

Neph's Surviv.io Gun Ranking

Draft 1.0

Desert Update

Preamble

This document seeks to organize, discuss, and rank the guns of Surviv.io. It is a first pass at a difficult topic, and takes a slightly different tact than many who have attempted the same. Rather than a linear ranking, these weapons are only loosely arranged in relative power. Different types of weapons serve different roles and it is difficult to directly compare these.

However, every player has the common experience of deciding when to drop a weapon for another. This document seeks to reflect that: each gun has a comparison to weapons it is similar to but directly better than, weapons it is similar to and possible to interchange with, and finally, weapons with which one would immediately replace with—weapons that are strictly better than the one in hand.

Hopefully by this method, a more organic ranking will be depicted, one that will guide the youthful player to success and the experienced player to agreement.

1 Handguns

The humble pistol is often the first weapon the eager survivor will pick up in their struggle for victory. It is also often the first weapon the survivor will discard. In recent updates the handgun family has been generously expanded. While still inarguably the weakest weapon family in the game, no longer are most handgun bad—many present compelling alternatives to traditional mid-game weapons when dual-wielded.

As single weapons, few are worth consideration against a rifle or SMG beyond the hope that the player may find another.

1.1 OT-38, 7.62mm. Very common.

Possibly the worst gun in the game. Has decent accuracy but not enough to make up for its myriad disadvantages. With a 5-cartridge cylinder that barely does enough damage to kill an unarmed target, slowdown that requires quickswitch to use, and oppressive reload, this weapon is simply impractical for the early game and useless beyond that.

The only time I would not get rid of this weapon is to avoid carrying 3 or 4 M9s. At least the OT can hurt on a headshot, so it is occasionally useful for finishing off somebody already weakened by M9s.

Better than: Nothing.

Comparable to: Nothing.

Would replace with: Anything.

1.2 M9, 9mm. Very common.

Also very bad. Their only use is to give some additional damage while closing with fists or to finish off an opponent that your MP5 somehow did not. At least the M9 will not make you contend with slowdown.

Better than: OT-38.

Comparable to: Nothing.

Would replace with: Anything.

1.3 G18C (Glock), 9mm. Common.

Fully-automatic, the glock is the first worthwhile pistol in the game. Can be unwieldy to use against fists but supplies a really nice burst of damage in front of another weapon. A good first slot weapon before you find a shotgun, as it can take down an unarmored M870 user before that second blast.

Better than: M9, Dual M9.

Comparable to: M93R, MP5.

Would replace with: Any shotgun, MAC-10, Dual M93Rs, HK416, AKM, Peacemaker.

1.4 M93R, 9mm. Common.

A surprisingly decent burst pistol. Unlike FAMAS or UMP9, the final 2 bullet burst is worth using instead of reloading early. Has impressive accuracy and can be dangerous even out to x4 range. Unfortunately, it fits in an awkward role that is neither very good at either short-range high-DPS or supplying the pressure of a rifle.

Better than: M9, UMP9.

Comparable to: MP5, Dual M9, Glock, Peacemaker.

Would replace with: Any shotgun, MAC-10, Dual Glocks, HK416, AKM, Deagle.

1.5 Colt Peacemaker, .45 ACP. Very uncommon.

An interesting new weapon that hybridizes traits of both the OT-38 and the Glock. Can be both an accurate single-shooter or a high-DPS full-auto. Runs out of ammo quickly, but the damage makes up for it. I have not had the chance to use it in x4 range, but I suspect it feels much like the EMR at rage, trading awkward barrel length and mediocre CQC DPS for small cylinder capacity.

Otherwise does not compete with rifles or SMGs, instead provides a very nice burst of rapid damage if combat drifts into close range.

Better than: OT-38, Glock.

Comparable to: M93R, M39 EMR.

Would replace with: Deagle, any shotgun.

1.6 Desert Eagle (Deagle), .50 AE. Rare.

Very high damage, sounds like sex, and has first-shot accuracy. Is a serious threat at any range—only weakness is the magazine size.

Better than: All handguns or dual handguns, M39 EMR, Mosin-Nagant, Winchester, M870, MP5.

