

PRODUCT REVIEW

M4 CARBINE

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JANUARY 2020

SELF-LOADING SERVICE RIFLE (5.56x45MM)



FN 15 Military Collector M4 with 30 round magazine.

Eugene Stoner's AR-15 (c. 1957) is the most prolific assault rifle in the West due to its excellent ergonomics and the flat shooting but light recoiling 5.56x45mm round it was designed to use.

The AR-15 was adopted by the US Army in 1967 as the M16 Rifle, while the shorter and lighter M4 Carbine variant was adopted in 1994 and is now the standard issue service rifle of the US Army.

The M733 variant (11.5" barrel) is easier to maneuver in tight places and discreetly transport than the M4 (14.5" barrel), let alone the original AR-15/M16 series rifles (20" barrels). An 11.5" barrel is only a little longer than the 10.3" barrel on the Mk 18 CQBR but improves reliability (longer dwell time) and is long enough to fit most QD sound

suppressor mounts, thus ideal if one wants a short barrel.

I recommend the FN 15 Military Collector M4, a semi-auto civilian version of the selective fire M4 Carbine.

A railed handguard facilitates the fitting of accessories like vertical grips, lights and lasers like those from SureFire and Crimson Trace.

It is desirable to fit the BCMGUNFIGHTER Charging Handle with the Mod 4 (MEDIUM) Latch from Bravo Company USA as it is much stronger than the standard M16/M4 charging handle.

AR-15 type rifles are more accurate than AK-47 type rifles and very reliable if they are properly maintained (use plenty of lubricant) and used with quality magazines like those from Magpul, which also makes an anti-tilt follower

for USGI magazines.

I prefer 20 round magazines as they are less likely to snag on clothing or cover than the 30 round variety.

The 5.56x45mm round lacks penetration as the small, high velocity bullets are prone to deflection, tumbling and fragmentation, which is best addressed by using armor piercing bullets like the one in the M995 round, though the Barnes 62-grain TAC-X (TSX) bullet has good penetration and better stopping power. If you want better penetration of light cover you can fit an upper receiver chambered for the 300 AAC Blackout round and use steel core bullets.

I recommend Aimpoint's Micro H-1 reflex sight and Trijicon's 3x24 Compact ACOG (Crosshair Ballistic Reticle).

AIMPOINT MICRO H-1



A small red dot sight like the Aimpoint Micro H-1 is ideal for use on the M4 Carbine as heavier sights will have a negative effect on handling. The CR2032 watch battery lasts 50,000 hours of continuous use (best left on). It is much like the more

expensive T-1 and T-2 but without night vision settings.

Some prefer Aimpoint's larger and less expensive PRO which has a larger 30mm tube that is more tolerant of imperfect sight alignment, but I favor the H-1 as it is markedly lighter.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Self-loading AR-15 type rifles are superb for defensive use due to their combination of reliability, accuracy and firepower.

RECOMMENDED ACCESSORIES

Handbook / Log Book

AR-15 Handbook / Firearm Usage & Maintenance Log Book. [Blackheart International]

Maintenance Video

AR-15 Rifle Maintenance. [Infidel Media Group]

Cleaning Kit

Otis 5.56mm/9mm Cleaning System, Otis 5.56 B.O.N.E. Tool, Real Avid .223/5.56 MSR Scraper Tool. [Otis Technology / Real Avid]

Cleaner/Lubricant

Slip 2000 725/Slip 2000 EWL. [Slip 2000]

Field Maintenance Kit

M16/M4 Maintenance Field Pack. [Brownell's]

Illuminated Front Sight

TFO AR-15 Style Front Sight. [TRUGLO]

Tactical Light

M300C Compact LED Scout Light. [SureFire]

Dry Fire Rounds

A-Zoom Snap Caps. [Lyman Products Corp.]

Ear Plugs

EarPro EP3 or EP4. [SureFire]

Sling

Tactical Sling M16/AR15 (TAS-1OD). [Eagle Industries]

HOT TIP

Training magazines can suffer metal fatigue to their springs so don't use them for combat.