

Parts of a Shotgun Shell

The modern shotgun shell contains the five components required for firing the shot: the *case*, *primer*, *powder charge*, *wad*, and *shot*.

- The shell **case** is the outer container for all other ammunition parts. It typically is made of plastic or paper with a metal base.

- The **primer** is the detonating agent contained in the middle of the shell's base. When the firing pin strikes the primer, a chain of events begins to fire the gun.

- A **powder charge** above the primer allows easy combustion from the flame created when the primer detonates.

- A plastic or fiber **wad** separates the shot from the powder, forming a seal that allows the gases created by the burning powder to push the shot down the barrel.

- **Shot** are small round projectiles usually made of lead or steel and are located at the front end of the shell. Depending on the gauge and shot size, one shell may contain anywhere from nine to 700 of them.

