The M14 rifle, officially the United States Rifle, 7.62 mm, M14, is an American selective fire automatic rifle that fires 7.62×51mm NATO (.308 in) ammunition. It gradually replaced the M1 Garand rifle in U.S. Army service by 1961 and in U.S. Marine Corps service by 1965. It was the standard issue infantry rifle for U.S. military personnel in the contiguous United States, Europe, and South Korea from 1959 until the M16 rifle began replacing it in 1964. The M14 was used for U.S. Army, Navy and Marine Corps basic and advanced individual training (AIT) from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s.
The M14 was the last American battle rifle issued in quantity to U.S. military personnel. The rifle remains in limited service in all branches of the U.S. military as an accurized competition weapon, a ceremonial weapon by honor guards, color guards, drill teams, and ceremonial guards, and sniper rifle/designated marksman rifle. Civilians models in semi-automatic are used for hunting, plinking, target shooting and competitions including metallic silhouette, 3 gun and metal challenge.
The M14 is the basis for the M21 and M25 sniper rifles which were largely replaced by the M24 Sniper Weapon System. A new variant of the M14, the Mk 14 Enhanced Battle Rifle has been in service since 2002.

History

Early development

The M14 was developed from a long line of experimental weapons based upon the M1 rifle. Although the M1 was among the most advanced infantry rifles of the late 1930s, it was not an ideal weapon. Modifications were already beginning to be made to the basic M1 rifle's design during the last months of World War II. Changes included adding fully automatic firing capability and replacing the eight-round en bloc clips with a detachable box magazine holding 20 rounds. Winchester, Remington, and Springfield Armory's own John Garand offered different conversions. Garand's design, the T20, was the most popular, and T20 prototypes served as the basis for a number of Springfield test rifles from 1945 through the early 1950s.

T25 prototype

In 1945, Earle Harvey of Springfield Armory designed a completely different rifle, the T25, for the new T65 .30 light rifle cartridge [7.62×49mm] at the direction of Col. Rene Studler, then serving in the Pentagon. The two men were transferred to Springfield Armory in late 1945, where work on the T25 continued. The T25 was designed to use the T65 service cartridge, a Frankford Arsenal design based upon .30-06 cartridge case used in the M1 service rifle, but shortened to the length of the .300 Savage case. Although shorter than the .30-06, with less powder capacity, the T65 cartridge retained the ballistics and energy of the .30-06 due to the use of a recently developed ball powder made by Olin Industries.[11][12]
After experimenting with several bullet designs, the T65 was finalized for adoption as the 7.62×51mm NATO cartridge. Olin Industries later introduced the cartridge on the commercial market as the .308 Winchester. After a series of revisions by Earle Harvey and

other members of the .30 light rifle design group following the 1950 Fort Benning tests, the T25 was renamed the T47.

In contrast, the T44 prototype service rifle was not principally designed by any single engineer at Springfield Armory, but rather was a conventional design developed on a shoestring budget as an alternative to the T47. With only minimal funds available, the earliest T44 prototypes simply used T20E2 receivers fitted with magazine filler blocks and re-barreled for 7.62×51mm NATO, with the long operating rod/piston of the M1 replaced by the T47's gas cut-off system. Lloyd Corbett, an engineer in Harvey's rifle design group, added various refinements to the T44 design, including a straight operating rod and a bolt roller to reduce friction.

Infantry Board service rifle trials

Experimental T47 rifle

The T44 participated in a competitive service rifle competition conducted by the Infantry Board at Fort Benning, Georgia against the Springfield T47 (a modified T25) and the T48, a variant of Fabrique Nationale's FN FAL (from "Fusil Automatique Leger", French for "light automatic rifle"). The T47, which did not have a bolt roller and performed worse in dust and cold weather tests than both the T44 and the T48, was dropped from consideration in 1953. During 1952–53, testing proved the T48 and the T44 roughly comparable in performance, with the T48 holding an advantage in ease of field stripping and dust resistance, as well as a longer product development lead time. A *Newsweek* article in July 1953 hinted that the T48/FAL might be selected over the T44. During the winter of 1953–54, both rifles competed in the winter rifle trials at U.S. Army facilities in the Arctic. Springfield Armory engineers, anxious to ensure the selection of the T44, had been specially preparing and modifying the test T44 rifles for weeks with the aid of the armory's cold chamber, including redesign of the T44 gas regulator and custom modifications to magazines and other parts to reduce friction and seizing in extreme cold. The T48 rifles received no such special preparation, and in the continued cold weather testing began to experience sluggish gas system functioning, aggravated by the T48's close-fitting surfaces between bolt and carrier, and carrier and receiver. FN engineers opened the gas ports in an attempt to improve functioning, but this caused early/violent extraction and broken parts as a result of the increased pressures. As a result, the T44 was ranked superior in cold weather operation to the T48. The Arctic Test Board report made it clear that the T48 needed improvement and that the U.S. would not adopt the T48 until it had successfully completed another round of Arctic tests the following winter.

