HUNT: SHOWDOWN 1896 · AUGUST 11, 2026

Hunt: Showdown 1896 Update 2.8 weapon balance and its meta fallout — Road to Hell through August 2026

Update 2.8 “Road to Hell” (9 Jun 2026) replaced weapon slots with a 1–5 size economy, gated top rifles behind Special Long Ammo and made Dumdum/Explosive/Spitzer scarce; 2.8.1 (1 Jul) rebalanced shotguns, Springfield and Berthier. No balance changes since, as of 11 Aug.

7 min read · 13 sources

ammo scarcity | inventory slot rework | meta | patch notes | road to hell | weapon balance

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As of 11 August 2026, the current patch cycle for Hunt: Showdown 1896 is **Update 2.8 “Road to Hell”** (launched 9 June), and the most recent weapon-balance patch within it is **2.8.1 (1 July)**. Update 2.8 delivered the biggest systemic change to loadouts since launch — the Inventory Slot Rework — plus Special Long Ammo, ammo scarcity and a new rifle. Chapter 2 (2 July) and Chapter 3 (5 August) added extraction mechanics, cosmetics and a fog event but **zero weapon changes**, so 2.8.1’s shotgun/Springfield/Berthier pass is the current balance state, with the Uppercut hotfix (2.8.0.3) layered beneath it.

1–5	126	139	128
Weapon size system (was S/M/L)	Uppercut damage (restored)	Springfield 1866 damage (was 132)	Berthier damage (was 132)

The patch cadence

- 9 Jun 2026 — **Update 2.8 — Road to Hell**
  Inventory Slot Rework, Special Long Ammo, ammo scarcity, 1890 Cavalry, new 1890 rifle
- 11-17 Jun 2026 — **Hotfixes 2.8.0.1-0.3**
  Special Long Ammo restored; loadout cap 15→30; Uppercut damage back to 126
- 1 Jul 2026 — **Update 2.8.1**
  Shotgun reserve pass, Springfield buff, Berthier nerf, Nitro deviation removed — last balance patch to date
- 2 Jul 2026 — **Chapter 2**
  Cargo Balloons, new Story Challenges — no weapon changes
- 5 Aug 2026 — **Chapter 3**
  Crashed Balloons, Confiscated Crates, Fog of War contract — no weapon changes

Crytek said the 2.8 launch pushed concurrent players into "the top three in Hunt's history," and defended the scale of the changes: the removed ammo types were "driving a stale meta," and the scarcity was meant as "a clean slate and a return to core Hunt gameplay"[1]. Community speculation (unconfirmed by Crytek) points to **Update 2.9 as "an even bigger update than 2.8"**[2].

What Update 2.8 did to weapons

The Inventory Slot Rework

The small/medium/large slot system was replaced by a **1–5 weapon size system** with a default capacity of **5 points**, extendable to **6 with Quartermaster** — whose cost rose from 6 to **8 Upgrade Points** (Frontiersman 5→6, Hundred Hands 2→3). Most carbines became Size 3, full rifles Size 4, and the biggest weapons (Nitro, Avtomat, silenced long rifles) Size 5[3][4]. The four Tool slots and four Consumable slots were merged into **8 flexible Equipment slots** (cap 4 per consumable type), Toolboxes stopped resupplying consumables, and the loadout limit was raised 15→30 in 2.8.0.1 to encourage experimentation[1][5].

Special Long Ammo

Mosin-Nagant (and Obrez), Krag, Lebel and Berthier moved to a new **Special Long Ammo** type. They share ammo only with each other — **no longer with regular Long Ammo** (Sparks, Martini-Henry, Uppercut, the new 1890 Cavalry) — and resupply only from Special Ammo crates, Ammo Box consumables or full restocks[1][3]. The dev note: these rifles stay "among the best items in the arsenal, but with new constraints requiring adaptation and extra precision"[1].

Ammo scarcity and ammo pools

All Dumdum, all Explosive (including frag arrows, explosive bolts, waxed frag charges) and all Spitzer ammo became scarce; all but three instances of each were stripped from inventories

with refunds, and **Dolch FMJ was retired outright**. Scarce ammo now comes only from crates and event cargo[1][4]. Reserve pools were re-tuned around the new sizes:

WEAPON	OLD RESERVE	NEW RESERVE
Berthier	3/18	3/12
Vetterli	6+1/20	6+1/16
Frontier 73C	7+1/28	7+1/21
Mosin Obrez	5/10	5/7
Springfield 1866 compact	1/24	1/20
Centennial Shorty	9+1/12	9+1/9
Uppercut	6/9	6/12 (6/18 Precision)
Nitro Express	2/4	2/6

Individual weapon changes in 2.8: **Officer Carbine** horizontal recoil up; **Hand Crossbow** standard bolt damage **195→205** (120 to the arm at close range instead of 112) while Dragon Bolt impact dropped **17→11** with reserve cut **3→2**; **Mako 1895** muzzle velocity **540→440 m/s** (black-powder correction); **Auto-4** spread **57→65**, reserve **5→4**; all Berthier variants **+50 Hunt Dollars**. New weapon: the **1890 Cavalry**, a Size 3 single-shot Long Ammo rifle with **139 damage, 380 m/s**, 1/18 ammo, FMJ/High Velocity, Fast Fingers-compatible — positioned as a cheap companion for the new economy[1][4].

Tools and consumables: Alert Trip Mine and Bear Trap reserves cut to **2** (Bear Trap damage up 58→62); flare pistol reserve **2→1**; decoy fuses **3→5**; Quad Derringer **12→16**; Pennyshot Derringer **−50% vs doors**; and the **Ammo Box consumable weakened from 2.5× to 2×** standard resupply (compact 20→16, medium 15→12, long 5→4, special 7→6)[1].