Comparable to: M1 Garand, Vector, FAMAS, MP220, MAC-10.

Would replace with: MK 12 SPR, SV-98, SCAR-H, CQBR, QBB.

2 Dual-Wielded Handguns

Dual-wielded handguns, with increased damage, fire rate, inaccuracy, and reload time, so substantially differ from their single-wielded brethren that they deserve their own category. Proficient in surprise attacks but crippled by their characteristically long reload, these weapons are worth most in solo and little in duos or solo squads. In the chaos of a full squad-vs-squad battle, tasteful application of their withering DPS can be reasonably effective.

2.1 Dual M9, 9mm. Very common.

Not quite just as bad as a single M9, not quite twice as good. Discard as soon as possible.

Better than: OT-38.

Comparable to: Nothing.

Would replace with: Dual OT-38, Glock, MP5, UMP9.

2.2 Dual OT-38, 7.62mm. Very common.

Thankfully reduces the slowdown that a single OT-38 gives you at a loss of the accuracy. It can be dangerous against unarmed opponents, even those with rifles.

Better than: Dual M9.

Comparable to: UMP9.

Would replace with: Peacemaker, Glock, M39 EMR, MP9, M93R.

2.3 Dual M93R, 9mm. Common.

The dual M93R possesses very high DPS without losing all of the accuracy of the single pistol. Can be used out to even x4 range if you remain stationary. Does not have the raw murdering ability of the dual Glock, but is far more effective at range. Carries an additional 10 rounds compared to a MAC-10 and discards them almost as rapidly. Surprisingly well-rounded for a basic handgun, but does not specialize as well as the dual Glock does.

Again, finds itself in an awkward place between entry-level rifles/SMGs and entry-level shotguns.

Better than: Dual M9, MP5, UMP9.

Comparable to: MAC-10, Dual Peacemaker.

Would replace with: Any shotgun, any DMR, any bolt-action, any assault rifle, Deagle, Vector.

2.4 Dual G18Cs (Glock), 9mm. Common.

Brutal DPS released in a very short time, can kill most shotgun users with surprise. Avoid in team modes, as the reload is punishing. The moving spread is very very bad—it cannot effectively apply damage even in x2 range. Make sure you do not attempt to use this without jumping a corner.

Better than: Dual M9s, MP5, M870, M93R.

Comparable to: MP220, MAC-10, Dual M93R.

Would replace with: Vector, SCAR-H, Dual Peacemaker, Sagia-12.

2.5 Dual Peacemaker, .45 ACP. Rare.

Like the Peacemaker, but twice as good. Has a very long reload.

Better than: Dual Glock, MP5.

Comparable to: MP220, Dual M93R, MAC-10.

Would replace with: SCAR-H, SV-98, Sagia-12.

2.6 Dual Desert Eagle (Deagle), .50 AE. Extremely rare.

The highest DPS in the game and still very accurate. Only real weakness is rarity of ammunition, but that can be mitigated with luck and a woodaxe.

Better than: Any dual handgun, any DMR, most assault rifles, most SMGs, most shotguns.

Comparable to: FAMAS, Vector, QBB, SV-98, Sagia-12.

Would replace with: SCAR-H, CQBR, M249, AWC.

3 Assault Rifles and SMGs

While different in construction, to the survivor there is little difference between the assault rifle and the SMG. Both serve as jacks of all trades—effective at all ranges but perhaps the extremes, dependable, average in stats, and hardly uncommon. These are the bread and butter of the player’s arsenal and part of the expected loadout of nearly any opponent. In a contest between members of this category, besides slight differences in damage output, player skill is often the sole determiner in victory.

Nevertheless, where there are options there are always a worst and best. The prudent survivor ought to know their fundamentals.

3.1 UMP9, 9mm. Common.

The only bad member of this category. I really want to believe in the UMP, but the reality is that by the time you have a 4x, you are very likely going to have a better gun at mid range, and the UMP is useless anywhere else. Better than some handguns, but worse than most weapons in the game. In the early game, I would rather have three frags than this gun.

Better than: Dual M9.

Comparable to: Nothing.

Would replace with: M93R, MP5, almost anything.

