

NEWBIE GUIDE TO ASSEMBLING THE OPTIMUM GUN CLEANING KIT

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INTRODUCTION:

There are several retail cleaning kits available on the market. All of which are available with a combination of good, not so good, worse, and ideal or great products for you to use. I've written this guide to help you navigate directly to select items that are good for any shooters best assembled gun cleaning / Armorer's Kit

The problem with all cleaning kits is that there is no single gun cleaning kit that comes with everything you would need and want in your own gun cleaning kit. Some manufactures make better rods, some make superior cleaning solvents, and some make good jags. No one manufacturer makes the best of everything. Therefore you will want to slowly assemble your own optimum gun cleaning kit with the best of the best products and tools made by a variety of specialty manufacturers.

Your basic gun cleaning kit should include:

- *Cleaning Rods – caliber specific*
- *Variety of Cleaning Jags – caliber specific*
- *Variety of Cleaning Patches – caliber specific*
- *Cleaning Solvents*
- *Carbon Removers*
- *Bore Polish*
- *Variety of Gun Oils, Grease and Lubricants*
- *Picking Tools, Brushes, & Chamber Mops*
- *Bore Guides – caliber specific*
- *Some Essential Basic Gunsmith's Tools*



Pro-Shot

Gunslick

Hoppes No.9

Average retail starter gun cleaning kits

Between these 3 kits: **Pro-Shot** has the best rod & patches; **Gunslick** has the best solvent & oil; And I can't say **Hoppes No. 9** has anything better to offer.

CLEANING RODS AND BORE GUIDES:

Bore Guides:

You may consider using a bore guide to help protect your rifles chamber when inserting your cleaning rod. They are also helpful for applying solvents and polish to your cleaning patches with the aid of an access window on the side of the bore guide.

Sinclair makes great quality no mar polymer bore guides that are caliber specific for all kinds of rifle types. **Gunslick**, **Pro-Shot**, and **Wheeler** each make good AR-15 and AR-10 bore guides that are inexpensive.



Wheeler AR-15 Bore Guide



Sinclair AR-15 Bore Guide

If you have a bolt-action rifle you may want to pick up an inexpensive **Gunslick** or **Tipton** universal bore guide.



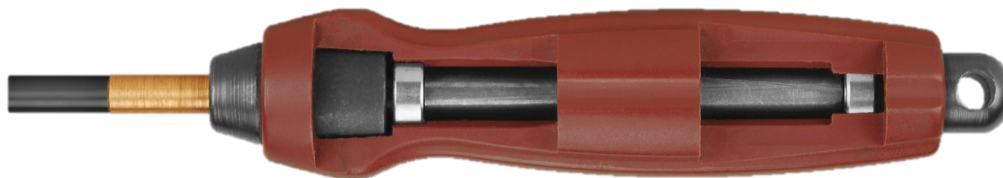
Gunslick Universal Bore Guide for Bolt Action rifles

The bore guide is the first line of defense to protect your chamber and barrel from the jag and cleaning rod. It helps keep the rod straight as it travels into the chamber and throughout the length of your barrel protecting you from a slight miss in your angle of entry that could cause you to gouge your jag against the inside of your barrel and damaging the rifling.

Cleaning Rods:

Not all guns are the same and not all cleaning rods are the same. Cleaning rods come in every caliber and barrel length. Ideally, you may want to have a variety of one-piece cleaning rods for the various calibers and barrel lengths that you own. You will discover that a 32" .20 CAL rod that works for your Mossberg .22 rifle, does not work well for your 16" AR-15 carbine barrel. Therefore you may end up needing different length cleaning rods.

When you buy a cleaning rod, you want to make sure the handle has a ball bearing movement with a good smooth rotating spin to it. As the rod goes in and out of your barrel, you want the rifling of your barrel to spin the rod in your handle as you push and pull. So a good smooth handle spin is essential.



Internal Ball Bearing Handel that allows the rod to spin smoothly in your hand



Make sure you select an appropriate length rod for your weapon. If you have a 20" barrel on your AR-10, you don't want to make the mistake of buying a .30 CAL/20" cleaning rod that will ultimately be slightly too short for you to use in your weapons barrel. Remember that you have to account for the distance of the entire upper receiver including the barrel, chamber, bore guide, and the edge of your upper receiver so that both the handle and the movement of the rod are not impeded by the upper receiver or bore guide.

