

The Spellslinger (A Pathfinder Wizard Archetype): A Guide

You are reading this because you, presumably, fancy the idea of a Wizard who uses a gun? Well, a Wizard with a gun is indeed a fun thing to play but if you are more of a power-gamer and want to be a mighty mage as well as a deadly shot, you're going to be disappointed.

This archetype is a very sub-optimal choice for a wizard, therefore this guide is not really an optimisation guide; it is merely a series of notes about how it plays along with a few suggestions for getting the most enjoyment out of it.

The Complete Professor Q's Guide to the Wizard has this to say about Spellslingers:

Spellslinger: Another one that has 4 opposition schools and doesn't get bonus spells. You see why I hate these Archetypes?

However, this one actually sort of works because Guns are all touch attacks. You don't get as many multiple attacks through your guns as a more martial class, but you can add your gun's enhancement modifier to your Spell's DCs for certain kinds of spells. Rime Cone of Cold, or Dazing Lightning Bolt comes to mind for this.

Mage Bullets is bad not only because you're sacrificing powerful spells for a moderate effect, but it also gives an enhancement bonus that won't stack with any permanent enchantments you've put on your gun.

Ultimately this option is still bad because the payoff isn't as good as the costs, but it takes a slightly better direction than the other two similar options. Adding a +5 to your spell DC for a 3 turn Daze effect is a pretty good trick.

The description of the Spellslinger is:

While few contest the seductive allure of commanding arcane and occult powers, there are those wizards who become obsessed with the natural mysteries of black powder. Combining this emerging technology with their considerable arcane skills, they transform firearms into a powerful focus.

Arcane Gun (Su)

The spellslinger gains the [Exotic Weapon Proficiency](#) (firearms) feat, and one or two of his firearms can be arcane guns. Arcane guns are normal one-handed or two-handed firearms in the hands of others, as they were normal firearms before the spellslinger imbued them with magic. In a spellslinger's hands, they both fire projectiles (bullets and pellets) and cast magic. At 1st level, the spellslinger decides whether he wants to have one or two arcane guns at a time. If the spellslinger chooses to have only one arcane gun at a time, spells fired Classes through the arcane gun that require an [attack roll](#) have a ×3 [critical hit](#) multiplier.

A spellslinger can cast any ranged [touch attack](#), cone, line, or ray spells through his arcane gun. When he casts through the arcane gun, the gun's [enhancement bonus](#) (if any) is a bonus to the spell's [attack rolls](#) or to the spell's saving throw DCs. Yet

there are dangers inherent to this method. If any of the spells' [attack rolls](#) result in a natural 1 (a misfire), or a natural 20 is rolled on any saving throw made against the spell by a target (an overload), the arcane gun gains the [broken](#) condition. If the arcane gun already has the [broken](#) condition, the gun explodes. When a gun explodes, it lets loose a blast of force, or if the spell has the acid, cold, electricity, or sonic descriptor, it deals that type of energy damage instead. In the case of spells with multiple descriptors, roll randomly among the descriptors to determine the type of damage dealt by the blast. The blast is centered on a single intersection within the spellslinger's space (spellslinger's choice) and deals 1d6 points of the appropriate energy damage or force damage per level of the spell cast. Any creature within the blast other than the spellslinger can make a [Reflex](#) saving throw to halve the damage. The [Reflex](#) save DC is calculated using the spell level of the spell being sacrificed.

A spellslinger can attune his arcane guns at the start of each day. That attunement lasts until the spellslinger attunes to a new gun, even if a formally attuned gun is destroyed.

This ability replaces [arcane bond](#).

Gunsmith

The spellslinger gains the [Gunsmithing](#) feat and a battered gun that is identical to the gun a [Gunslinger](#) gains at first level. If the spellslinger chooses the ability to attune two arcane guns, he still only starts out with one gun. Like a [Gunslinger](#), a spellslinger can use the [Gunsmithing](#) feat to restore his battered gun.

This ability replaces [Scribe Scroll](#).

Mage Bullets (Su)

A spellslinger is adept at transferring spell energy into his arcane gun attacks. As a [swift action](#), he can sacrifice a spell and transform that energy into a weapon bonus equal to the level of the spell sacrificed on a single barrel of his firearm. With that weapon bonus the spellslinger can apply any of the following to his arcane bond: [enhancement bonuses](#) (up to +5) and [dancing](#), [defending](#), [distance](#), [flaming](#), [flaming burst](#), [frost](#), [ghost touch](#), [icy burst](#), [merciful](#), [seeking](#), [shock](#), [shocking burst](#), [spell storing](#), [thundering](#), [vicious](#), and [wounding](#). An arcane gun gains no benefit from having two of the same weapon special abilities on the same barrel. The effect of the mage bullets ability lasts for a number of minutes equal to the level of the spell sacrificed, or until this ability is used again to assign the barrel different enhancements.

