

30 Magazine Clip



COMPARISON, DIY, INFORMATIONAL, TACTICAL GEAR

First Spear TUBES and other things like TUBES

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Are you familiar with TUBES from First Spear? They are a great buckle. But expensive. So expensive that in my day job as a gear designer I pretty much consider them cost prohibitive except in the case of a custom built piece of gear. That really is to bad as I would love to use them more often.



First Spear TUBES 4" (split-bar) (left), DuraFlex Tactik Buckle 4" (center), Aspetto -KWIQ Clip (right). All with male and female sides mated.

Just in case you don't know

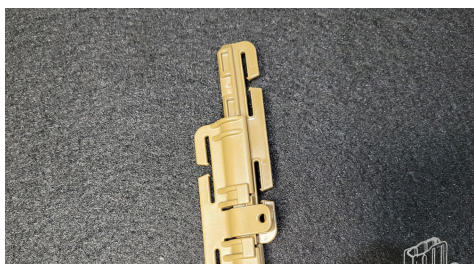
In case you are not familiar with TUBES they were developed by First Spear and produced (for First Spear) by ITW. They come in two lengths (widths might be a better way to look at it). 2" and 4". Normally you will find the 2" versions securing a quick detach shoulder strap on a plate carrier while you will find the longer 4" holding the cummerbund to the plate bag. Each of the two sizes are also available in a solid-bar and a split-bar (field repair) configuration. The split-bar allows you to slip the TUBE onto a loop of webbing (if configured correctly) after it is sewn down.



First Spear TUBES 4" (split-bar) with male and female sides separate.

Why are they good?

TUBES do a couple of things REALLY well. They can stabilize a piece of fabric (think of a cummerbund for a plate carrier) along an entire edge of that piece with only a single interface. They also offer an easy method of extracting ones self from a plate carrier. Simply pull out and up/down at the same time.



Tubes (split-bar) with male and female sides half engage.



Tubes Measurements



Tubes. Slight curve built in to ensure a tight fit

Other options

Most gear designers, gear DIY'ers, and gear-heads know of the First Spear TUBES. But, you may be interested to know there are other similarly functioning buckles. You might call them TUBES-Adjacent. All are acetal polymer construction and all are solid options with slight variations in the way they operate.



First Spear TUBES 4" (split-bar) (left), DuraFlex Tactik Buckle 4" (center), Aspetto -KWIQ Clip (right). All with male and female sides unmated.

The Tactik Buckle from DuraFlex

The DuraFlex Tactik buckle first came on the scene (for me) in 2018. It was being showcased at different industry tradeshows. Originally advertised as having 1", 1.5", 4" versions available. It then kind of went dark for a while. Then, all of a sudden it came available not to long ago. Well, the 4" version anyway. We still have yet to see the 1" or 1.5". Like the TUBES the Tactik buckle came in two configurations (other than size) solid-bar and split-bar (for field repair or installation after production of the host piece of gear). Both pieces are 4" tall. There are two main differences. 1) The Tactik buckles comes with the pull lanyard that is used to release the buckles. On the TUBES you normally have to make some kind of para-cord *pull* for this function. 2) the *gesture* used to release is different. On the TUBES you must pull out and either up or down. This releases the locking mechanism (No springs. Everything is molded) and the up/down slides the male side out of the female. On the Tactik buckle you only pull outward on the lan-

yard which releases the entire buckle. One isn't necessarily faster than the other as both releases are accomplished with a single motion. They just work a little different. I have never seen either system fail.



Tactik M/F engaged



Tactik Measurements



Tactik Buckle

The Aspetto KWIQ-Clip

The KWIQ-Clip from Aspetto is the most different and I haven't ever actually integrated them into a piece of gear. But I do have a few... because you never know. It also has no individual moving parts just like the others. Again, the release is managed by pulling on and deforming the acetal polymer material to release a latch. I believe you call this a "living latch". The KWIQ-Clip is a full inch taller than the other buckles referenced in this write-up. The reason being is that it allows you to interface the buckle to the gear via 3 pieces of 1" webbing. Each separated by 1". Sounds perfect for a 3-row skeletonized cummerbund. With the other two you have to be a little creative in your gear design as they both interface with the gear using 1.5" webbing. This usually isn't what you find on a cummerbund. So, the Aspetto KWIQ-Clip has an advantage here in helping your gear stay simple but I can't help but think a 5" tall buckle has a great chance of *jabbing* you in the ribs or pelvis when you bend or lean. Is the 1" difference really enough to matter? I don't know. But that is something to keep in mind when planning your next build. The manufacturer claims a 300 lbs Tensile Strength.



Aspetto M/F engaged



Aspetto Measurements



Aspetto Female Side

Where can I get them?

First Spear TUBES

You can now get TUBES direct from First Spear. This is fairly new. You used to have to be an approved gear producer. Beware that most of the time TUBES are sold as their individual separate components (Male and Female). You need to purchase both sides. Not always though.

[Direct link to 4" Female Split-Bar on First-Spear.com](#)

[4" TUBES Male/Female Split Bar on Agelitegear.com](#)

DuraFlex Tactik Buckle

[4" Tactik Buckle Split-Bar at WTFIdea.com](#)

[4" Tactik Buckle Split-Bar at 8492Nylonworks.com](#)

[4" Tactik Buckle Solid-Bar at StratusArmament.com](#)

Aspetto KWIQ-Clip

This buckle is sometimes sold as Male/Female or Male/Male. Make sure you get what you need.

[Aspetto KWIQ-Clip on QorePerformance.com](#)

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