You should choose a one-piece rod that is ideally made of brass because brass is a soft metal that is less likely to damage your steel barrel. Stainless steel is okay too as long as you are extra careful not to gouge the inside your barrel. Although some avid shooters argue that nylon coated rods are safer to use in your barrels, I am of the opinion that you should avoid the nylon coated rods because solvents can quickly break down the polymers in the nylon coating and the material can shed in your barrel. If you want to spend money on a new rod every year or so, I say go for the nylon coated rods. If you want a rod that will last you 15 years, get a brass or stainless steel **J Dewey**.

J Dewey makes an excellent one-piece cleaning rod in every caliber and length that you would need. **Pro-Shot**, **Bore-Tech Tipton**, and **Montana X-Treme** also make excellent cleaning rods.



J Dewey Brass Cleaning Rod

Avoid using any of the cheap aluminum collapsible rods that you might get with almost every gun cleaning kit such as the Hoppes Number 9 cleaning kit below. Collapsible rods in general should be avoided. There is however one exception.

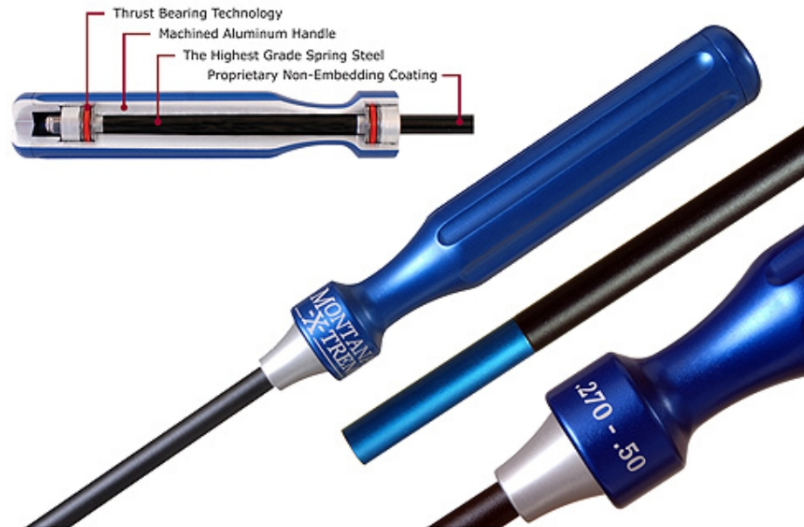
Average cheap aluminum collapsible cleaning rod that comes in the Hoppes kit



MONTANA X-TREME

Montana X-Treme Rods are well built, they have smooth handles. They can be purchased separately as a one-piece full-length rod only.

Montana X-Treme makes a superior collapsible four-piece female threaded rod that is only available for purchase along with the .22 CAL and .30-50 CAL Professional Cleaning Kits.



You don't always want to be carrying your one-piece cleaning rod with you to the range. Having one or two good collapsible stainless steel rods in your range kit is a great idea. I highly recommend the very first gun cleaning kit item(s) that you purchase to be: two (2) **Montana X-Treme Professional Gun Cleaning Kits**: One (1) .22 CAL kit; and One (1) .30-.50 CAL kit. Each kit comes complete with solvent, lubricant, various cleaning jags, and standard nylon brushes and picks. The cleaning solvent and lubricants are not particularly interesting to me, but the two (2) **Montana X-Treme collapsible stainless steel cleaning rods** are the best collapsible cleaning rods you will find. They have excellent ball bearing handles that glide smoothly as you work the cleaning rod. They are made of thick high quality stainless steel that has extended threading to provide a secure straight rod when fully assembled. *These collapsible rods cannot be purchased separately from the cleaning kits*, so you must purchase both of the Montana X-Treme Professional cleaning kits in order to get both the .30 CAL and .22 CAL collapsible cleaning rods.