This ability replaces [cantrips](#), but the spellslinger gains the [detect magic](#) and [read magic](#) cantrips and places them in his spellbook. He can cast either of these as 1st-level spells.

School of the Gun

The rigor and care required by arcane guns is so great that a spellslinger forsakes four schools of magic. These opposition schools are chosen at 1st level and cannot be changed later. A spellslinger who prepares a spell from his opposition school must use two spell slots of that level to prepare the spell. In addition, the spellslinger takes a –4 penalty on any skill checks made when crafting a magic item that has a spell from one of his opposition schools as a prerequisite.

This ability replaces [arcane school](#).

The Good Part

So, you get proficiency in firearms; plus gunsmithing; plus you can fire some types of spells through the gun with bonuses; plus you can sacrifice spells to enhance the gun. Only one sacrificed spell can be applied (to an individual barrel) at a time, so until you get 2nd level spells, you can't get anything more than a +1 on your gun - unless your GM allows you to ignore the basic rules on weapon crafting. Which he/she shouldn't do but might be feeling sorry for you.

Additionally, Mage Bullets is very poorly written, because half of the special enhancements are melee only - and you only get to enhance the barrel of your gun, not the stock or eg the 'axe' part of an axe-musket. For the exact functionality of these effects, you need to discuss this with your GM. For instance, you might be allowed to apply any or all or a few of these to your gun - or they might be completely unusable because they don't work on ranged weapons. Be nice to your GM (and point out the way this archetype is nerfed compared with a full wizard) and they might be kind enough to let you have this minor perk, but RAW melee only means they can't be applied to your gun in a useful way. None of these abilities (except the number of 'plusses') are applied to any spells fired through the gun - because the 'Arcane Gun' ability states 'When he casts through the arcane gun, the gun's [enhancement bonus](#) (if any) is a bonus to the spell's [attack rolls](#) or to the spell's saving throw DCs' and there is no mention of any other enhancements from 'Mage Bullets'.

Melee Only:

[dancing](#), [defending](#), [spell storing](#), [vicious](#), [wounding](#). These 5 specify in their descriptions that they can only be placed on melee weapons. Therefore, you can enhance the barrel only of your arcane gun with these. Spell Storing is particularly useless: not only do you need to sacrifice a spell to get it on your gun, you then need to put the spell to be stored into it, and then you need to hit an enemy with the barrel for the stored spell to be delivered - all before the ability expires (1 minute per spell level of the sacrificed spell).

[ghost touch](#) is listed under the melee weapons section and isn't present in the ranged section. It is possible to get ammunition enchanted with ghost touch, so this one might be allowed by your GM. Or it might not.

Allowed for Ranged:

[distance](#) is very useful, particularly if you are using a pistol. (It's less useful for a musket if you persuade your GM to allow 'Focused Shot' to work with firearms because that only works within 30ft. And only works on a standard attack, not a full attack. So only try to get it if you're a full caster without iterative attacks. You might even be able to get this feat to apply to both bullets when firing a double-barreled firearm...)

[flaming](#), [flaming burst](#), [frost](#), [icy burst](#), [shock](#), [shocking burst](#), [thundering](#) are all theoretically good energy damage additions, but are less commonly useful than you might think. If you have a +1 gun, sacrificing eg a 4th level spell to make the gun into a +5 gun is often more useful than adding the energy damage because then it enhances spell attack rolls and saving throw DCs; and if the enemy isn't worth casting other spells at, then you probably don't need to enhance your gun to do an extra 1d6 energy damage either.

[merciful](#) - an extra 1d6 damage? Good. But makes all your damage non-lethal? Less useful, but sometimes you want to subdue rather than kill.

[seeking](#). This one is actually cool and useful. It negates Blur, Displacement, and other sources of concealment.

Therefore Mage Bullets allows you 2 useful abilities - but does mean you can get up to an extra +5 on attack rolls and/or saving throw DCs for a limited range of spells.

The Bad Part

You lose Scribe Scrolls; and your Arcane Bond - no bonded item OR familiar; and cantrips; and any school powers; and specialisation spell slots; and, the worst part in my opinion, half of the 8 arcane schools become opposition schools. Goodbye to half of your choices of spell.

Abjuration: Protection spells, like Protection from Energy; Dispel Magic; Shield; etc

Conjuration: Teleport; Summon Monster; Wall of Stone; Black Tentacles; Mage Armour; many others.

