

Rifle basics - AR15 Rev. September 2025

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Introduction

The AR-15 is probably one of the best-known and most modular weapon platforms in the world. Designed in the late 1950s by Eugene Stoner for the ArmaLite company, it was conceived from the start as a break from the heavier military rifles of the time. Its adoption by the U.S. Army under the name **M16** marked the beginning of a long technical and tactical evolution.

History and Evolution

From the beginning, the rifle stood out thanks to the use of aircraft-grade aluminum and polymers, materials that made it lighter than traditional steel weapons. Over the years, it underwent numerous improvements:

- Feed ramps (improved feeding ramps) for better reliability.
- Heavy barrel for sustained fire capability.
- **Detachable carry handle**, allowing easy installation of optics.
- **Rail systems** (Picatinny, M-Lok, etc.) giving shooters the ability to add lights, lasers, grips, optics, and other accessories.

This process of continuous improvement accompanied its massive use by the U.S. military and, by extension, by most Western armed forces.

Modularity and Popularization

One of the AR platform's greatest strengths is its modularity. It allows easy changes of barrel, caliber, or configuration. This modularity, combined with large-scale industrial production, democratized the AR-15 in both military and civilian spheres.

Beyond the standard 5.56×45 mm version, many variants exist, including:

- Gas systems replaced by a **short-stroke piston** (e.g., HK416, Sig MCX).
- Variants in different calibers: .308 (AR-10), .300 Blackout, 7.62×39 mm, and even
 9 mm for civilian, sporting, or law enforcement use.

Today

Having become the most modular rifle on the market, the AR-15 is at once a reference military weapon, a platform for technical innovation, and a widely adopted tool among sport shooters. Its history illustrates the evolution of modern firearms: lighter, more adaptable, and designed to meet the varied needs of its users.

Elements of basic training

Safety

4 Fundamental Firearms Safety Rules

Weapon ⇒ Loaded

Accidents often happen with guns that people thought were empty.

Muzzle ⇒ Aware

Because the firearm is loaded, my muzzle is always in a safe direction.

Finger ⇒ Off

Because I can be surprised, my finger stays off the trigger until I want to fire.

Target ⇒ Responsible

I am sure of my target, the environment around it, and the consequences of my shot.

On the person, the rifle is loaded and ready.

When I put my weapon down (for transport or storage), I unload it because I don't know who might pick it up or what they might do with it.

Manipulation

3 fundamental manipulations

- Press check
- Loading
- Unloading

Keep your firearm ready to fire

- Reload
- Reload with retention
- Immediate action
- Remedial action
- Maintenance

Shooting

Stances

They describe the shooter's body language.

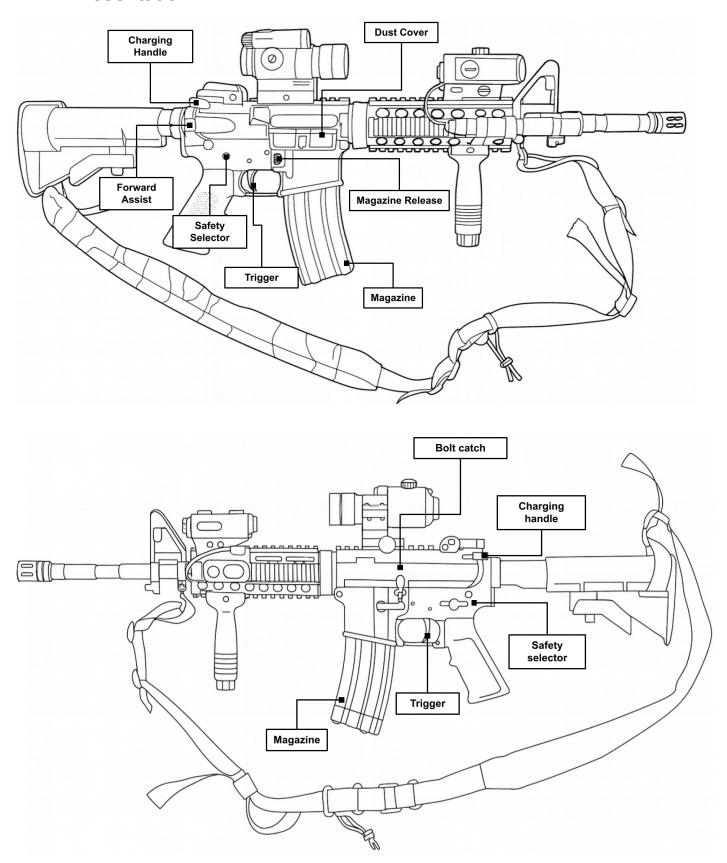
The 5 Fundamental Principles of Shooting