In June 1954, funding was finally made available to manufacture newly fabricated T44 receivers specially designed for the shorter T65 cartridge. This one change to the T44 design saved a pound in rifle weight over that of the M1 Garand. Tests at Fort Benning with the T44 and T48 continued through the summer and fall of 1956. By this time, the T48/FAL rifles had been so improved that malfunction rates were almost as low as the T44. In the end, the T44 was selected over the T48/FAL primarily because of weight (T44 was a pound lighter), simplicity with fewer parts, the T44's self-compensating gas system, and the argument that the T44 could be manufactured on existing machinery built for the M1 rifle

(this later turned out to be unworkable). In 1957, the U.S. formally adopted the T44 as the U.S. infantry service rifle, designated M14.

Production contracts

Initial production contracts for the M14 were awarded to the Springfield Armory, Winchester, and Harrington & Richardson. Thompson-Ramo-Wooldridge Inc. (TRW) would later be awarded a production contract for the rifle as well. 1,376,031 M14 service rifles were produced from 1959 to 1964.

National Match M14

Springfield Armory produced 6,641 new M14 NM rifles in 1962 and 1963, while TRW produced 4,874 new M14 NM rifles in 1964. Springfield Armory later upgraded 2,094 M14 rifles in 1965 and 2,395 M14 rifles in 1966 to National Match specifications, while 2,462 M14 rifles were rebuilt to National Match standards in 1967 at the Rock Island Arsenal. A total of 11,130 National Match rifles were delivered by Springfield Armory, Rock Island Arsenal, and TRW during 1962–1967.

Production M14 rifles made by Springfield Armory and Winchester used forged receivers and bolts milled from AISI 8620 steel, a low-carbon molybdenum-chromium steel. Harrington & Richardson M14 production used AISI 8620 steel as well, except for ten receivers milled from AISI 1330 low-carbon steel and a single receiver made from alloy steel with a high nickel content.

Deployment

A U.S. soldier with an M14 watches as supplies are dropped in 1967 during the Vietnam War.

After the M14's adoption, Springfield Armory began tooling a new production line in 1958, delivering the first service rifles to the U.S. Army in July 1959. However, long production delays resulted in the 101st Airborne Division being the only unit in the army fully equipped with the M14 by the end of 1961. The Fleet Marine Force finally completed the change from M1 to M14 in late 1962. Springfield Armory records reflect that M14 manufacture ended as TRW, fulfilling its second contract, delivered its final production increment in fiscal year 1965 (1 July 1964 – 30 June 1965). The Springfield archive also indicates the 1.38 million rifles were acquired for just over $143 million, for a unit cost of about $104.

The rifle served adequately during its brief tour of duty in Vietnam. Though it was unwieldy in the thick brush due to its length and weight, the power of the 7.62×51mm NATO cartridge allowed it to penetrate cover quite well and reach out to extended range, developing 2,560 ft·lbf (3,463 J) of muzzle energy. However, there were several drawbacks

to the M14. The traditional wood stock of the rifle had a tendency to swell and expand in the heavy moisture of the jungle, adversely affecting accuracy. Fiberglass stocks were produced to resolve this problem, but the rifle was discontinued before very many could be distributed for field use. Also, because of the M14's powerful 7.62×51mm cartridge, the weapon was deemed virtually uncontrollable in fully automatic mode, so most M14s were permanently set to semi-automatic fire only to avoid wasting ammunition in combat.

A rare M14 presentation model, serial No. 0010

The M14 was developed to replace seven different weapons—the M1 Garand, Springfield M1903, Enfield M1917, M1 carbine, M3 Grease Gun, Thompson M1928/M1, and M1918 Browning automatic rifle (BAR). The intention was to simplify the logistical requirements of the troops by limiting the types of ammunition and parts needed to be supplied. However, it proved to be an impossible task to replace all four. The M14 was also deemed "completely inferior" to the World War II M1 Garand in a September 1962 report by the U.S. Department of Defense comptroller. The cartridge was too powerful for the submachine gun role and the weapon was simply too light to serve as a light machine gun replacement for the BAR.