Divination: Scrying; Named Bullet; True Strike - probably the first choice of most players as an opposition school, but if you intend to use magic for scouting then lacking it hurts your ability to plan ahead and memorise the correct spells for the day. Goodbye, Shroedinger's Wizard, hello having the wrong spells...this is more of a problem at high level than low. If you aren't going to reach 6th level spells (True Seeing), then you probably won't miss this school as much.

Enchantment: Confusion; Charms, Dominate, etc. Also popular as an opposition school, confusion is the biggest loss.

Evocation: most blast spells, particularly the ones that can be fired through the gun. Since the Spellslinger is set up to be a blaster (more on that anon), it seems to be a school to keep - but is it really?

Illusion: All of the low-level 'don't hit me' spells are in here (Mirror Image, Blur, Displacement); Invisibility and Greater. It really makes you very vulnerable at low level if you lose this school.

Necromancy: Enervation; Ray of Exhaustion; Waves of Fatigue; a few others. Enervation is probably the best individual spell to fire through your gun, but there aren't very many other spells here you'd miss.

Transmutation: Fly; Overland Flight; Greater Magic Weapon; too many useful spells to list.

So losing Divination, Enchantment, and Necromancy seem to be the most obvious ones, but the fourth choice will hurt - a lot. I'm going to suggest losing Evocation, because as long as you have a few spells you fancy firing through your gun, and there are enough of these spells in conjuration and transmutation, you will be ok. If you could still get the 'Admixture' subschool, then I might change my mind - but there are no school powers for you.

Pistol or Musket?

Pistol. A musket does more damage and has a greater range, but unless you take 3 levels of Musket Master you will never be able to reload it faster than a move action. The Reloading Hands spell and a Beneficial Bandolier (uses your swift action to work) can reload one barrel once each per round for you, but you'll struggle to make a full attack worthwhile at higher levels. With a pistol, not only can you reload it as a free action when you desire (rapid reload + alchemical cartridges), but you can also hold a metamagic rod, or a staff, or a wand, or a potion, or a melee weapon in the other hand. This is good. A full caster build might not need the free action reloads, but is even more likely to want to be holding something more useful than just a gun. Being able to apply eg Dazing from a metamagic rod makes your blast spells better; coupled with a potential +5 to the DC of these compared to a normal wizard is pretty much a spellslinger's only way of being 'better'.

Roles and Builds

Your choice of role to play affects your choice of schools too, so I'm putting this section next.

Cheesy but Legal: Witch, Cleric or Sorcerer

The very best sort of build to play is to not be a wizard. Take one level only of Spellslinger, then take either Sorcerer or Cleric or Witch. Then play as one of these who has a minor, yet nifty, ability with a gun. This is completely legal, because the Spellslinger archetype doesn't mention

anything about having to use wizard spells only, or even arcane only, to fire through the gun or to sacrifice to enhance it. If you choose either of these (or any other class with spells) then you will only be losing one level to gain all of the benefits of the Spellslinger.

Read a guide to whatever class you choose; most of this guide will be redundant to you, however if you take feats to make your ranged weapon work better then you will have less feats to make your main role as effective as a non-spellslinger. For the Cleric, Harm with Reach is the only really potent, standout spell that might make it worth taking the level of spellslinger. Overall, though, you're probably better off simply taking the black powder inquisition if you really want to be a cleric with a gun.

A sorcerer would be a level behind, but could take a few spells that work through the gun and otherwise be built in a similar way to a normal sorcerer.

The witch actually matches up best. They get a goodly selection of spells, including Enervation, Lightning Bolt, Burning Hands, Cone of Cold and Harm (albeit at 7th level, 8th with Reach). Plus taking the 'Time' patron gets you Disintegrate. A half-elf can take the Bonded Witch archetype, and so can make his/her gun into a bonded item and therefore can enchant it without needing to take the craft arms & armour feat, along with most of the normal bonuses for having a bonded item. However, would using a gun appeal to a player who wanted to play a witch? If so, this is probably the most 'optimal' version of the full-casting spellslinger.

Party Wizard: Spellslinger all the Way

If you are the primary arcane caster in a party, then you will be weak compared to a normal wizard. If you intend to shoot your gun, then you're likely to want (some of) the ranged combat feats, and that will weaken you even more as a wizard because you can't get all the feats you're going to want. But if you're not going to fire your gun, why take this archetype? You trade all your school powers, an extra spell per spell level, your arcane bond, and 2 more opposition schools for being able to increase the DC of a few spells.