- 1. Grip
- 2. Stance
- 3. Aiming
- 4. Breathing
- 5. Trigger squeeze

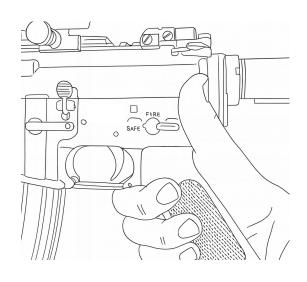
7 Chronological steps of shooting

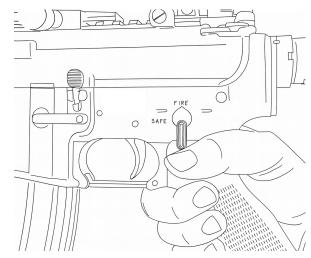
- 1. Positive ID
- 2. Elevation
- 3. Aiming
- 4. Finger-Trigger
- 5. Press
- 6. Analysis
- 7. Scanning

Presentation



Engage and disengage the safety





Safety on

Safety off



Weapon on safe



Rifle shouldered = Safety off

Stances



Patrol



Weapon in hand



Low ready



High ready



Shooting

3 fundamental manipulations

1 Press check



Check if a round is present in the chamber.



Inspect the magazine.

Close the dust cover.

2 Loading

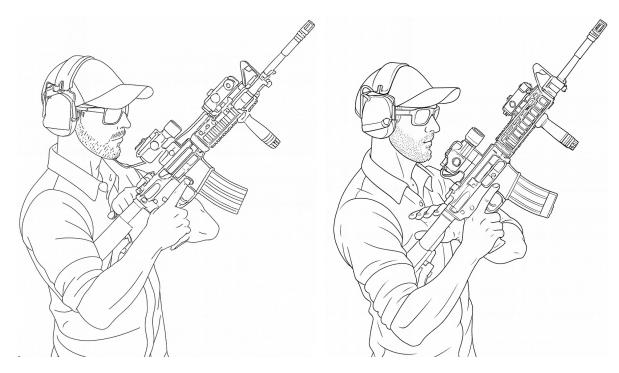






Insert the magazine firmly.

Check that it is locked in place by applying a counter-pull.



Cycle the bolt.

3 Unloading



Remove the magazine.



Place your hand under the magazine well and **cover** the ejection port with your fingers.



Open the bolt and **let the round drop** into your hand.

Important note: Perform a press check after removing the cartridges to ensure that the chamber is empty and the magazine has been removed from the weapon.

Immediate action



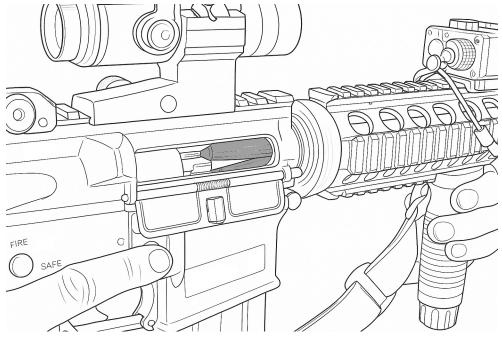
The firearm fails to fire.

Ensure the magazine is fully seated.



Point the ejection port toward the ground. **Cycle** the bolt.

Remedial Action



Example of a double feed:
Two cartridges are blocking the chamber.



Lock the bolt to the rear.



Rip out the magazine.
The magazine is probably the cause of the malfunction.
It's best to get rid of it.

3 x RACK



Point the ejection port toward the ground. **Rack** 3 times (fully releasing each time).

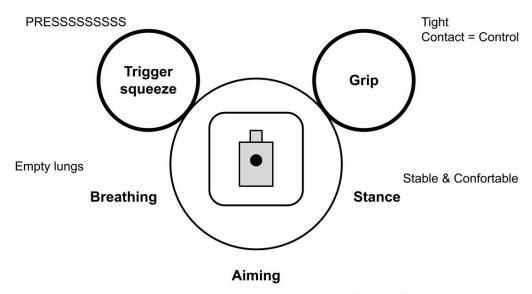


Insert a new magazine.



Load.

The 5 Fundamental Principles of Shooting



Irons sights: Front sight is sharp Red dots: Both eyes opened Scope: no shadow



Example of a correct firearm grip.

7 Chronological steps of shooting

1. Positive ID	Friend or Foe? Rules of engagement
2. Elevation	Sights to the eyes Safety off
3. Aiming	Distance Speed Point of aim
4. Finger-Trigger	Prep the trigger
5. Shoot	P-R-E-S-S-S
6. Analysis	Have I succeeded? No? Send again
7. Scanning	- Foes? - Friends? - Chief? - Status?

The 7 Skills to Train

Acronym: The 7D

Decide	Decide to engage with your firearm or with other means.
Discuss	Communicate with the opponent.
	De-escalate a situation.
Distance	Create distance from the opponent.
	Engage from afar.
Duck	Use cover or concealment.
Deploy	Fire while moving.
Defend	React to an opponent's attempt to seize your weapon.
Distribute	Fight multiple opponents at once.

Contribution

If you want to contribute or access the original document, please reach out to us at:

https://chocolate-warfare.com

info@chocolate-warfare.com