3.2 MP5, 9mm. Common.

An early game gun for sure, but can hold its own in the mid game. While the MP5 will lose a DPS race almost always, it is nowhere horrible... just kind of decent at most ranges. Combined with a MAC, makes for an acceptable x2 range combination until you can find a shotgun and specialize.

Better than: UMP9, Dual M9, Glock, Winchester.

Comparable to: M93R, M39 EMR, DP-27.

Would replace with: Any shotgun, dual Glock, dual M93R, MAC-10, AKM.

3.3 AK-47 (AKM), 7.62mm. Uncommon.

A strong rifle you can win the game with. Slightly above average at all ranges, with a tolerable spread and solid DPS. For short ranges, I tend to swap this gun out for the MP5 because of the barrel length and the M416 because of the higher DPS, but is very solid well into x4 range. Pairs very well with the MP220 and with the MAC-10.

Better than: MP5, DP-27, M39 EMR, Dual M93R, Winchester.

Comparable to: HK416, MAC-10, Mosin-Nagant, Dual Peacemaker.

Would replace with: FAMAS, SPAS-12, Deagle.

3.4 MAC-10, 9mm. Common.

The MAC-10 is possibly the single most versatile short-range gun in the game. In CQC, it melts unarmored foes alone and armored foes if lead with a shotgun blast. When used stationary, it can project good damage past x2 range and in CQC can melt unarmored foes. Better than the Vector in the early/mid-game but worse in the late-game, it can be a difficult decision which to pick if the choice arises early in the battle.

While capable in all modes, the MAC-10 is perhaps most fun in solo squads, where it can knock multiple grouped early-game foes before executing them all. Of course, when a good short-range solution (MP220 or similar) and a x4 scope or better is obtained, it is more useful to have a weapon stronger in the mid-range.

Better than: MP5, DP-27, Peacemaker.

Comparable to: Dual M93R, Dual Glock, M870, Deagle, Dual Peacemaker.

Would replace with: MP 220, HK416, Vector, Dual Deagle.

3.5 M416 (HK416), 5.56mm. Uncommon.

If rifles are the most basic of all guns, the HK416 is the most basic of all rifles. With excellent close-range DPS and an interesting spread at range, it is the standard by which all other guns are measured. The HK416 is the quintessential mid-game weapon—to find anything better than this is luck, to attempt to win with anything less than this is unfortunate.

While typically I will trade the HK416 for FAMAS, if I have an already mid-range-heavy build (Perhaps a SPAS instead of MP220), I will retain the HK416. Additionally, HK416 seems to have more utility than FAMAS in team modes.

Better than: MAC-10, AKM, Winchester, M39 EMR, DP-27.

Comparable to: FAMAS, SPAS-12.

Would replace with: Sagia-12, Vector, Dual Deagle.

3.6 FAMAS, 5.56mm. Uncommon.

With only slightly less DPS than the HK416 but the best moving accuracy in the game, FAMAS is the lord of pretty-common mid-range rifles. While some may disdain this burst rifle, it packs an intense punch and can hold its own vs. full-auto rifles at close ranges. It is capable well through x8, a very reliable gun.

It can be difficult to decide whether to use FAMAS or Vector if the choice is yours. I tend to go Vector simply because I find its mid-range suppressing ability very fun to play. However, FAMAS may be a superior choice numerically.

Better than: MAC-10, AKM, Winchester, M39 EMR, DP-27.

Comparable to: Dual Deagle, HK416, SPAS-12, Vector.

Would replace with: SCAR-H, SV-98, Mk 12 SPR.

3.7 Vector, 9mm. Very uncommon.

A wickedly fun SMG. Straight-shooting and with an incredibly high ROF, it can hold its own from x1 through x4 range. Where the Vector excels is in suppression—it is not a killing machine but a harassing one. From its many good stats stands out perhaps its best: reload time. Its very brief reload (and abundance of 9mm ammo) is what allows it to remain competitive against late-game heavy hitters such as SCAR even though it is numerically inferior.

This weapon is an excellent partner to bolt-action snipers. While typically it is not a competitor to shotguns, alongside a bolt-action it is inferior to none but the Sagia.