Montana X-Treme Professional Cleaning Kit (Available in .22 CAL & .30-.50 CAL)

Purchasing the Montana X-Treme Professional Cleaning kits come with the added benefit of gaining some nice plastic boxes to organize your jags, brushes and pick tools. Additionally they contain a variety of standard jags, nylon brushes, and metal picking tools that you are sure to put to use while cleaning your weapons.



Montana X-Treme indeed makes the very best collapsible cleaning rod, but I think their solvents are too strong with heavy fumes. I prefer KG Industries Solvents and Lubricants. I also like M-Pro 7 as a solvent. However the Montana X-Treme jags and extra accessories that come in these kits are all good and useful.

CLEANING JAGS:

For precision rifle barrels, you'll want to buy a set of **Parker Hale Style Jags** made by J Dewey. Available in .17/.20 CAL and .30 CAL. These brass or stainless steel jags can be purchased directly from J Dewey with either male or female threading. I suggest that you get all brass, one of each thread types, in both .17/.20 CAL (5.56/.223) and .30 CAL (.308). That's (4) Jags: Two sizes, one each male and female. You may find that you need to borrow a Rod from someone sometime and you may discover the borrowed rod receives a different thread than you need.



Male Threaded Brass Parker Hale Style Jag

The Parker Hale Style Jag is designed so you can wrap the cleaning patch around

it and it will allow you to push and pull the jag throughout the length of the barrel while keeping the cleaning patch between the jag and the inside of the barrel. The jag can be used with a new patch for repeated attempts to scrub the inside of the barrel with several strokes using either solvent, carbon remover, or bore polish.

Parker Hale Style Jag wrapped with a cleaning patch

Other common cleaning rod attachments you may want to get are caliber specific bore mops, nylon bristle bore cleaning jags. Bore mops also known as chamber mops are cotton covered metal jags that can be used to wipe out your weapon's chamber and the entrance to its bore. They should be used with caution so you don't mar the inside of the barrel with the metal stem of the mop. A bore mop should be used on a very short cleaning rod that is designed for a pistol because the bore mop is not meant to go into the barrel. The shorter pistol rod is absolutely necessary to maintain control of the bore mop. The nylon bristle jag can be used occasionally with your full-length rod to help scrub out any fouling and carbon build up during an occasional deep clean of the barrel.



Bore Mops, Chamber Mops, Nylon Bore Jags



*Use a short pistol-cleaning rod to carefully swab out the chamber
(A bore guide should not be used during this process)*

BORE SNAKES:

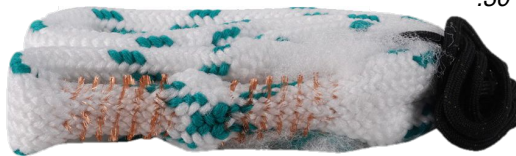
Hoppe's makes a great must have tool for your cleaning kit. The Hoppes Rifle Bore-Snake size .17, .22 - .223 Cal is excellent for passing through your bore. These are also available in larger .30 Cal and Shotgun diameters. These can be stored in a zipper pouch and kept in your range bag.



.20 Cal Bore snake



.30 Cal Bore snake



12GA Bore snake

Otis makes a variety of specialty cleaning kits that come in a compact zipper pouch that is lightweight and easy to brake out of your bench kit to take with you in a range bag or a hunting backpack.



Deluxe Rifle Pistol Cleaning Kit



Tactical 5.56 & 9mm Cleaning Kit

CLEANING PATCHES:

Buy high quality cleaning patches. Some patches can be less absorbent or they shed excessive lint or fibers. J Dewey and Gunslick make some decent cleaning patches, but I think **Pro-Shot** makes great cleaning patches.



You want to buy various sizes of Pro-Shot cleaning patches from. 17/.20 CAL to .45/.58 CAL. Even if you don't own a .45 CAL weapon, the larger patches are useful for wiping down various nooks and surface areas of your weapons. They can also be cut down to size if you happen to run out of your smaller caliber patches.

CLEANING SOLUTIONS & LUBRICANTS:

There are several solvents and lubricants that I recommend for various cleaning applications.

For general cleaning and lubrication of AR platform rifles, I use Frog Lube in the upper receiver, BCG and chamber area. I recommend a container each of **Frog Lube paste** and **Frog Lube liquid gel**.