Ranged Gish: Gunslinger1/Spellslinger5/Eldritch Knight10/Spellslinger4

You could take a different martial class, but gunslinger gets you grit (Quick Clear is always nice). The redundancy on feats (gunsmithing and firearms proficiency twice) is not quite total since you can choose either the Pistolero or Musket Master archetypes and your Spellslinger version of the Firearms feat will mean you still have proficiency in all firearms, including siege.

This build looks like it's the one intended for you, but it does have significant drawbacks. First, you lose two levels from your casting class (the martial class level and the first level of Eldritch Knight), which makes you even weaker than a full wizard. When you finally get 4th level spells (Woot: Dimension Door, or Black Tentacles), he's just got Teleport and Overland Flight...and you have to pay for almost all of your spells, no free ones per level for a prestige class. You have

fewer spells per day, of lower level, and from only 4 schools, remember. A stronger build for being a Wizard-with-a-gun, would be Gunslinger1/Normal Wizard5/Eldritch Knight10/etc.

In addition, Eldritch Knight, while it increases your BAB nicely, swaps your wizard bonus feats for combat ones. This ensures that you can take most of the ranged combat feats, but also means that you won't have as many feats to improve your spell casting. Eg Metamagic feats; Spell Penetration; Summoning feats; etc. All of which weaken your wizardly power even further. And if you take Musket Master, you will never be able to reload as a free action - that needs the 'Fast Musket' ability.

You can't take advantage of the early entry to prestige classes rule by taking the divination school power, but you can qualify through a racial SLA that is a 3rd level arcane spell by being eg an Aasimar with Daylight. The only real advantage of this is getting the Eldritch Knight capstone ability at character level 12 instead of 16, but also delays your spellcasting progression so you only have 1st level spells until you reach character level 5. It's a toss-up whether it's worth doing in my opinion, so take whatever race appeals to you (Hint: Elf, best for a wizard). The capstone works really well in conjunction with the Named Bullet spell. It is otherwise hard to get many criticals with a gun.

Ranged Striker: Gunslinger5/Spellslinger5/Eldritch Knight10

Five levels of gunslinger get you the really important gunslinger bonus of getting to add your dex bonus to your damage with a gun (and Fast Musket at 3rd level, for a Musket Master).

This build is predominantly a gunslinger with some very useful spellcasting added on. It is not suitable as the main arcane caster in a party because you will be only just getting third level spells at level 10 when a full caster has been enjoying fifth level spells since level 9, however the way to look at this build is as a gunslinger who has some very tasty spellcasting added on. You end up with +17 BAB, and 7th level spells at 20th level. Compare that to most ranged specialists who are purely martial types. Since you aren't competing with a full wizard, most of the deficiencies of the archetype become irrelevant. All of your feat choices can be directed towards combat, yet you can still disintegrate your enemies!

If you can persuade your GM that Trench Fighter (a fighter archetype) should be available to you, then this is even better than taking gunslinger levels. 3 levels of Trench Fighter gets you Dex to damage, and the lack of gunsmithing and exotic weapon proficiency (firearm) from Trench Fighter aren't a problem for you since Spellslinger has them - however, that should be an alarm call for the GM: Trench Fighter is specifically intended for campaigns with 'guns everywhere' where advanced firearms are available and guns are no longer exotic.

Quite a few people suggest taking inquisitor levels once a gunslinger reaches level 5, but I think that Spellslinger and Eldritch Knight are far superior choices since EK adds to both BAB and

arcane spellcasting, and Spellslinger can enhance your gun and the spells fired through it. A gunslinger/inquisitor will be better at switch-hitting, since most of the inquisitor class abilities work on melee as well as ranged (and it can wear better armour), but its spellcasting is a lot weaker.

Gunslinger5/Spellslinger5/EK10 is a bit of an indulgence as a character class. Your party should already have both a primary arcane caster and a front-line fighting type. Then there should be some sort of divine caster (cleric/oracle, inquisitor, paladin) for out of combat healing and status removal. You can then be a major damage-dealer and secondary mage. It's a lot better than being a rogue and you can take the 'Trap Finder' trait if it's really needed - you'll have lots of skill points due to your high Intelligence. If you're the 5th member of a party, then this is an ideal build to play. Shoot everything whilst having Greater Invisibility up...

For this build, the early entry Aasimar is possibly best so you get the capstone at L15 rather than 20, however you lose out on stats since you don't get any racial bonus to either Dex or Int. I have provided a fairly detailed guide to building one of these, at the end of this document.

