
2. GUN DESIGN CLASSIFICATIONS

The nine design classifications used to categorize the vast number of guns which were taken into custody are "*Black Powder*", "*Blank*", "*Pellet*", "*Pistol*", "*Replica*", "*Revolver*", "*Rifle*", "*Shotgun*", and "*Toy*". A tenth term, *UNKNOWN*, was used as a temporary classification for guns for which the examinations may not have been completed at the time the data was analyzed. The following definitions briefly describe each classification used in this report:

Pistol means any handgun that does not contain its ammunition in a revolving cylinder. Pistols may be single shot, manually operated repeaters, multiple-barreled, semiautomatic, or fully automatic.

Revolver means a handgun that contains its ammunition in a revolving cylinder.

Rifle means any weapon designed or redesigned, made or remade, and intended to be fired from the shoulder and which uses the energy of an explosive in a fixed cartridge to fire a single projectile through a rifled bore with a single pull of the trigger.

Shotgun means any weapon designed or redesigned, made or remade, and intended to be fired from the shoulder and use the energy of an explosive in a fixed shotgun shell to fire either a number of ball shots or a single projectile through a smooth bore with a single pull of the trigger.

Black Powder is an unofficial term used to catalogue firearm with antique firing systems like flintlocks, percussion caps, etc., whether the firearm itself is an antique or simply utilizes an antique firing mechanism. This category can include both antique guns and replicas of antique guns.

Pellet Gun is a weapon that expels a projectile, such as .177 caliber "BBs," by means other than by action of an explosive.

Blank is an unofficial term (*also used is "Starter gun"*). Although not intended to fire a projectile, they create a report by means of an explosive, have the features of a functioning firearm and may be capable of being redesigned to expel a projectile by means of an explosive.

Toy guns can generally be readily identified as such, but some models manufactured before restricting legislation was imposed, bear extraordinary resemblance to specific models of firearms.

Replica firearms are not *toys*, but are in fact detailed copies of actual firearms. They generally contain enough features, often including firing pins, that they require considerable inspection to be satisfactorily excluded from firearm classification.

3. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BY DESIGN CLASSIFICATION

Because the majority of the recovered guns (*approximately 96%*) fell into the four categories of Pistol, Revolver, Rifle and Shotgun, the following comparative analyses utilize these four and consolidate the remaining five categories into a group referred to as OTHER. This is consistent with the methodology used in prior crime gun studies done by the Washington Field Division. It is based upon the legal mandate followed by ATF's National Tracing Center under which only crime firearms as defined under the Gun Control Act of 1968 are traced.

Of the total of 2,912 guns recovered under the buy-back program, 2,200 were handguns, 596 were long guns, and 116 were classified in categories grouped under OTHER.
