

STYLE: Switch Side Debate

Switch side debates act as normal debates; however, speakers do not know what side they are speaking on prior to the debate. As a result, speakers should be prepared to speak on both sides of the resolution.

DEBATE: Resolved, that police officers should not carry firearms.

Background: The origins of US police forces date back to 1838, when Boston devised the first public, full-time police force, marking the beginning of modern policing that stands today. Right until the end of the 19th century, police weapons in the United States were not standardized; rather, officers used whatever weapons they happened to personally own. The first city to standardize its law enforcement's weapons was New York City in 1896. Currently, police forces have standardized weapons, but these weapons may vary by state. Generally, however, police officers carry glock pistols. Those who argue in favor of disarming police officers assert that every incident police officers come across is not violent, and therefore does not require the use of a firearm. On the other hand, those in favor of arming police officers argue that in a country where the citizens are heavily armed, it makes sense for the police forces to be equally or more armed. However, the question remains: Should police officers carry firearms?

Pro:

- The incidents police deal with are often not extremely violent, and do not call for the use of firearms. Therefore, police should be disarmed in order to prevent undue violence and death.
- The recent events of unarmed individuals being shot, especially minorities, show that police officers are inclined to use their firearms, even when they are unnecessary. In order to prevent more of these tragedies, officers should be disarmed.
- Disarming police officers would call for an increased emphasis on de-escalation tactics, which is safer for all parties involved and diminishes violence in society.

Link for further research: <https://qz.com/602682/the-case-for-disarming-americas-police-force/>

Con:

- In a country with relaxed gun laws, it is absolutely necessary for police officers to be armed. If the citizens who are committing crimes are heavily armed, it makes sense for the officers enforcing the law to be as well.
- Without firearms, police officers' jobs would be exponentially more dangerous, and they would have difficulty in enforcing the law in more violent cases. Therefore, in order for police officers to be able to effectively do their jobs, they must be armed.
- Having police officers carry firearms inherently deters crime. Therefore, if police officers were to be disarmed, citizens would be more inclined to commit crime, as they would be under the preconception that they could essentially get away with it.

Link for further research:

<https://www.economist.com/britain/2017/06/29/is-it-time-for-britains-unarmed-police-to-be-given-guns>