Alternative Ranged Striker:

Mysterious Stranger1/Spellslinger1/Sorcerer1/Eldritch Knight10/more sorcerer levels

This build gets to use grit points (Cha based) to add Cha to damage and then gets a better selection of spells from the Sorcerer class than a Spellslinger-based character. It won't be very effective until higher level (it gets 3rd level spells at character level 9), but if you start at high level it might be preferable to be able to cast spells from any school. Again, this really benefits from the early entry rule if you start at low level otherwise you can't take the EK class until you have 6 levels of sorcerer - which would mean having a low BAB for half your career, while also having delayed spell progression.

Another Ranged Striker:

Spellslinger1/Inquisitor19 or Pistolero5/Spellslinger1/Inquisitor14

The Inquisitor19 version gets Harm, and can use a Rod of Reach to be able to use it through the gun. The version with 5 levels of gunslinger (or 3 of trench fighter, if allowed) will do more damage per shot normally. Both work in a similar manner: the inquisitor abilities increase fighting ability compared to a cleric, on a par with the Eldritch Knight levels, but with a different flavour. The spells are very limited in terms of having ones that benefit from being fired through the gun, but allow a character to act as either a backup arcane or divine spellcaster (or a very minor version of both), depending on the individual spells chosen. Overall, I think omitting the spellslinger level is more 'optimal', but if it appeals to you, you'll still be an effective ranged attacker with interesting abilities.

Other Build that has been suggested: Myrmidach Magus. Unfortunately, I have never played a magus and I'm not sure how to make one, with or without adding one or more levels of Spellslinger. If anyone builds one, let me know the details and whether it is worth using.

Which Spells are Good for a Spellslinger?

A spellslinger can cast any ranged [touch attack](#), cone, line, or ray spells through his arcane gun. Let's have a look at them:

I have included touch attack spells which become ranged touch spells when Reach is applied at +1 spell level; they are listed at the higher level so you can compare them to spells of their final level, but a Rod of Reach would negate that. And after the list of spells which can be fired through a gun, I've added a few spells which are more useful to a spellslinger than a normal wizard. There are, of course, many spells that are often better than these to memorise, but are useful to most wizards - see a guide to Wizards for information about those.

I have also listed the school for each spell, to help you decide which opposition schools to take.

1st Level

Snowball. Conjuraton.
Detect Secret Doors. Divination.
Detect Undead. Divination.
Burning Hands. Evocation.
Colour Spray. Illusion.
Ray of Enfeeblement. Necromancy.
Ray of Sickening. Necromancy

Useful: Fabricate Bullets, Longshot (not very useful, but it might help), Magic Weapon (enhances your gun for longer than the mage bullets ability after 1st level, and allows you to put something else onto your gun without losing a 2nd level spell) (all Transmutation), Abundant Ammunition (Conjuraton).

Obviously, the detect spells aren't very important here. The best spells are Burning Hands, Colour Spray and Snowball.

2nd Level

Acid Arrow. Conjuraton.
Corrosive Touch - with Reach applied. Conjuraton.
Detect Thoughts. Divination.
Admonishing Ray. Evocation.
Fire Breath. Evocation.

Scorching Ray. Evocation.
Shocking Grasp - with Reach. Evocation.
Defoliate (Line version only). Necromancy.
Touch of Gracelessness - with Reach. Transmutation.

Useful: Reloading Hands (Conjuration), Make Whole (Transmutation) Since you lack cantrips, this is the quickest way to remove the broken condition from your gun. It still takes 10 mins. You might be able to persuade your GM that you should be allowed to memorise Mending as a 1st level spell, like you can with Detect Magic and Read Magic. Or you might not. General spell rules seem to allow this, but the Spellslinger description calls out your ability to do so with only the 2 cantrips. And it is a matter of GM fiat if the other cantrips technically count as still being 'on your spell list'.

Best: Scorching Ray and Acid Arrow. Defoliate is a bit situational - as in I can't think of a time when I'd ever have it memorised. The possible increased DC might make Detect Thoughts feasible, but most neutral characters might be a bit suspicious of someone pointing a gun at them while muttering a spell...

3rd Level

Force Anchor. Conjuration.
Gloomblind Bolts. Conjuration. Fetchlings only.
Pellet Blast. Conjuration.
Touch of Idiocy - with Reach. Enchantment.
Battering Blast. Evocation.
Diamond Spray. Evocation.
Firestream. Evocation. Ifrits only.
Frigid Touch - with Reach. Evocation.
Heatstroke. Evocation.
Lightning Bolt. Evocation.
Pellet Blast. Conjuration.
Vengeful Comets (although it is unclear exactly how this would work, so many GMs might decide that your gun bonus doesn't apply). Evocation.
Ray of Exhaustion. Necromancy.