Better than: MAC-10, HK416, SPAS-12, M870, Dual Peacemaker.

Comparable to: Dual Deagle, MP220.

Would replace with: Sagia-12, CQBR, QBB, M249.

3.8 SCAR-H, 7.62mm. Very uncommon.

The undisputed strongest long-range rifle before the introduction of the very rare CQBR. Remarkably obtainable given its power, it is the reason the Police Station is always so disrupted. Straight-shooting, painful, and an ammo sipper compared to peer weapons, it is arguably better than any of the LMGs under x8 range, and certainly better than any of the DMRs at any range. Vector + SCAR-H is a surprisingly good combination for those with good reload management.

SCAR-H in the right hands can even outplay high-level shotgun users at close range—not an ability to rely on, but certainly not one to neglect.

Better than: SPAS-12, FAMAS, Dual Deagle, Vector, any DMR.

Comparable to: QBB, SV-98, Sagia-12.

Would replace with: CQBR, M249, AWC.

3.9 M4A1-S (CQBR), 5.56mm. Gold airdrop exclusive.

With DPS just shy of M249, reasonable reload, impressive bullet speed and accuracy, it seems almost gratuitous that the CQBR also features the first visually-suppressed bullets in the game. Admittedly, it is not the most useful feature late-game, and you are unlikely to encounter this poorly-understood gun at any time besides. That is, if you encounter it at all. Currently, the CQBR seems to be the rarest gun in the game by at least two or three times.

Enjoy it if you find it. The CQBR is not an overwhelming gun, but together it seems like more than the sum of its parts. An impressive gun that can excel at all ranges (x15 and suppressed bullets are a hilariously well-paired combination), it is most remarkably able to kill SV and even AWC users with careful dodging and well-timed burst application of its high-ROF DPS—something the mighty M249 even struggles to do. Against QBB users, wait until they are low on ammo or reloading and then commit to the DPS race. You'll win.

Better than: Almost everything.

Comparable to: SV-98, AWC, M249.

Would replace with: Perhaps nothing.

4 DMRs

These semi-automatic rifles combine the best of all worlds into long-range killing machines. With more powerful and precise rounds than most assault rifles, moderate reload cycles, and reasonable slowdown, these DMRs simply take the humble rifle and push its engagement envelope comfortably into x4 and x8 range. Provided you can click fast enough, their DPS is not inconsiderable. Although somewhat less dependable in short ranges than a full-auto weapon, they are by no means incompetent at short ranges if combined with a well-aimed shotgun.

4.1 M39 EMR, 7.62mm. Very uncommon.

A depressingly underwhelming gun. While not exactly bad at anything, it is average at almost everything and has simply mediocre damage. Combined with its poor-for-a-DMR accuracy, it seems like it would need full-auto to be worthwhile. Strongish in the early/mid-game if you can time your clicks well, though. Otherwise hampered by awkwardly low fire-rate that causes to tend to miss shots.

In short, the OT of DMRs. A shame it cannot be dual-wielded.

Better than: Most handguns, Winchester.

Comparable to: Nothing.

Would replace with: Mosin-Nagant, MAC-10, AKM, SPAS-12, Mk 12 SPR, M1 Garand.

4.2 Mk 12 SPR, 5.56mm. Very uncommon.

In contrast to the M39 EMR, the Mk 12 SPR is an incredibly good gun at everything. Able to shoot as rapidly as you can click, with outstanding damage and good accuracy, it's not quite as reliable as FAMAS but far stronger in good hands. With DPS that allows it to kill rifle users in close range and damage it can project to x8, it is nothing less than the baseline for long-range combat. This DMR can go toe-to-toe with the best bolt-action rifles. The SCAR is slightly more versatile but by only a small margin.

Better than: M39 EMR, Vector, FAMAS, most rifles, Dual Deagle.

Comparable to: M1 Garand, SV-98, SCAR-H, QBB.

Would replace with: CQBR, M249, AWC.

4.3 M1 Garand, 7.62mm. Rare.

The M1 Garand confuses me. At an awkward place between DMRs and bolt-action rifles, it has higher per-shot damage at the expense of magazine capacity. While it can outplay the Mk 12 with cover, it tends

to be less versatile against full-auto opponents in the later game. It is simply bad at flushing opponents out—it requires good frag use or creative DP pairing to work against groups.

