

## WEAPON GUIDE

# AK-47

SMALL ARMS REVIEW TEAM

### SELF-LOADING SERVICE RIFLE (7.62x39MM)



WASR-10 with wire folding stock.

Mikhail Kalashnikov's AK-47 (c. 1947) and its variants are by far the most produced rifles due to their simplicity, reliability, robustness, firepower, and ease of cleaning and repair.

The AKM (c. 1959) is the most produced variant and uses a lighter sheet metal receiver rather than the machined steel receiver of the AK-47. The machined steel receiver is prone to cracking unless they are cold hammer forged as on Arsenal's SAM7 series rifles, thus are generally less durable than the lighter AKM receivers.

Whereas the AK-47 and AKM are chambered for the 7.62x39mm round, the AK-74 (c. 1974) is chambered for the 5.45x39mm round which is lighter, flatter shooting, and has less recoil, but lacks penetration due to the faster and lighter bullets being prone to tumbling, thus is widely considered inferior to the larger caliber 7.62x39mm round when used with steel core

bullets which have far better barrier penetrating characteristics.

The 5.45x39mm round was introduced in response the 5.56x45mm round the US Army started using in their M16A1 (AR-15) rifles in the Vietnam War which use small, high velocity bullets that are prone to tumbling/fragmentation.

The 100 series Kalashnikov rifles are essentially just AK-74 type rifles (with a 90 degree gas port) available in 7.62x39mm, 5.45x39mm and 5.56x45mm with greater parts compatibility.

Twenty round magazines are less likely to snag than the 30 round variety. Steel magazines are the strongest and most durable, though Bulgarian Circle 10 polymer magazines are reliable and much lighter.

Short barrel variants use non-standard components, have a lot of muzzle blast/flash and reduced bullet velocity/energy, so are not recommended. Fit a folding stock to a standard rifle

if you want a rifle that is easier to discreetly transport.

The AK selector/safety lever is poorly located, which can be addressed by fitting a Mark VI Enhanced AK Selector Safety Lever from Krebs Custom; while the Fuller rear sight mod (from Rifle Dynamics) will make aiming easier and faster.

The semi-auto Century Arms WASR-10 (a Romanian made AKM variant) has a chrome lined bore and chamber to aid corrosion resistance and the extraction of fired cartridge cases, which is available with a wire side folding stock which folds to the right side of the receiver so it is not obstructed by an optical sight mount on the left side of the receiver. The minimalist wire stock is tough and makes an AK easier to conceal than those fitted with a large polymer side folding stock like the one on the AK-74M. Wrap it with paracord for comfort.

### PRIMARY ARMS SLX 3X MICROPRISM



The SLX 3X from Primary Arms is a superb general purpose telescopic sight for tactical use on assault rifles.

There is a variant with a bullet drop reticule (BDC) for the 7.62x39mm and .300 Blackout rounds (ACSS Raptor 7.62x39/300BO).

It is best attached to an AK via a side mount, ideally the two part mount from RS products: AK-310M Full Length (lower) and AKOT Trijicon ACOG Compact Mount (upper). It is lightweight but tough and allows for a lot of adjustment to correctly position the optic.

### RECOMMENDED ACCESSORIES

#### Manual

AK Handbook.  
[Blackheart International]

#### Log Book

Firearm Usage & Maintenance Log Book.  
[Blackheart International]

#### Cleaning Kit

Izhmash Cleaning Kit (7.62/5.45). [K-Var Corp.]

#### Firearm CLP

Beak Free CLP.  
[Safariland]

#### Broken Shell Extractor

7.62x39 Broken Shell Extractor.  
[C.J. Weapons Accessories]

#### AK Hi-Vis Front Sight

XS AK 24/7 Tritium Stripe.  
[XS Sights Systems]

#### Front Sight Tool

Magna-Matic AK47 Front Sight Tool. [Magna-Matic Defense]

#### Red Dot Sight

Aimpoint Micro H-1.  
[Aimpoint]

#### Dry Fire Rounds

Pachmayr A-Zoom Snap Caps.  
[Lyman Products Corporation]

#### Sling

Tactical Sling (TAS-AK).  
[Eagle Industries]

#### Ear Plugs

EarPro EP3 or EP4 [SureFire]

### SPECIFICATIONS

Weight: 3.47 kg (7.7 lb)

Length: 88 cm (35 in)

Barrel Length: 415 mm (16.3 in)

Action: gas operated

Magazine Capacity: 30 rounds

### HOT TIP

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