Useful: Keen Edge (on ammunition, not your gun, because that is yet another property you can't have on a ranged weapon), Greater Magic Weapon (the best way of enhancing your gun without wasting spells or money) (both Transmutation).

Best: Lightning Bolt, although if you have access to dazing (as a feat or as a metamagic rod) a dazing fireball is still often better because of its area of effect. Pellet Blast is pretty good for non-evocation users.

4th Level

Dimensional Anchor. Abjuration.
Crushing Despair. Enchantment.
Dragon's Breath. Evocation.
Force Punch - with Reach. Evocation.
River of Wind. Evocation.
Shout. Evocation.
Enervation. Necromancy. This is one of the very best spells to use through your gun.
Fear. Necromancy.
Toxic Gift - with Reach. Necromancy.
Vampiric Touch - with Reach. Necromancy.
Absorbing Inhalation. Transmutation.
Excruciating Deformation - with Reach. Transmutation.

Useful: Named Bullet (Divination) - on a wand, if you can afford it. This is wonderful if you get the Eldritch Knight L10 capstone ability: Use named bullet, confirm the critical (easy to do), add a swift action spell (no need for quicken, can do as part of a full attack) to the target. eg Disintegrate.

Best: Enervation - time to get Opposition Research! However, there are a lot of useful 4th level spells (Dimension Door, Emergency Force Sphere, Confusion - even at 2 slots, it's often worth having) competing for slots. Dimensional Anchor can be useful once you reach higher levels.

5th Level

Acidic Spray. Conjuration.
Bestow Curse - with Reach. Necromancy.
Touch of Slime - with Reach. Conjuration.
Cone of Cold. Evocation.
Contagion - with Reach. Necromancy.
Waves of Fatigue (but your gun has no effect on this). Necromancy.

Best: Acidic Spray or more Enervations, but you probably want non-gun spells like Teleport.

6th Level

Cold Ice Strike. Evocation.
Contagious Flame. Evocation.
Elemental Assessor. Evocation.
Hellfire Ray. Evocation.
Disintegrate. Transmutation. This is one of the very best spells to use through your gun.
Absorb Toxicity - with Reach. Necromancy.

Useful: Greater Named Bullet (a bit of a waste of a 6th level slot) (Divination)

Best: Disintegrate. And again you have other spells that you are likely to want in your memory (eg Greater Dispel Magic).

7th Level

Waves of Ecstasy. Enchantment.

Prismatic Spray. Evocation.

Waves of Exhaustion (but your gun has no effect on this). Necromancy.

Useful: Arcane Cannon, perhaps (you like guns, don't you?)

Best: Disintegrate. Yes seriously, it can still be better than these 7th level spells. You might prefer non-gun spells though.

8th Level

Polar Ray. Evocation.

Greater Shout. Evocation.

Plane Shift - with Reach. Conjunction.

Best: probably Greater Shout or Plane Shift, but you won't be taking any of these because of the other spells available (Maze, Irresistible Dance, Mind Blank, etc).

9th Level

Energy Drain. Necromancy.

Bestow Curse, Greater - with Reach. Necromancy.

Best: none, really. Would you take these? No, nor would I.

And there you have it. How many of these 'special' spells would a normal wizard bother memorising? Yet, to justify taking this archetype, a Spellslinger will have quite a lot of them. Necromancy gets more higher level spells that benefit from the higher DC from your gun, so is a prime candidate for the Opposition Research discovery.

Overall, you are likely to have: Snowball or Burning Hands/Colour Spray; Scorching Ray or Acid Arrow; Lightning Bolt or Pellet Blast; Enervation; and Disintegrate available to enhance with your gun. Adding Dazing with a metamagic rod (you did take a pistol, didn't you, so you can hold the rod at the same time as your gun?) will make most of those much better so you do more than just an increased chance of more damage from your higher DC than a normal wizard.

Cleric Spells (for those taking Spellslinger1/Cleric X)

I've only listed one Inflict Wounds spell, but there are lower level versions.

1st level: Ray of Sickening

2nd level: Arrow of Law/Dread Bolt/Shard of Chaos/Spear of Purity; Blinding Ray (Dhampirs only); Admonishing Ray

3rd level: Searing Light; Death Knell - with Reach

4th level: Bestow Curse - with Reach; Contagion - with Reach.

5th level: Inflict Critical Wounds - with Reach. 4d8+1/lvl damage; Poison - with Reach.

6th level: Hellfire Ray; Cold Ice Strike; Plane Shift - with Reach.