Replacement

The M14 remained the primary infantry rifle in Vietnam until it was replaced by the M16 in 1966–67, though combat engineer units kept them several years longer. Further procurement of the M14 was abruptly halted in late 1963 due to the U.S. Department of Defense report which had also stated that the AR-15 (soon to be M16) was superior to the M14. (The DOD did not cancel FY 1963 orders not yet delivered.) After the report, a series of tests and reports by the U.S. Department of the Army followed that resulted in the decision to cancel the M14. The M16 was then ordered as a replacement for the M14 by direction of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara in 1964, over the objection of the U.S. Army officers who had backed the M14. (Other factions within the Army research and development community had opposed the M14 and the 7.62×51 mm round from the start.) Though production of the M14 was officially discontinued, some disgruntled troops managed to hang on to them while deriding the early model M16 as a frail and under-powered "Mattel toy" that was prone to jam. In late 1967, the U.S. Army designated the M16 as the "Standard A" rifle, and the M14 became a "Limited Standard" weapon. The M14 rifle remained the standard rifle for U.S. Army Basic Training and troops stationed in Europe until 1970.

The U.S. Army also converted several thousand M14s into M21 sniper rifles, which remained standard issue for this purpose until the adoption of the M24 SWS in 1988.

In 1969, tooling for the M14 was sold to Taiwan and later many rifles were exported to Baltic countries and Israel.

Post-1970 U.S. military service

An Army marksman in Fallujah, Iraq, using an M14 with a Leupold LR/T 10×40 mm M3 scope

In the mid-1990s, the Marine Corps chose a new rifle for Designated Marksman (sniper) use, an M14 modified by the Precision Weapons Shop in Marine Corps Base Quantico called the Designated Marksman Rifle (DMR). It is intended for use by security teams (SRTs, FAST companies), and Marine Scout Snipers in the cases where a semi-automatic rifle would be more appropriate than the standard bolt-action M40A1/A3 rifle. The USMC Rifle Team uses the M14 in shooting competitions. Although the M14 was phased out as the standard-issue rifle by 1970, M14 variants are still used by various branches of the U.S. Military as well as other armed forces, especially as a sniper rifle and as a designated marksman rifle, due to its accuracy and effectiveness at long range. Special active units such as the OPFOR units of the Joint Readiness Training Center use M14s. Few M14s were in use in the Army until the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars. Since the start of these conflicts, many M14s have been employed as designated marksman and sniper rifles. These are not M21 rifles, but original production M14s. Common modifications include scopes, fiberglass stocks, and other accessories. A 2009 study conducted by the U.S. Army claimed that half of the engagements in Afghanistan occurred from beyond 300 meters (330 yd). America's 5.56×45mm NATO service rifles are ineffective at these ranges; this has prompted the reissue of thousands of M14s.

A USMC Designated Marksman Rifle (DMR) in use

A Gunner's Mate using an M14 rifle to fire a shot line from the USS *Carter Hall* to USNS *Lewis and Clark*.

The 1st Battalion of the 3rd United States Infantry Regiment ("The Old Guard") in the Military District of Washington is the sole remaining regular U.S. Army combat field unit where the M14 is still issued as the standard rifle, along with a chromed bayonet and an extra wooden stock with white sling for military funerals, parades, and other ceremonies. The United States Air Force Honor Guard uses a version of the M14. The U.S. Navy Ceremonial Guard and Base Honor Guards also use the M14 for 3-volley salutes in military funerals. It is also the drill and parade rifle of the United States Military Academy,

United States Naval Academy, United States Air Force Academy, The Citadel, Norwich University, Virginia Military Institute, and North Georgia College and State University. U.S. Navy ships carry several M14s in their armories. They are issued to sailors going on watch out on deck in port, and to Backup Alert Forces. The M14 is also used to shoot a large rubber projectile to another ship when underway to start the lines over for alongside refueling and replenishment.

A SEAL operator with an M14 rifle participating in maritime interdiction enforcement during Operation Desert Storm.