Frog Lube Paste

Frog Lube Liquid Gel

I use the Frog Lube liquid gel to penetrate into the BCG where the bolt and the firing pin are held within the bolt carrier. Then I like to apply the Frog Lube paste all over the exterior of the bolt carrier as well as the inside of the upper receiver wherever the BCG touches metal. I also apply the paste to the charging handle along its areas of travel.



For heavy cleaning of excessively dirty parts, I recommend a large spray bottle of **Frog Lube Solvent** and a large spray bottle of **M Pro 7 Gun Cleaner**. I use the large spray bottles to spray-down greasy parts as needed. For example: I'll remove the BCG and use either the M Pro 7 or Frog Lube Solvent spray bottle to really wash down the BCG. Then I'll wipe it clean and dry, lube the inside with the liquid gel Frog Lube, and finally paste the outside with Frog Lube before reinstalling it.



*Frog Lube Solvent
Spray Bottle*



*M-Pro 7 Gun Cleaner
Spray Bottle*

For everything else, including cleaning your precision bore, lubricating your trigger system and other moving parts, I recommend **KG Industries firearm related products.**

You can purchase KG Industries products directly from the manufacturers website: <http://www.kgcoatings.com>

Your gun cleaning kit should include at least the first three products below:

- **(1st) KG-1 Carbon Remover (4oz bottle)**
- **(2nd) KG-2 Bore Polish (4oz bottle)**
- **(3rd) KG-4 Gun Oil (2oz bottle)**
- (4th) KG-5 Trigger Lube (2oz bottle)
- (5th) KG-12 Big Bore Solvent (4oz bottle)
- (6th) KG-410 Light Gun Oil (8oz bottle)



To get started you'll want to order one small bottle of each of the above KG products. Then later on you'll probably want to order the KG4 Gun Oil and KG1 Carbon Remover in larger size quantities such as by the pint, quart, or gallon.





When cleaning your precision barrel, first apply the KG1 carbon remover down the barrel with a few full strokes back and forth along the length of the barrel. Re-apply to a new patch and repeat several more full strokes. Continue to re-apply with new patches until the patches show that the barrel is clean.

Next apply the KG2 Bore Polish down the barrel with 20 full strokes back and forth along the length of the barrel.

Use the KG4 Gun Oil to lightly lubricate precision bolts, action, metal parts, springs, and surfaces that should be always kept lubricated.

Once in a while you're going to accidentally drop your well-oiled bolt in the dirt. On that day you are going to be glad you are prepared with an emergency spray can of **CRC Electronics Cleaner**, Break Cleaner, or Carburetor Cleaner on hand. Use this to thoroughly spray down your bolt or BCG to clean off all the oil infused with dirt, sand, and rock. This will clean off all the particulate abrasives that have infiltrated and contaminated your lubricant allowing you to start over and re-insert your bolt or BCG with a fresh clean coat of KG4 Gun Oil or Frog Lube Paste. It's happened to me more than once.

Tipton

Makes a set of Nylon Picking Tools that are good to get. The Montana X-Treme Kit comes with Stainless Steel picking tools, but having these nylon picks for special areas is a good idea.



If you are thinking about assembling your own firearm projects, here are a few more bottles of stuff that I would recommend to have on your workbench at home.

- **MasterPro Super Lithium EP Moly grease** for installing AR barrel nuts
- **Blue Loctite** for use as needed on threads, gas blocks, and scope mounts
- **Militec-1 Synthetic Weapons Lubricant** for internal 1911 & Pistol parts
- **RIG Universal Gun Grease** for internal parts needing long-term light grease
- **RIG +P Stainless Steel Lube** for stainless steel parts
- **Triple Action G96 Complete Gun Treatment** for using as a first-time-one-time overall lubricant of the action. Spray down a brand new Bolt, BCG, charging handle, and the inside of any Action, or Upper Receiver and Chamber to give a brand new gun a good light lubrication to function test and test fire the weapon until it's first cleaning

STARTING ESSENTIAL TOOLS:

Borka Tool:

The one field tool kit that I never leave behind is my **Borka Tool ATD-EFK, Adjustable Torque Driver Extended Field Kit**. This USA Made kit contains essential bits and a patented leverage torque driver that will help you properly secure and torque screws. This kit is useful for scope mounts, rail mounts, and a multitude of other common applications on your average weapon system. It includes the most common hex inch, hex metric, torx, slotted, philips, and pozi bits all wrapped up in a TAB GEAR nylon pouch you can carry in your back pack or range bag.



