

Pellet Guns

Pellet guns in this discussion will be limited to those having rifled barrels, which will serve to distinguish them from the smooth-bore versions which fall more readily into the toy category, and which are not considered to be profitable items. Rifled barrel pellet guns are generally operated in one of three ways:

1. Spring-actuated - In these guns, a heavy spring is cocked manually. The trigger releases the spring, compressing an enclosed volume of air which is communicated to the chamber of the gun which has previously been loaded (by hand) with a pellet. These guns are almost invariably single-shot. European versions of these guns can be quite expensive, and they generally outperform the American ones.
2. Pneumatic or pump-actuated - In these guns, air pressure is built up in a reservoir by one or more strokes of a manually operated pump lever. The trigger releases the pressurized air into the chamber which contains a pellet that has been manually inserted. These guns are nearly always single-shot. European versions are not known. These guns are usually more powerful and accurate than American spring-actuated or CO₂ guns, but the pump operation of known designs is awkward and time-consuming. The best European spring-actuated guns are superior to the pneumatics. Pneumatic guns generally have the largest number of parts and seals compared to spring or CO₂ guns. The Sheridan pneumatic rifle is the foremost example of such a gun.
3. CO₂ actuated - In these guns a small CO₂ cylinder is inserted into a pressure chamber and punctured as the closure is made. The trigger momentarily connects the pressure chamber with the breech, allowing a small amount of liquified CO₂ to

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