Various sniper variants have been used by the United States Navy SEALs, often mistaken with M21 in the overt literature, only one of them has received a standard name in the U.S. military designations system: the M25, developed by the Special Forces. SEALs also use the Mk 14 Mod 0 Enhanced Battle Rifle (EBR) for close-quarters battle and in a designated marksman role. "Delta Force" units are known to have used M14 sniper variants.

According to *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War*, the well-known account of the Battle of Mogadishu, Sergeant First Class Randy Shughart, used an M14 for sniping from helicopters to provide support fire to ground troops.

The U.S. Army Special Forces ("Green Berets") have made some use of the M25 "spotter rifle". The M25 was developed in the late 1980s within the 10th Special Forces Group, which was charged to support Special Forces sniper weapons as well as the Special Operations Target Interdiction Course (SOTIC). The M25 was first planned as a replacement for the old M21, but after the Army adoption of the M24 SWS as its standard sniper rifle, the M25 was intended to be used by spotters of the sniper teams, while the snipers would use the bolt-action M24.

The M14 has remained in service longer than any U.S. infantry rifle surpassing that of the Springfield M1903 rifle, it also holds the distinction of serving as the standard infantry rifle of the U.S. Army for a second shortest span of time than almost any other service rifle, only surpassed by the short lived US Krag–Jørgensen rifles and carbines.

Service with other nations

The Philippines issues M14 rifles, M1/M2 carbines, M1 rifles, and M16 rifles, to their civilian defense forces and various cadet corps service academies. The Hellenic Navy uses the M14.

The M14 production Springfield tooling and assembly line was sold in 1967 to the Republic of China (Taiwan), who in 1968 began producing their Type 57 Rifle. The State Arsenal of the Republic of China produced over 1 million of these rifles from 1969 to the present.

Other than the surface finish it is essentially a US rifle. It is used by the reserves and as a backup defense weapon, and used by airport guards.

In Mainland China, Norinco has produced an M14 variants for export, which were sold in the U.S. prior to the importation ban of 1989 and the enactment of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. Rifles made by Poly Technologies were imported to the US in the 1980s but were banned from further import in 1989 by the first Bush Administration. They are currently being sold in Canada, Italy and New Zealand. They have been marketed under the M14S and M305 names.

Rifle design

Receiver markings

Stamped into receiver heel:

- **U.S. Rifle**
- **7.62-MM M14**
- **Springfield Armory (or commercial contractor name)**
- **Serial number**

Stock

The M14 rifle was first furnished with a walnut stock, then with birch and finally with a synthetic (fiberglass) stock, which was adopted for use in damp jungle environments in Vietnam, since the wood versions would often become warped and swollen with moisture. The stock was also fitted with a hinged shoulder rest for improved user comfort when firing from a prone position. Original equipment walnut and birch stocks carry the Department of Defense acceptance stamp or cartouche (an arc of three stars above a spread-winged eagle). These stocks also carried a proof stamp, a P within a circle, applied after successful test-firing.

Rifles manufactured through late 1960 were provided with walnut handguards. Thereafter synthetic, slotted (ventilated) hand guards were furnished but proved too fragile for military use. These were replaced by the solid synthetic part still in use, usually in dark brown, black or a camouflage pattern.

Rifling

Standard M14 rifling has right-hand twist in 1:12 inches with 4 grooves.

Accessories

Although M14 rifle production ended in 1964, the limited standard status of the weapon resulted in the continued manufacture of accessories and spare parts into the late 1960s and beyond.

- **M6 bayonet with M8A1 sheath**
- **M2 Bandoleer (Has 6 pockets, each containing 2 × 5-round Mauser-type clips for a total of 60 rounds, and a pouch for a magazine filler. The sling was adjustable and was held in place with a matte-black steel safety pin). Standard Operating Procedure was for the operator to use up the ammunition in the bandoleers before using the loaded magazines in the ammo pouches. The pockets' stitching could be ripped out to allow the bandoleer to carry 6 pre-loaded 20-round magazines.**
- **Sling [The service rifle used a one-piece cotton or nylon webbing sling and the competition and sniping variants use the standard M1907 two-piece leather sling]**