The Borka Tool ATD-EFK can be purchased directly from the manufacturer website:

<http://www.shooterstools.com/Pages/ATD/atdkits.html>

Gunsmith Screwdriver Set:

Weaver and Wheeler both make a nice standard gunsmith's handheld screw driver kit with multiple bit tips for various size phillips, slotted, torx, and hex bits that both duplicates and expands on the bits that come with your Borka Tool.



Weaver Gunsmith's Deluxe Screwdriver Kit



Wheeler Pro Plus Gunsmith's Screwdriver Kit

This is a driver set for your bench or toolbox that is essential for gun owners. I tried the Weaver and I like the feel and contour of the Weaver screwdriver. I must tell you that my Weaver screwdriver bit receiving tip separated from the shaft that secures the stem to the handle. It's a poor design, I think of the driver itself. It was a simple fix. I used a little JB Weld to re-secure it and it has since served me well for many years.

Mountz ATS:

I also highly recommend a **Mountz Adjustable Torque Screwdriver** that can start from either zero or 12 inch pounds (in/lb) and can be adjusted to at be least 35 (in/lb). This is supplemental to your Borka Adjustable Torque Driver Extended Field Kit.



Both Wheeler and Weaver also make a torque screwdriver but I've never used them. I ordered my torque screwdriver used off of eBay. I got a Mountz calibrated and adjustable from 0-45 in/lb. Make sure to double check the unit of measurement to be certain you are getting one that measures in/lb as apposed to

in/oz.

Multi-Tool:

Choose a good multi-tool such as a Leatherman or a Gerber that has pliers, carbon scraper, slotted, philips, hex and a blade. **Brownells** sells a great AR15 multi-tool. **Leatherman** makes the **Mut** model among several others.



Leatherman MUT EOD Multi-Tool



Brownells AR15 Multitasker Tool

ADDITIONAL ESSENTIAL TOOLS:

AR Armorer's Wrench:

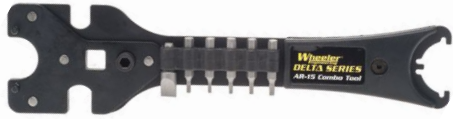
It's well established on the internet that a little company called **Gem State Armory** once made the best Armorer's wrench. A friend of mine has one and it is impressive. I wish I could get my hands on one, but unfortunately they have not manufactured it for several years now. I have contacted the owner of GSA, and was told that they may go back into production with them someday, but as of now they are no longer making them. Apparently, I am on a long list of folks waiting to be notified from GSA about a future production run of the beloved tool.

In the interim, like me, you'll need to settle on another AR Armorer's wrench. Upon the advise of another friend, I found that a \$20 **generic powder coated AR Armorer's wrench** available on eBay works quite well at not scratching up the buffer tube and castle nut.



Good leverage and no marring of the rifle is the key to a successful wrench. I

have not had to test the limits of my generic wrench yet. Every wrench, including the GSA wrench has its limit of force. On that note, it's always good to get a second AR Armorer's wrench from another manufacturer just as a backup. There are several manufacturers of this type of tool. **Magpul** makes a really nice and solid AR Armorer's wrench. Do not waste your time with the Wheeler Armorer's Wrench.



Just say no thank you to the Wheeler Ultra Series Wrench



Magpul Armorer's Wrench AR15/M4

Ballpeen Hammer:

A small **8oz Ballpeen Hammer** is sometimes needed for both disassembly and assembly of various firearms.



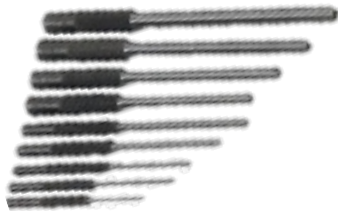
Small Jewelers Mallet:

In some cases, you need to hammer on delicate finished surfaces of a firearm. **Hobby Lobby** sells a great small yellow or turquoise jewelers mallet with a brass face on one striking side and a plastic face on the other striking side.



