

Girardoni Air Rifle

(Wiki)[1780]

The rifle was 4 ft (1.2 m) long and weighed 10 lb (4.5 kg), about the same basic size and weight as infantry muskets of the time. It fired a .46^[3] or .51^[4] caliber ball and had a tubular, spring-fed^[5] [magazine](#) with a capacity of 20 balls. Some of the weapons were also made using a gravity fed magazine. Unlike its contemporary, muzzle-loading muskets, which required the [rifleman](#) to stand up to reload with powder and ball, the shooter could reload a ball from the magazine by pulling a transverse chamber bar out of the breech which allowed a ball to be supplied to it and which then rebounded back to its original position with the aid of a spring, all while lying down.^[5]

Contemporary regulations of 1788 required that each rifleman, in addition to the rifle itself, be equipped with three compressed air reservoirs (two spare and one attached to the rifle), cleaning stick, hand pump, lead ladle, and 100 lead balls, 1 in the chamber, 19 in the magazine built into the rifle and the remaining 80 in four tin tubes. Equipment not carried attached to the rifle was held in a special leather [knapsack](#). It was also necessary to keep the leather [gaskets](#) of the reservoir moist in order to maintain a good seal and prevent leakage.^[6]

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