The sound engineering is worth what else the gun lacks—the “ping” of the ejected clip as a foe dies is worth 20 kills.

Better than: M39 EMR, FAMAS, most rifles, Dual Deagle.

Comparable to: Mk 12 SPR.

Would replace with: QBB, SV-98, SCAR-H.

5 Bolt-Action Rifles

Bolt action rifles, with their high stopping power and remarkable accuracy, are not only the undisputed champions of extreme-range combat (x8 or greater), but also function surprisingly well in CQC. If you keep enough distance and quickswitch effectively, you can outplay shotgun users with careful use of cover in x2 or even x1 range. However, small-gun users may be able to get on top of you in buildings—at melee range or against a wall, your longer barrel will be unable to land a shot.

At range, the bolt-action relies even more heavily on effective use of cover than do the DMRs. Your significantly lower fire rate means you cannot as effectively suppress a player from beyond their visual range than with a DMR. Against a player with the same or greater visual range, you must absolutely quickswitch if you wish to live. Furthermore, creative variation in shot timing are required to use these powerful weapons against experienced players, especially in a squad or duo setting. If your shot pattern or movement is predictable, your shots will be dodged and you will be killed.

These rifles are not for players of moderate skill. In the hands of those who can handle them, they surprisingly tend to pair more gracefully with a high-DPS rifle or SMG than a shotgun.

5.1 Model 94 (Winchester 94), .45 ACP. Very uncommon.

Technically a lever-action rifle. This gun is like a poor man’s Mosin, if that poor man’s Mosin was a disgusting crossbreed with an EMR. This gun is like a better EMR that requires quickswitch and is even slower at firing. I expect it to be balanced soon but until then, my judgment is harsh.

Better than: M9, OT-38.

Comparable to: Nothing.

Would replace with: Almost anything, especially a shotgun or bolt-action.

5.2 Mosin-Nagant, 7.62mm. Very uncommon.

This gun is not really that good, but it can function decently as a M870 in a CQC pinch, something the EMR cannot do.

Better than: Most handguns, Winchester.

Comparable to: M39 EMR, SPAS-12.

Would replace with: Mk 12 SPR, M1 Garand, SV-98, SCAR-H, Deagle.

5.3 SV-98, 7.62mm. Rare.

A very strong, very fun gun. Dual SV might be the strongest all-range combination without airdrop weapons, and the SV pairs well with Vectors and Sagias alike. Requires a bit more thought than the Mosin with regard to reload, but the 10-round magazine will not often leave you in a bind. Of course, will require good use of cover against full-auto rifles, but can usually kill anything but LMGs with ease.

My personal favorite.

Better than: Mk 12 SPR, M1 Garand, FAMAS, SPAS-12.

Comparable to: Dual Deagle, SCAR-H, QBB, CQBR, Sagia-12.

Would replace with: M249, AWC.

5.4 AWM-S (AWC), .308 Subsonic. Gold airdrop exclusive.

Indisputably the most powerful gun in the game. One-shots everything less than tier-three armor. The black .308 bullet streak inspires fear and lust in every player it misses.

Better than: Everything.

Comparable to: Nothing.

Would replace with: Nothing.

6 LMGs

These coveted weapons are distinguished not only by their rarity but by their lack of major downsides. They possess high rates of fire, substantial DPS, impressive accuracy, a tremendous magazine size, and unique cover-clearing buffs for the minor trade-offs of long reload and consequential slowdown. Somehow, they manage to be difficult to use. Most players can recall their first time finding an LMG: initial elation followed by a frustratingly rapid death. A firing LMG user is an attractive target for a high-adrenaline opponent with a shotgun. While they will take some hits (the high ROF ensures that), your foe can weave through your low-spread line of fire to quickly close in on you, a static target.