Standard Flat/Rounded Tip Roll Pin Punch Set:

You should have a Standard Roll Pin Punch Set with either flat tips or rounded tips for installing trigger pins and roll pins as necessary on firearms.



Specialty AR Roll Pin Starter Set:

For the AR platform, you'll want to get a Specialty AR Roll Pin Starter Set w/cut out in the tip to hold a pin in place as you get it started. **Midway USA**, **Brownells**, and **Amazon** are the three best places to find these tools.



AR Bolt Catch Starter Tool:

If you are working on AR's be sure to get a **AR bolt catch roll pin starter tool** that is designed to fit the close clearance and long reach to the bolt catch release pin hole located on the receiver. Using anything else will surely cause visible damage to the receiver. **KAK Industry** makes the best one called **Walt's Tool**. Brownells also makes one that is inferior to the KAK Industry tool.



*KAK Industry
Walt's Tool
Bolt Catch Starter Tool*



Brownells Bolt Catch Roll Pin Punch



Armorer's Bench Block:

Get a **Hockey Puck Style** Armorer's bench block. Which is actually a real hockey puck with a center drilled out. HK Parts makes one with their brand logo on it. You can find generic homemade creations on eBay. You can get a hockey puck and make your own with your favorite team logo.



*Armorer's Bench Block
HK Parts*

Also Wheeler makes a similar item that is not an actual hockey puck. The Wheeler bench block has several layered cut outs and holes for holding barrels, pistol frames, and various size pins and parts. The Wheeler is great for pistols, but the simple hockey puck is a better tool for use with most firearm assemblies. It's made of a softer rubber where the Wheeler is a heavier density polymer. The softer hockey puck serves well to protect the finish of and support a receiver while hammering pins into position.



*Wheeler Universal
Bench Block*

Carry Case / Tool Box:

You'll need a case to put all this in. I use the MTM Case Guard Tactical Range Case. It comes with attachments to cradle any rifle as well as an AR-15 mag well stand.



OTHER USEFUL TOOLS:

Supercool: Liquid Nitrogen Substitute:

Liquid nitrogen is not a chemical element that you can obtain or store easily. Therefore you should always keep a small can of air used for dusting off electronics. Dusting sprays contain a refrigerant fluorocarbon that is in liquid form as a compressed gas. When you hold the can upside down and engage the nozzle, the compressed gas pushes the liquid fluorocarbon out through the applicator straw to spill onto something that you need to supercool. As the fluorocarbon liquid begins to boil and evaporate off at room temperature, the energy released in the chemical change of state, causes whatever it touches to supercool. If you need to remove a stuck screw where you've twisted/stripped off the head, the supercool process will help you freeze and shatter out the stuck screw.



Sight Adjustment Tools:

Craftsman/Sears makes a slotted "Finger Bit" mini screwdriver that makes a great sight adjustment tool for Red Dots and scopes.



Gerber makes a Mini Dime multi-tool that is also great for sight adjustments.



A standard A2 front sight adjustment tool as well as any proprietary sight adjustment tools you may need to fit your weapon sights should find their way into your range bag or cleaning toolbox as well.



TAKEDOWN TOOLS:

If you own any firearms that require special takedown tools, you will want to make sure you have the necessary items in your cleaning kit. For example, you may need a 1911 or a Glock takedown tool.



Wilson Combat 1911 Takedown Tool



Glock Takedown Tool

OTHER STUFF:

Buy the large box of Q-Tips for cleaning nooks and crannies.



Buy a small box of Kim Tech Kim Wipes for cleaning optics lenses and safety glasses.



Viewdoo is a product from a company called vantifog. It's available directly from the manufacture's website: <http://www.vantifog.com/shop.html>
Viewdoo is a superior lens-cleaning product that can be used on sport optics without lens coatings as well as safety glasses and prescription glasses.



You should have A good pair of needle nose pliers on your bench or in your toolbox.



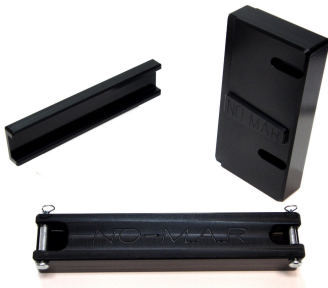
Tipton makes an excellent gun vise that can be used for cleaning and working on your rifles. It's called Tipton's Best Gun Vise. Getting one of these for your bench is not a bad idea.