- **Cleaning kit (contained in the stock's butt-trap) included: a combination tool, ratchet chamber brush, plastic lubricant case, brass bore brush, four cleaning rod sections, cleaning rod case, and a cleaning rod patch-holding tip.**
- **M5 winter trigger and winter safety**
- **M12 blank firing attachment and M3 breech shield**
- **Cartridge charger clip (holds five cartridges)**
- **Magazine filler (or "spoon") for charging detached magazines externally. (The M14 has a groove over the action that allows the operator to place a loaded clip and top off the attached magazine internally through the open action).**
- **M1956 Universal Small Arms Ammunition Pouch, First Pattern (could hold 2 × 20-round M14 magazines horizontally).**
- **M1956 Universal Small Arms Ammunition Pouch, Second Pattern (could hold 3 × 20-round M14 magazines vertically).**
- **M1961 ammunition magazine pouch. (Could carry 1 × 20-round M14 magazine. The bottom of the pouch contained eyelets for attaching a First Aid Pouch or 3-cell (6 pocket) Grenade Carrier that could tie down around the thigh.)**
- **M2 bipod**
- **M76 rifle grenade launcher**
- **M15 grenade launcher sight**
- **Mk 87 Mod 0/1 line (rope) throwing kit**

Types of sights

- **Rear peep, front blade, metric**
- **Rear National Match peep with hood, front National Match blade, metric**

Variants and related designs

A U.S. Border Patrol Agent, armed with a M14 rifle, tracking someone in harsh winter conditions on the northern U.S. border.

Military

M15

The M15 Squad Automatic Weapon was a modified M14 developed as a replacement for the .30-06 M1918 Browning Automatic Rifle for use as a squad automatic weapon. It added a heavier barrel and stock, a hinged buttplate, a selector switch for fully automatic fire, and a bipod. The sling was from the BAR. Like the M14, it was chambered for 7.62×51mm NATO.

Firing tests showed that the M14, when equipped with the selector switch, hinged buttplate and bipod, performed as well as the M15. As a result, the M15 was dropped and the modified M14 became the squad automatic weapon. Accuracy and control problems with this variant led to the addition of a pistol grip, a folding rubber covered metal foregrip and

a muzzle stabilizer. However, it was a poor suppressive fire weapon owing to 20-round magazines and it overheated rapidly.

M14E1

The M14E1 was tested with a variety of folding stocks to provide better maneuverability for armored infantry, paratroopers and others. No variant was standardized.

M14E2/M14A1

Selective fire version of the standard M14 used as a squad automatic weapon. Successor to the full-automatic M14 with a bipod and the never issued M15. The developmental model was known as the M14E2. As a conceptional weapon developed by the Infantry School, it was known as the M14 (USAIB) (United States Army Infantry Board). It was issued in 1963 and redesignated as M14A1 in 1966.

It had a full pistol-gripped in-line stock to control recoil, a plastic upper forend to save weight, a muzzle compensator, the BAR sling, an M2 bipod, and a folding metal vertical foregrip mounted under the forend of the stock. Although an improvement over the M14 when in full-auto, it was still difficult to control, overheated rapidly, and the 20-round magazine limited its ability to deliver suppressive fire.

M14M (Modified)/M14NM (National Match)

The M14M is a semi-automatic only version of the standard M14 that was developed for use in civilian rifle marksmanship activities such as the Civilian Marksmanship Program. M14M rifles were converted from existing M14 rifles by welding the select-fire mechanism to prevent full-automatic firing. The M14NM (National Match) is an M14M rifle built to National Match accuracy standards.

The M14M and M14NM rifles are described in a (now-obsolete) Army regulation, AR 920-25, "Rifles, M14M and M14NM, For Civilian Marksmanship Use," dated 8 February 1965. Paragraph 2, among other things, stated that the Director of the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax Division, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury (predecessor to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives) had ruled that M14M and M14NM rifles so modified would not be subject to the 1934 National Firearms Act (NFA) and, as such, could be sold or issued to civilians. However, with the passage of the Gun Control Act of 1968, the NFA was amended to prohibit sales of previously modified automatic weapons such as the M14M and M14NM to civilians.

M14 SMUD

***Stand-off Munition Disruption*, used by Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel to destroy unexploded ordnance. Essentially an M14 National Match rifle with scope.**

Mk 14 EBR

A soldier using a M14 EBR-RI equipped with a Sage M14ALCS chassis stock provides security in Iraq, 2006.