The follow-up passes: 2.8.0.3 and 2.8.1

2.8.0.3 (17 June) walked back the Uppercut: base damage with basic/FMJ/Incendiary ammo restored to **126**, and the Special Ammo reserve corrected 9→12. The dev note was explicit about the target: the Uppercut "regains some of its previous appeal and moves towards its old power level, especially compared to its new main competitor, the Haymaker"[6].

2.8.1 (1 July) was the first systemic response to the rework's fallout — a shotgun reserve rebalance:

WEAPON	OLD BASIC RESERVE	NEW BASIC RESERVE
Slate	6	12
Romero 77 Alamo	5	12
Terminus	8	12
Specter 1882	10	12

WEAPON	OLD BASIC RESERVE	NEW BASIC RESERVE
Rival 78	8	12
Auto-5	6	8
Romero 77 Shorty	5	2
Specter 1882 Shorty	8	4
Terminus Shorty	6	4
Rival 78 Shorty	6	4

The dev note framed it as: sawn-offs "have now become an enticing choice with few downsides," so their reserves were cut to fit Size 2, while full-size shotguns "have stagnated, dropping a little in usage" and got reserves added to make them viable again[7]. Shotgun prices were shuffled (Terminus 238→168, Slate 333→313, Rival 78 150→170, Rival Shorty 125→145). The rest of 2.8.1: **Springfield 1866 damage 132→139** (HV 126→132) because with Dumdum scarce it "has been struggling… compared to the other Size 4 weapons"; **Berthier damage 132→128** (Spitzer 113→109) because as a Size 3 it "simply stood out as being strong"; **Nitro Express** lost its random deviation from ADS at long range; **Mako reserve 8→10**; **Shadow Leap** interaction 4s→3s[7][8].

Chapter 3's only meta-adjacent tweak came a day after launch: after survey feedback, Crytek **reduced Storm and Night time-of-day frequency and increased Sundown** in the Fog of War contract — event tuning, not arsenal balance[9].

What it did to the meta

The 3+2 loadout became the default. Size-3 rifles paired with Size-2 secondaries without Quartermaster is the rework's headline outcome. Devs themselves showcased **Berthier Riposte + Rival Mace** ("doesn't require Quartermaster") and the community quickly converged on "a lot of berthiers with bornheim match or a rival shotty… one of the big winning combinations with the new system"[3][10]. The Berthier's dominance at Size 3 is exactly what the 2.8.1 damage cut to 128 was answering.

The "pocket shotgun" meta, then its correction. Size-2 sawn-off shotguns became a fixture, and community testing found the size barely mattered: sawn-offs lost only ~2 m of one-shot range versus full-size guns for half the slot cost — "for only 50% of the slot size, we get a weapon that only loses 2 meters of lethality," with the poster warning that "how overpowered 2-slot shotguns are will end up stifling meta diversity"[11]. 2.8.1's reserve cuts to sawn-offs and buffs to full-size guns were the direct response.

Uppercut versus Haymaker. The rework made both Size 2, and players calculated the Haymaker won on nearly every axis — same ammo total, **+120 m/s velocity**, 0.3s faster cycle, an underbarrel shotgun, and $31 cheaper — leaving the Uppercut "a downgrade you can pay 31 more hunt dollars for"[12]. The 2.8.0.3 buff to 126 damage was Crytek's acknowledgment, and it is the cleanest live example of the rework being tuned by pick-rate feedback.

Long ammo went from shared pool to gated pool, killing "ammo-slaving" (topping up a Mosin from an Uppercut). Special Long Ammo users now rely on scarce special crates, and the weakened Ammo Box punishes spray-and-resupply — the Special Rifleman playstyle is now about landing the first shot. **Dumdum/Spitzer/Explosive scarcity removed the ammo-specialist loadouts** — the Springfield-with-Dumdum was one of the most popular cheap rifles, which is why 2.8.1's damage buff to 139 was framed as compensation [7] [8]. **Quartermaster's value rose** (an extra size point) even as its cost rose to 8 UP, and the 5-slot gate on Avtomat/Nitro/silenced long rifles effectively requires it for those guns [4] [13].

> **CAUTION**
>
> Pick-rate figures and kill data are not published; the meta assessment above is from community testing and discussion (June–July 2026), not official telemetry. The "2.9 bigger than 2.8" claim is an unconfirmed Reddit recollection of a dev stream.

Bottom line

The current patch is still Update 2.8; the balance that governs live play as of 11 August 2026 is: **weapon sizes 1–5 with 5 base capacity (6 with Quartermaster at 8 UP)**, **Special Long Ammo gating Mosin/Krag/Lebel/Berthier**, **Dumdum/Explosive/Spitzer scarce**, **Uppercut at 126 damage**, **full-size shotgun reserves up and sawn-off reserves down**, **Springfield at 139 damage**, **Berthier at 128**, and **Nitro without ADS deviation**. The meta that settled: size-3 rifle plus size-2 shotgun or pistol combos, with ammo discipline enforced by scarcity rather than by weapon stats alone. Chapters 2 and 3 added no weapon changes, so 2.8.1 (1 July) remains the last balance patch — watch for Update 2.9, which Crytek has implied is a large one.

SOURCES

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13 r/HuntShowdown — Thoughts? Personally I am Unimpressed with this update (community critique)
https://www.reddit.com/r/HuntShowdown/comments/1u4hy5p/thoughts_personally_i_am_unimpressed_with_this/

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