

# Bar Shot and Round Shot

## Round Shot

If they wanted to hit a distant target, they would fire **round shot** (**cannon ball**).

*Constitution's* cannon fired shot made of cast iron that weighed 24 or 32 pounds and were about 5 ½ and 6 1/10 inches in diameter. The maximum range for round shot was about 2400 yards, or 1.36 miles (this is the length of 20 football fields!). At the right distance, round shot could punch through the side of a ship, leaving a ragged hole and producing a cloud of deadly splinters. If a ship was struck low in the hull, water might rush in and the ship could sink.



## Bar Shot

If a gun crew wished to damage an enemy's sails and rigging, they could load and fire bar shot.

Made of wrought (hammered) iron, bar shot consisted of two hemispheres joined in the middle by a stiff iron bar. When fired, bar shot spun at high speed and cut through sails and ropes like a buzz saw. It had a limited range, however, so could only be used when the ships were close to each other.