Main article: Mk 14 Enhanced Battle Rifle
The Mk 14 Enhanced Battle Rifle is a more tactical version of the M14, with a shorter 18-inch barrel, a retractable stock and multiple rails for more accessories.
M14 Tactical
Modified M14 using the same stock as the Mk 14 but with a 22-inch barrel and a Smith Enterprise muzzle brake, used by the U.S. Coast Guard.
M14 Designated Marksman Rifle
Main article: United States Marine Corps Designated Marksman Rifle
Designated marksman version of the M14, used by the U.S. Marine Corps. Replaced by the M39 Enhanced Marksman Rifle.
M39 Enhanced Marksman Rifle
Main article: M39 Enhanced Marksman Rifle
Modified M14 DMR fitted with the same stock as Mk 14, used by the U.S. Marine Corps. Being replaced by the M110 Semi-Automatic Sniper System.
M89SR Model 89 Sniper Rifle
Main article: M89SR
The M89SR is an M14 in bullpup configuration first introduced by Sardius in the 1980s. Later produced by Technical Equipment International (TEI) for the Israel Defense Forces
AWC G2A Sniper Rifle
AWC G2A Sniper Rifle is a modified M14 with bullpup stock designed by Lynn McWilliams and Gale McMillian in the late 1990s. Produced and delivered for testing at the Fort Bragg sniper school.
M21, M25 sniper rifles
The M21 and M25 are accurized sniper rifle versions, built to closer tolerances than the standard M14. These are the more standard sniper rifle variants of the M14.

Commercial production

A U.S. Border Patrol Agent with M14 during a law enforcement memorial service
Armscorp M14
From 1987 to 1994, Armscorp of America or Armscorp USA produced investment-cast semi-auto M14 receivers. During the first year of production, Armscorp receivers were supplied by Smith Manufacturing of Holland, Ohio, which were heat treated and finish machined by Armscorp. From 1988 to 1994, a few receivers with an 'S' serial number

prefix were made of stainless steel. From approximately 1994 until 2008, Armscorps receiver castings were supplied by the Lamothermic Corporation of Brewster, New York.

CAR 14

A product of Troy Industries the CAR 14 (Carbine Assault Rifle 14) is a smaller and lighter tactical version of the M14. Its barrel is 12.5 inches long and it weighs 7.9 pounds. The rifle has select fire ability, a threaded flash suppressor for a suppressor, a tactical rail on top for sights and other attachments, and the operating rod cover.

Federal Ordnance

From 1984 to 1991, Federal Ordnance of South El Monte, California sold a semi-auto version of the M14 rifle. Initially named the *M14* or *M14A*, the rifle utilized an aftermarket semi-auto receiver fitted with surplus USGI M14 parts. All receivers were machined from castings of AISI 8620 alloy steel. Except for the first fifty receivers, the castings were supplied by Electro Crisol Metal, S.A. of Santander, Spain, then imported to the US for heat treatment, finish machining, and exterior phosphate treatment. M14 and M14A receivers were heat-treated using the carburizing process by a firm in Santa Ana, California, followed by finish machining on a CNC machine at Federal Ordnance in South El Monte. Federal Ordnance M14 and M14A receivers were heat-treated and carburized according to USGI M14 requirements. Each completed production rifle was proof fired, then tested for functioning by firing three rounds. USGI parts and bolts were used extensively in Federal Ordnance rifles through at least serial number 88XX. In 1989, Federal Ordnance renamed the rifle the *M14SA* and *M14CSA*. Rifles in the 93XX serial range and higher have modified receivers designed to accept Chinese-made bolts, barrels, and other parts owing to a shortage of original USGI components. Approximately 51,000 complete Federal Ordnance M14 rifles and 60,000 or more receivers were manufactured before production was halted in late 1991.

La France Specialties M14K

The M14K is a commercial version of the M14 designed and built by Timothy F. LaFrance of La France Specialties of San Diego, California, most using forged receivers produced by Smith Enterprise of Tempe, Arizona. This rifle has a custom-made short barrel with a custom-made flash suppressor, shortened operating rod, and employs a unique gas tube system. Fully automatic versions have a removable flash suppressor. Semi-automatic versions (of which very few were made) have a silver-brazed flash hider to comply with the requirement that Title I firearms have a 16" barrel. Most M14Ks employ the M60 gas tube system. Some late-model M14Ks employ a custom-designed and manufactured gas system. Both are intended to control the rate of fire in fully automatic mode. The rear sight is a custom-made National Match type aperture, and the front sight is a custom-made narrow blade, wing-protected sight to take advantage of the additional accuracy afforded by the special barrel.

