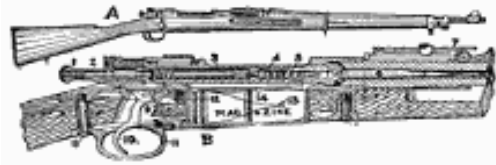


# First World War Weapons

During World War I, a wide variety of weapons were used:

The main weapon used by soldiers in the trenches was the **bolt-action rifle**. 15 rounds could be fired in a minute and a person 1,400 meters away could be killed.



**Machine guns** needed a crew of 4-6 men to work them. They had the firepower of 100 rifles and could fire more than 500 rounds per minute. Machine guns were the deadliest weapon of WWI.

Large field guns, also called **artillery**, had a long range and could deliver devastating blows to the enemy from great distances. They fired **shells** which exploded on impact.

The German army were the first to use **chlorine gas** at the battle of Ypres in 1915. Chlorine gas causes a burning sensation in the throat and chest pains. Death is painful – you suffocate! The problem with chlorine gas is that the weather and wind direction must be right.

**Mustard gas** was the deadliest gas used. It was fired into the trenches in shells. It is colourless and takes 12 hours to take effect. Effects include – blistering skin, vomiting, sore eyes, internal and external bleeding. Death can be long and agonizing and take up to 5 weeks.

The **Zeppelin**, also known as the airship or blimp, was an airship that was used during the early part of the war in bombing raids by the Germans. They carried machine guns and bombs. However, they were abandoned because they were easy to shoot out of the sky.



**Tanks** were used for the first time in the First World War. They were developed to cope with the conditions on the Western Front. The first tank was called 'Little Willie' and needed a crew of 3. It had a revolving turret, and its maximum speed was 3mph. It could not cross trenches, however.

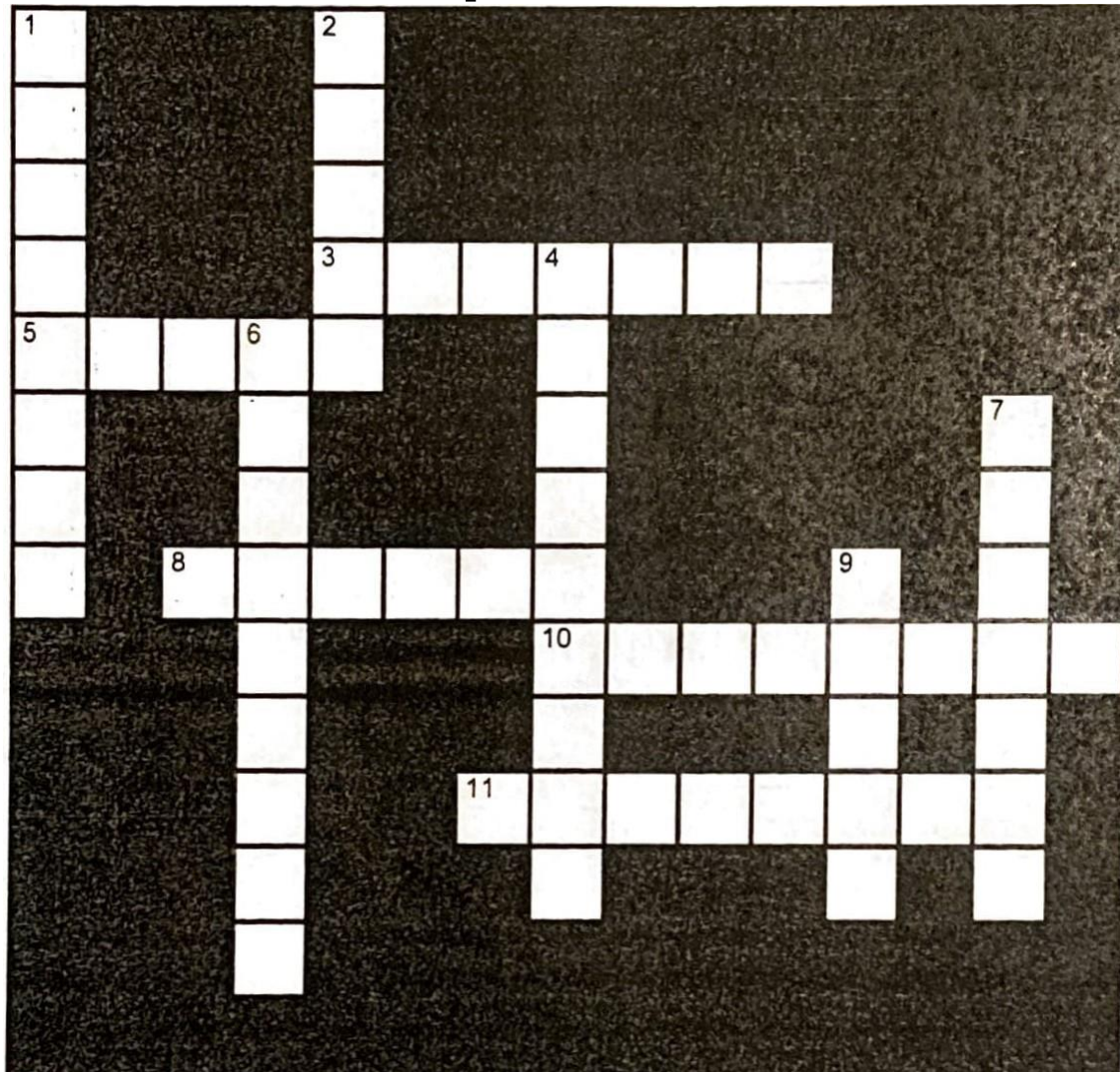
Larger more advanced tanks were developed by both sides, but they were plagued by mechanical breakdowns and were not reliable.

**Planes** were also used for the first time. At first, they were used to deliver bombs and for reconnaissance, but later became fighter aircraft armed with machine guns, bombs and sometimes canons. Battles between planes in the sky became known as 'dogfights'.



**Torpedoes** were used by submarines. The German submarines, called **U-boats**, used torpedoes to blow up ships carrying supplies from America to Britain. The Germans torpedoed the passenger liner Lusitania on May 1, 1915, believing the ship was smuggling weapons to the Allies. The ship sank with a loss of 1,195 lives. Americans were outraged and joined the war in 1917 on the side of the Allies.

# WWI Weapons Crossword



## Across

- 3 This colourless gas is deadly (7)
- 5 Used by all soldiers in World War I (5)
- 8 Name of the first tank "Little \_\_\_\_\_" (6)
- 10 A fight between two planes (8)
- 11 Also known as blimp (8)

## Down

- 1 This gas was first used at Ypres in 1915 (8)
- 2 Tanks were first used at this battle (5)
- 4 These weapons were used by submarines (9)
- 6 This liner was blown up by torpedoes (9)
- 7 This gun needed 4-6 men to work it (7)
- 9 This type of gun fired shells (5)