Rather than Rambo-esqe hip firing in CQC, LMGs are more suited for burst-firing at range. The LMG is not an SMG on steroids, but rather a bottomless DMR. In fact, I would refuse to use one without an 8x. Make use of their magazine size and cover-clearing ability to flush out and wear down a healing opponent at a safe distance. If your foe comes closer than 4x range, be prepared to painfully win a DPS race if they are already firing a rifle or immediately switch to appropriate short-range weaponry if they are closing shotgun in hand. Even an M249 will die to the M870.

6.1 DP-27, 7.62mm. Very uncommon.

Possibly the single most unwieldy weapon in the game. Not horrible, but in comparison a dark stain on the lustrous name of the LMG family. The very long barrel makes CQC an impossibility and its unusually low ROF means that the bullet stream can be effectively dodged. While not to be completely disregarded in the hands of a foe, it works well only as a secondary weapon, and it is rare that a player would be brave enough to forgo a shotgun for this awkward LMG.

Better than: Dual M9, M93R, UMP9.

Comparable to: MP5, Glock, Peacemaker.

Would replace with: AKM, HK416, MAC-10, Dual M93R.

6.2 QBB, 5.56mm. Rare.

The attractive bullpup competitor to the M249, the QBB offers much lower raw power for better mobility and reload—an awfully tempting trade at most ranges. More of a skirmisher than the M249, it is best used as an automatic Mk 12 with less damage but a bottomless magazine. Against many combinations, it survives more reliably than the M249 (provided one uses it cautiously), but in a 1v1 contest, I expect the M249 to defeat the QBB every time.

Thankfully, the QBB is an order of magnitude more common than the M249, making the difficult choice an infrequent one.

Better than: Most assault rifles, all DMRs, Vector.

Comparable to: Dual Deagle, SV-98, SCAR-H, M249.

Would replace with: CQBR, AWC.

6.3 M249, 5.56mm. Extremely rare.

The OG. The M249 is not to be trifled with even after all this time. With the single highest power of any automatic weapon and an incredibly deep 100-round magazine, this weapon is as formidable as ever during

its long service on the island. Do not underestimate how vulnerable you are while firing and this LMG will wreak destruction at x8 range.

Better than: Almost everything.

Comparable to: CQBR.

Would replace with: Perhaps AWC.

7 Shotguns

Shotguns provide the final word in CQC. With devastating point-blank power, nearly every combat in the final circle begins and ends with an exchange of shotgun blasts. The ranking here is simple: with little variation in damage or range, the question solely becomes—what can kill the fastest?

7.1 M870, 12 gauge. Common.

5 shots at moderate rate. Requires quickswitch. Dangerous even in the late-game. Better than MP220 in squads, but lethal alongside it.

Better than: Most handguns, MP5, HK416.

Comparable to: Dual Glock, Dual Peacemaker,, MAC-10, Deagle; Mosin-Nagant.

Would replace with: Vector, MP220, Sagia-12, SPAS-12, Dual Deagle, AWC.

7.2 MP220, 12 gauge. Uncommon.

2 shots at very rapid rate. No quickswitch. The fastest burst damage in the game. The standard by which all other short-range weapons are judged. Can kill Sagia-12 without breaking a sweat: be wary of the 220.

Better than: M870, Vector, Dual Deagle.

Comparable to: Nothing.

Would replace with: Sagia-12, AWC.

7.3 SPAS-12, 12 gauge. Very uncommon.

9 shots at moderate rate. Requires quickswitch. Dangerous at range, does not have as much power as M870 but the extra capacity is worth it in most cases as is the versatility out to x4. Do not pair with FAMAS or other mid-range-focused rifles.

Better than: M870.

Comparable to: Vector, FAMAS, Mosin-Nagant.

Would replace with: SCAR-H, SV-98, Sagia-12, AWC.

7.4 Sagia-12, 12 gauge. Rare.

5 shots at rapid rate. The only fully-automatic shotgun. Very powerful but can still die to MP220 handily.

Better than: M870, SPAS-12, SCAR-H.

Comparable to: MP220.

Would replace with: AWC.

Final Thoughts

The balance of the Surviv.io meta is a delicate one, and is far more precisely tended to than most would give the devs credit for. The past few updates have demonstrated the care of the devs to maintaining the balance while still introducing new weapons, and their commitment to roll back changes if need be.

This document is dedicated to them.