7th level: Archon's Trumpet; **Harm - with Reach.**

8th level: Bestow Curse, Greater - with Reach.

Harm is better than any of the wizard spells, since it does so much damage even if the target saves and being able to get up to +5 on the DC might make it worth taking the level of spellslinger. Or it might not. Other notable spells are Plane Shift and Bestow Curse.

Feats

There are many; you can only have a few of them.

If you follow my suggested build (Gunslinger5/Spellslinger5/EK10) then you'll be taking mainly combat feats. You might want to take Craft Magic Arms & Armour, unless magical guns are common or someone else is a crafter.

Gun-related:

Point-blank Shot.

Precise Shot.

Deadly Aim.

Rapid Reload.

Rapid Shot.

Improved Critical - since Keen doesn't apply to ranged weapons; but you can get Keen enchanted on your bullets (and then you should use the Abundant Ammunition spell on them).

Focused Shot - but only if a) you're not going to be getting iterative attacks; b) you can persuade your GM to let this feat apply to firearms; and, if possible, c) if you can then persuade your GM that it applies to both bullets fired from a double-barreled gun.

Weapon Focus & Snap Shot - if you can afford them. Followed by Improved Snap Shot & Combat Reflexes.

If you take levels in Eldritch Knight, you can also qualify for Weapon Specialisation & Greater Weapon Focus, but I'd be surprised if you had enough feats available to actually take them unless you neglect your wizard side completely.

Two weapon fighting, and improved versions might be interesting but again, you probably won't have enough feats. Without a 3rd arm, you'd also then need quickdraw and a lot of spare guns. Improved Initiative is always nice to have.

Improved Precise Shot isn't worth taking because the 'seeking' property is better.

Wizard-related:

See any guide to wizards. Look at the suggested feats and sigh. If you want to focus on spellcasting, then don't be a Spellslinger. You can take a selection of them, but you are unlikely to have enough of them to compete with a real wizard - unless you omit most of the combat ones listed above - and you still won't match even a basic blaster-type of wizard without the school power.

Magic Gear

There are two magic items that you probably want at low level: [Beneficial Bandolier](#) (belt slot) and [Endless Bandolier](#) (chest slot). Once you can afford alchemical cartridges and have the Rapid Reload feat, you will have free action reloads (you did take a pistol not a musket?) so you can sell the Beneficial Bandolier and get a Belt of Incredible Dexterity.

Other gear you'll want: (apart from a magic gun) cloak of resistance, headband of Intellect, etc, etc. Like all characters.

Example Build Gunslinger5/Spellslinger5/Eldritch Knight10

Race: You could pick Aasimar to get early entry to Eldritch Knight, but that loses you any racial bonus to either Dex or Int. I prefer Tiefling, so you can get a prehensile tail. This enables you to pull off either the ultra-cheesy two weapon fighting build with a humungous amount of free actions (subject to GM approval), with or without double-barrel pistols, or it allows you to be able to hold and retrieve items from your handy haversack/efficient quiver - potions, scrolls, rods, wands, etc. Plus tieflings can have claws (or a bite) so they count as armed without you needing to switch weapons if someone gets too close to you.

Stats: You will want an Int of 18 by level 20 (and the higher it is, the better your spell DCs will be). Otherwise, have Dex as high as possible, plus some Con. I don't like having a penalty in Wis (for saves, but to get more than one point of grit you'll need a score of 14). You could drop charisma further, and assume that you will use a magic item to boost your Int later on, to get higher Con or any particular arrangement you prefer.

20pt buy:

Str 8

Dex 17 +2 Race

Con 12

Int 15 +2 Race

Wis 10

Cha 10 -2 Race

Level ups will go into Dex & Int. 4th: Dex, to 20; 8th: Int, to 18. Then I'd favour Int at 12th and 16th level because one more point of damage is not as useful as one more point to your spell DCs. Should you ever reach L20, then getting more Int is probably still the best.

Traits: Reactionary is always useful, but Magical Lineage (to regain 2 levels of caster level) and (if you are replacing a Rogue in the party) Trap Finder might be essential.

Favoured Class: either Gunslinger or Wizard. Gunslinger gets you the points earlier so is better unless you have a particular racial FCB for wizard that you like.

1st 5 Levels: Gunslinger (Pistolero)

Feats:

1st Point-Blank Shot

3rd Precise Shot

4th Rapid Reload (whichever pistol you use)

5th (bonus) Rapid Shot

Items:

By this point, with your 10,500gp (from the WBL chart) you might have bought: Endless Bandalier, Beneficial Bandalier, Mithril Shirt +1, Cloak of Resistance +1, a +1 Pistol (double-barrel, if your GM lets you), and have made/bought your (masterwork) starting pistol and a pile of ammunition. Later on, you can sell the Beneficial Bandalier to make space for a Belt of Incredible Dexterity.