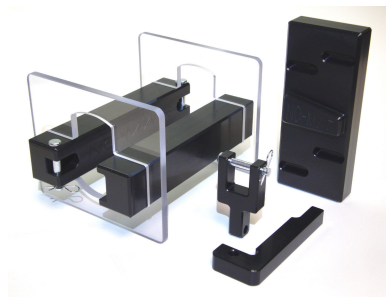
Geissele Automatics makes the AR15/M4 **Reaction Rod**. Also available in an AR10 version. These are essential tools for installing Barrels, Gas Blocks, Rails and Muzzle Devices on AR uppers.



Getting a set of No Mar Vice Blocks for both the AR15 and the AR10 is a good idea for your bench too. These can be purchased from eBay.



AR 10 Vice Block Set for Upper and Lower



AR15 Vice Block Set for Upper and Lower

Geissele Automatics also makes a reaction block that holds your AR15/AR10 lower by the buffer tube.



Geissele Automatics comes through again with an essential Gas Block Roll Pin Starter and a Gas Block Pin Punch Set

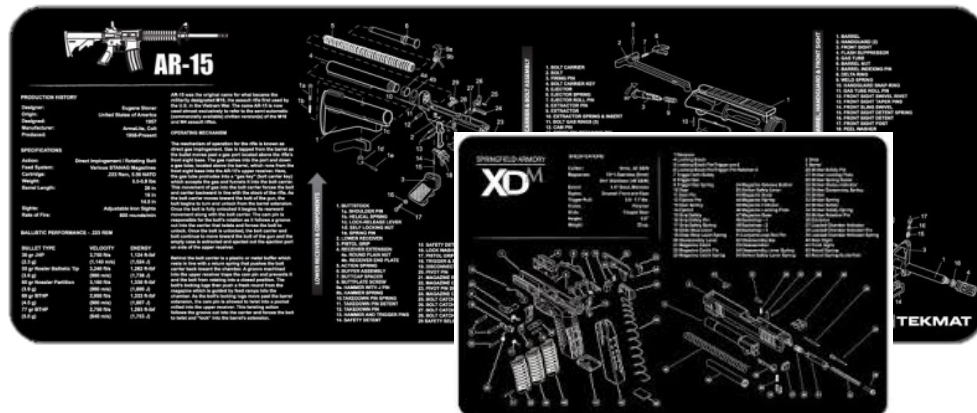


Geissele Automatics Gas Block Roll Pin Starter



Geissele Automatics Gas Block Pin Punch Set

Getting a **TEKMAT** for your rifle and pistol is also a good idea. It provides a soft place to work on your firearms as well as helps with parts identification when you are disassembling and reassembling parts as needed for care and maintenance.



There is a lot more stuff out there in the firearms world that gun enthusiasts can get for their own various weapons cleaning and maintenance needs. With the exception of the *Wheeler Pro Plus Screwdriver Kit*, the *Tipton Cleaning Rods*, and the *Leatherman MUT EOD Multi-Tool*, I personally own and use all of the items I have recommended in this guide. Most of it fits in my MTM Guard Case Tactical Range Box. There are a few items like the Vise Blocks, the Best Gun Vise, and the Tekmats that I leave on my bench. And of course my Borka Tool and Multi-Tool live in my range bag with my ears, eyes, batteries, targets, and staple gun.

It's my opinion that the items I've recommended in this guide are the best in each of their class and together they complete the most optimum cleaning kit you can own. Building the most optimal cleaning kit for your self will take some time and money. You should start here: https://www.westernpowders.com/cleaning_kits

If you are a product developer or manufacturer and you would like to send me a new great product to try, please feel free to contact me at M. Abbott 1560-1 Newbury Road, PMB#245, Newbury Park, CA 91320 or sales@torqueprecision.com
Photographs in this paper were peeled from the internet, if you believe that you own the rights to any of the photographs or logos used herein and you wish for me to remove the identified photographs, please let me know and I will comply.