Nerf’s new blasters curve their shots a la Angelina Jolie in Wanted

Nerf’s got a new trick up its sleeve: Hasbro’s latest foam-flinging sidearms can *curve* their shots, possibly letting you hit targets you can’t even see. (Think Angelina Jolie or James McAvoy in *Wanted* but with bouncy balls instead of bullets.)

That’s because each of Nerf’s three new Rival Curve blasters has an adjustable barrel you can twist to change the angle of your shot: left or right to shoot around corners, up to shoot straight, or down to lob balls over cover.

Feeling skeptical? I would also be looking at this CG, especially considering *MythBusters* all but proved you can’t bend a real-life bullet over a decade ago. But you actually *can* curve toy projectiles like these foam balls. In fact, companies like Hasbro have already been doing it for years to increase their accuracy and range.

When Hasbro first introduced its Rival lineup in 2015, it borrowed a feature popularized in airsoft guns called a “hop-up” – a nub that puts a backspin on the ball as it leaves the barrel, making it float in the air. It’s known as the Magnus effect.

Normally, a hop-up is designed to make a ball hop, well, *up*, but the Nerf community has long known you can simply twist a hop-up to curve your shots instead. Here’s Out of Darts demonstrating that in 2016 (skip to 2:40 to be thoroughly convinced):

[embedded content]

Here, that twistable hop-up is coming to official blasters you can buy for between $15 and $30, including a single-shot pistol called the Flex; a neat bolt-action blaster with a 12-round internal magazine called the Sideswipe; and, best of all, a 20-round hopper-fed, pump-action blaster called the Helix, which has a genuine lip on its pump grip to keep your hands from sliding off, something that’s pretty dang rare in Nerf.

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Just know that you’re likely sacrificing a good bit of range to get that curve. An early demo on YouTube suggests it might be a pretty shallow curve to start. You may need a strong wind to get results like Hasbro is imagining in the image atop this post.

Here are the full details on each new blaster, straight from Hasbro. The first two will arrive in March, with the Helix set to be a Target-exclusive blaster in the US starting this August.

NERF RIVAL CURVE SHOT FLEX XXI-100

(HASBRO/Ages 14 years & up/Approx. Retail Price: $14.99/Available: 3/1/2021)

Select your curve to fire rounds left, right, straight, or down and take the competition by surprise with the NERF RIVAL CURVE SHOT FLEX XXI-100 blaster. Fire around corners, barriers, and obstacles with this blaster that unleashes rounds in a curved trajectory, giving you the ultimate strategic competitive advantage! Turn the rotating muzzle to choose whether you want the round to go straight, left, right, or down. Your opponents may be out of your line of sight, but with this NERF RIVAL CURVE SHOT blaster, they can still be within range, so take aim and curve your shot! Includes 5 Official NERF RIVAL rounds and has integrated onboard round storage. Pull down the priming handle to open the breech, load 1 round, and close the breech. Then select your curve, and press the trigger fire. Includes trigger lock. Eyewear recommended (not included). No batteries required. Available at most major toy retailers nationwide.

NERF RIVAL CURVE SHOT SIDESWIPE XXI-1200

(HASBRO/Ages 14 years & up/Approx. Retail Price: $24.99/Available: 3/1/2021)

Select your curve to fire rounds left, right, straight, or down and take the competition by surprise with the NERF RIVAL CURVE SHOT SWIDESWIPE XXI-1200 blaster. Fire around corners, barriers, and obstacles with this blaster that unleashes rounds in a curved trajectory, giving you the ultimate strategic competitive advantage! Turn the rotating muzzle to choose whether you want the round to go straight, left, right, or down. Your opponents may be out of your line of sight, but with this NERF RIVAL CURVE SHOT blaster, they can still be within range, so take aim and curve your shot! Includes a 12-round side-loading internal magazine and 12 Official NERF RIVAL rounds. The bolt attaches to either side for right-handed and left-handed battlers. Load the magazine,

move the priming bolt, and press the trigger to fire 1 round. Includes trigger lock. Eyewear recommended (not included). No batteries required. Available at most major toy retailers nationwide.

NERF RIVAL CURVE SHOT HELIX XXI-2000

(HASBRO/Ages 14 years & up/Approx. Retail Price: $29.99/Available: 8/1/2021)

Select your curve to fire rounds left, right, straight, or down and take the competition by surprise with the NERF RIVAL CURVE SHOT HELIX XXI-2000 blaster. Fire around corners, barriers, and obstacles with this blaster that unleashes rounds in a curved trajectory, giving you the ultimate strategic competitive advantage! Turn the rotating muzzle to choose whether you want the round to go straight, left, right, or down. Your opponents may be out of your line of sight, but with this NERF RIVAL CURVE SHOT blaster, they can still be within range, so take aim and curve your shot! The high-capacity HELIX XXI-2000 blaster features an easy-load hopper for quick reloading. Pump the handle to prime and press the trigger to unleash 1 round at a velocity of 90 feet per second. Includes 20 Official NERF RIVAL high-impact rounds and trigger lock. Eyewear recommended (not included). Available exclusively at Target.

https://www.theverge.com/2021/1/25/22249059/nerf-rival-curve-shot-wanted-blaster