The stocks and handguards on M14Ks are shortened versions of the GI birch or walnut stock, but make use of the original front ferrule. The front sling mount is relocated slightly to rear, to accommodate the shortened stock. Most handguards are of the solid, fiberglass variety (albeit shortened), but a limited number were made with shortened wood handguards. The steel buttplate was deleted in favor of a rubber recoil pad, which greatly reduces perceived recoil. A limited number of M14Ks were manufactured with the BM-59

Alpine / Para folding stock. These too had the shortened stocks and handguards, making for an extremely compact package especially suited to vehicular and airborne operations. A couple of M14Ks were built for SEAL Team members using the tubular folding stock assembly on a cut-down M14E2 stock found on some of the Team's full-size M14s prior to adoption of the Sage International EBR stock for M14 applications. These are by far one of the rarest variants of the M14K.

Norinco

The Chinese firm Norinco manufactures two versions of the M14 rifle known as the M14S or M305. These rifles have been banned from importation (1989 for all Polytech rifles) and (1994 for Norinco rifles) to the U.S., due to a Clinton era prohibition on Chinese made firearms. They are commonly sold and are popular in Canada for hunting and target shooting.

Polytech Industries

Polytech Industries of China made an unlicensed version of the M14 rifle known as the M14S. Polytechs, unlike Norinco rifles, were all banned in the 1989 firearm importation ban by the President George HW Bush administration.

Smith Enterprise, Inc

Smith Enterprise Inc. was founded as Western Ordnance in 1979 by Richard Smith in Mesa, Arizona and the company made numerous types of rifles, but specialized in the M1 Garand and M14. In 1993, Western Ordnance reformed as Smith Enterprise and has built and rebuilt numerous M14 rifles for the US Military and the militaries of Colombia, Canada and other nations.

The U.S. Department of Defense has contracted Smith Enterprise to build and modify M14 rifles for use by soldiers, Marines and sailors in Iraq and Afghanistan. Smith Enterprise played a major part in the M14 rifle modernization projects for various US military units which resulted in the development of the U.S. Navy Mark 14 Enhanced Battle Rifle. The company's history included originally making forged receivers for M14 rifles and briefly switching to investment casting. Smith stopped making receivers for a few years, but reentered the market with receivers machined from bar stock in 2002.

In 2003 Smith Enterprise Inc. created its version of the M14 Enhanced Battle Rifle known as the MK14 Mod 0, type SEI. The rifle used a medium heavy weight 18.0" barrel and was used as a basis to create the US Navy's Mark 14 Mod 0 with Springfield Armory, Inc. being tasked to supply the necessary machinery in cooperation with the Naval Surface Warfare Center Crane Division. SEI builds an improved M14 gas cylinder as a component of their specialized rifles and a part for the military to upgrade older rifles. The gas cylinder is assigned the NATO Stock Number: NSN 1005-00-790-8766.

Springfield Armory

Springfield Armory, Inc. of Geneseo, Ill., produces a semi-automatic-only version of the M14 rifle. The standard rifle is known as the M1A. The company produces several variations of the basic rifle with different stocks, barrel weights, barrel lengths, and other optional features. The Springfield M1A and its model variants have been widely distributed in the U.S. civilian market and have seen use by various law enforcement agencies in the U.S. Springfield Armory, Inc. also produce the SOCOM series and the Scout Squad Rifle, based on the short-barreled version of the M14. The SOCOM 16 comes with provisions to mount a red dot sight and the SOCOM II adds railed handguards to the

package. Springfield Armory's M21 tactical is a civilian version of the M21 Sniper Weapon System currently in use by the U.S. military.

Gallery

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  A U.S. soldier demonstrates shooting an M14 rifle to Iraqi Highway Patrol (IHP) police officers during training in Iraq, 2006.
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  Sailors, 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit, enter the reeds on the edge of Lake Tharthar in Iraq to conduct cordon and search operations July 15, 2007.
- 
  A U.S. soldier scans for activity during a combat patrol in Afghanistan, 2009.
- 
  A soldier with an M14 equipped with a Sage M14ALCS chassis stock.
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  Two Sea-Air-Land (SEAL) team members, one equipped with an AN-PAQ-1 laser target DESIGNATOR, right, the other armed with an M14 rifle, assume a defensive position

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  Battle of Hamo Village During the Tet Offensive. US Marines and ARVN troops defend a position against enemy attack. Photo taken circa January 1968.
- 
  Soldiers in a Niger army unit stand in formation while a dignitary visits their outpost during Operation Desert Shield. The men are armed with M14 rifles.