Skill Points: 7 per level, so you should be able to include Disable Device if you are also the 'rogue' in your party. (Not including FCB.)

Attacks:

Normal +12, doing 1d8+7 damage. From BAB of 5, Dex bonus of 5, Point-Blank Shot +1, Pistol +1. Damage is the d8 + Dex 5, plus Point-Blank Shot +1 and Pistol +1.

Rapid Shot: +10/+10; 2x (1d8+7)

Using Double-barrel as well: 4 bullets at +6; 4x (1d8+7).

Levels 6 to 10: Wizard (Spellslinger)

Feats:

7th Deadly Aim

9th you can't take Improved Critical yet (BAB is only +7), so either take a feat you want or one you are happy re-training as soon as possible to get Improved Critical. Weapon Focus (for Snap Shot) or Improved Initiative, or a Crafting feat, etc.

10th (bonus) this must be a wizard feat. I'd favour either a crafting feat or metamagic Reach.

Items: 62,000gp

Belt of Dex +4 (16,000); Headband of Int +2 (4,000); Cloak of Resistance +3 (9,000); etc. Your gun might be +2 by now, with 'of distance' (18,000). There are lots of good items available: Boots, Bracers of Armour, Hats. A Rod of Dazing (lesser) at 14,000 might be useful.

Skill Points: 5 (without a stat booster for levels 6 & 7) then 6 once your Int reaches 18. Plus the retroactive ones.

Attacks: assuming a +2 gun and weapon focus.

Normal +18/+13, doing 1d8+10 damage. From BAB of 7/2, Dex bonus of 5+2, Point-Blank Shot +1, Weapon Focus +1, Pistol +2. Damage is the d8 + Dex 7, plus Point-Blank Shot +1 and Pistol +2.

Rapid Shot: +16/+16/+11; 3x (1d8+7)

Deadly Aim (-2/+4): +14/+14/+9; 3x (1d8+11)

Using Double-barrel as well: 4 bullets at +10, 2 bullets at +5; 6x (1d8+11).

Generally, you will be most effective shooting enemies. I suggest using your spells for utility (leaving some slots empty to fill when needed is often a good idea) or defense - Mage Armour (if you don't have bracers of armour), Shield, Mirror Image, Invisibility. If you have a Rod of Dazing, then Colour Spray and Pellet Blast might be useful fired through your gun. If you have the prehensile tail, then you can still have a free hand for spellcasting if your GM doesn't like you trying to hold a Rod and your gun; this also means you can reload the gun without putting the rod away.

Levels 11 to 20: Eldritch Knight

Feats:

11th Snap Shot & (fighter bonus) Improved Critical

13th

15th & (fighter bonus)

17th Opposition Research, probably (11 levels of Wizard-equivalence needed so you can't have it earlier).

19th & (fighter bonus)

For the last 5 feats (2 of which must be fighter bonus ones), there are lots of options: combat (Two Weapon Fighting & Improved & Greater; Quickdraw; Improved Initiative; Weapon Specialisation & Greater Weapon Focus - you don't qualify for Greater Weapon Specialisation since you need 12 levels of fighter-equivalence); magic item crafting; improving casting (Spell Penetration; Spell Focus; Metamagic; etc).

Attacks

At 15th level, BAB is +12/+7/+2; and you have 5th level spells.

At 20th level, BAB is +17/+12/+7/+2; and you have 7th level spells.

See the Spells section for advice on which spells are good to cast through your gun, however things like Haste, Greater Invisibility, Named Bullet, Enervation & Disintegrate are all useful. Wall of Stone, shaped, can give you very nice battlements to shoot from.

Your final feats will affect your total attack bonuses and damage.

Eg taking all 3 two weapon fighting feats (plus rapid shot and being hasted) and using 2 double-barrelled guns can allow you to fire 18 bullets per round!

With Deadly Aim now being -5/+10, each bullet will do 1d8+26 or so damage (Dex bonus 5+3 (belt of Dex +6)), weapon bonus +5, Weapon Specialisation +2, Deadly Aim +10, Point Blank Shot +1, and you might add some elemental damage and/or spend Grit for 'Up Close & Deadly' for +2d6 precision damage.

Final Thoughts

Gunslingers are very effective ranged fighters. But they are rather one-dimensional. Turning one into a useful backup caster means they can kill things in combat as well as do things normally impossible for martial characters.