fire mission code is correctly received).

Above mission is given and read from a standard 'Mission Brief' format. These are given to either team individually or at times collectively for larger more dynamic scenarios when both side need to know what the others doing. Some missions are easier whilst others can be very complex depending upon the players skills set.

Example of one of our typical 'Warning Order' notices.

We post these up for our events. Players can log into site and click they are attending, maybe or decline, as well as find out what the basic scenario is all about. This one was to recover some 'God Rods', codeword for Space satellite targeting kinetic energy weapon, that had crash landed and had to be recovered.



'OP THOR'
MIKE 3
SUNDAY THE 3RD MARCH 2013
(PLUMSTEAD SITE)
NO EASY DAY!
WE DARE YOU

Walk on just £20 with own weapon and equipment.
£45 Full day: Includes combat uniform, mask, weapon and 3000 BB's.
Full facilities available including hot snacks, tea, coffee and pyrotechnics.
Doors open 09:00 (Please arrive ten minutes prior to complete paperwork)

CALL 01508 481841

Contact Details:

Tel: 01508 481841

Email: enquiries@skirmishuk.com

Website: <http://www.skirmishpaintball.com>

Facebook: Skirmish Airsoft East Anglia



Call sign 'Ironman' during Operation Zipzag, 17th February 2012.

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