[Template:About](/wiki/Template:About" \o "Template:About) [Template:Infobox weapon](/wiki/Template:Infobox_weapon)

The **AK-47** (also known as the **Kalashnikov**, **AK** , or in Russian slang, **Kalash**) is a [selective-fire](/wiki/Selective_fire) (semi-automatic and automatic), [gas-operated](/wiki/Gas_operated) [7.62×39mm](/wiki/7.62×39mm) [assault rifle](/wiki/Assault_rifle), developed in the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union) by [Mikhail Kalashnikov](/wiki/Mikhail_Kalashnikov). It is officially known in the Soviet documentation as *Avtomat Kalashnikova* ([Template:Lang-ru](/wiki/Template:Lang-ru)).

Design work on the AK-47 began in the last year of World War II (1945). In 1946, the AK-47 was presented for official military trials, and in 1948, the fixed-stock version was introduced into active service with selected units of the [Soviet Army](/wiki/Soviet_Army). An early development of the design was the *AKS* (S—*Skladnoy* or "folding"), which was equipped with an underfolding metal [shoulder stock](/wiki/Stock_(firearms)). In 1949, the AK-47 was officially accepted by the [Soviet Armed Forces](/wiki/Soviet_Armed_Forces)[Template:Sfnm](/wiki/Template:Sfnm) and used by the majority of the member states of the [Warsaw Pact](/wiki/Warsaw_Pact).

Even after almost seven decades, the model and its variants remain the most popular and widely used assault rifles in the world because of their substantial reliability under harsh conditions, low production costs compared to contemporary Western weapons, availability in virtually every geographic region and ease of use. The AK-47 has been manufactured in many countries and has seen service with armed forces as well as [irregular forces](/wiki/Irregular_military) worldwide, and was the basis for developing many other types of individual and crew-served firearms. As of 2004..."Of the estimated 500 million firearms worldwide, approximately 100 million belong to the Kalashnikov family, three-quarters of which are AK-47s".[[1]](#cite_note-1)

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## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

### Origins[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

Throughout World War II, Soviet soldiers found themselves consistently outgunned by heavily armed German troops, especially those armed with the [Sturmgewehr StG 44](/wiki/StG_44) assault rifles, which the Germans fielded in large numbers.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)[[2]](#cite_note-2)[[3]](#cite_note-3)[[4]](#cite_note-4)[[5]](#cite_note-5)[[6]](#cite_note-6)[[7]](#cite_note-7)[[8]](#cite_note-8) The select-fire StG 44 was chambered for a new [intermediate cartridge](/wiki/Intermediate_cartridge), the [7.92×33mm Kurz](/wiki/7.92×33mm_Kurz), and combined the firepower of a submachine gun with the range and accuracy of a rifle.[[3]](#cite_note-3) On 15 July 1943, a Sturmgewehr was demonstrated before the [People's Commissariat of Arms of the USSR](/wiki/People's_Commissariat_of_Arms_of_the_USSR).[[9]](#cite_note-9) The Soviets were so impressed with the Sturmgewehr, that they immediately set about developing an intermediate caliber automatic rifle of their own, to replace the badly outdated [Mosin–Nagant](/wiki/Mosin–Nagant) bolt-action rifles and [PPSh-41](/wiki/PPSh-41) submachine guns that armed most of the Soviet Army.[[5]](#cite_note-5)[[8]](#cite_note-8)[[9]](#cite_note-9)[[10]](#cite_note-10)[[11]](#cite_note-11)[[12]](#cite_note-12) The Soviets soon developed the [7.62×39mm M43 cartridge](/wiki/7.62×39mm), the semi-automatic [SKS carbine](/wiki/SKS) and the [RPD light machine gun](/wiki/RPD_machine_gun).[[13]](#cite_note-13) Shortly after World War II, the Soviets developed the AK-47 assault rifle, which would quickly replace the SKS in Soviet service.[[14]](#cite_note-14)[[15]](#cite_note-15) In the 1960s, the Soviets introduced the [RPK](/wiki/RPK) light machine gun, itself an AK-47 type weapon with a stronger receiver, a longer heavy barrel, and a bipod, that would eventually replace the RPD light machine gun.[[13]](#cite_note-13)

### Concept[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[thumb|A Type 2 AK-47, the first machined receiver variation](/wiki/File:AK-47_type_II_Part_DM-ST-89-01131.jpg)

[Mikhail Kalashnikov](/wiki/Mikhail_Kalashnikov) began his career as a weapon designer in 1941, while recuperating from a shoulder wound, which he received during the [Battle of Bryansk](/wiki/Battle_of_Bryansk).[[2]](#cite_note-2)[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) Kalashikov himself stated..."I was in the hospital, and a soldier in the bed beside me asked: ‘Why do our soldiers have only one rifle for two or three of our men, when the Germans have automatics?’ So I designed one. I was a soldier, and I created a machine gun for a soldier. It was called an Avtomat Kalashnikova, the automatic weapon of Kalashnikov—AK—and it carried the date of its first manufacture, 1947." [[16]](#cite_note-16) machined receiver was substituted for the sheet metal receiver. This was a more costly process, but the use of machined receivers accelerated production as tooling and labor for the earlier [Mosin–Nagant](/wiki/Mosin–Nagant) rifle's machined receiver were easily adapted.[[26]](#cite_note-26) Partly because of these problems, the Soviets were not able to distribute large numbers of the new rifle to soldiers until 1956. During this time, production of the interim [SKS](/wiki/SKS) rifle continued.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

Once the manufacturing difficulties of non milled receivers had been overcome, a redesigned version designated the [AKM](/wiki/AKM) (M for "modernized" or "upgraded"; in Russian: *Автомат Калашникова Модернизированный [Avtomat Kalashnikova Modernizirovanniy])* was introduced in 1959.[[27]](#cite_note-27) This new model used a stamped sheet metal receiver and featured a slanted [muzzle brake](/wiki/Muzzle_brake) on the end of the [barrel](/wiki/Gun_barrel) to compensate for [muzzle rise](/wiki/Muzzle_rise) under recoil. In addition, a hammer retarder was added to prevent the weapon from firing out of battery (without the bolt being fully closed), during rapid or automatic fire.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) This is also sometimes referred to as a "cyclic rate reducer", or simply "rate reducer", as it also has the effect of reducing the number of rounds fired per minute during automatic fire. It was also roughly one-third lighter than the previous model.[[27]](#cite_note-27)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Receiver type** | **Description**[**[26]**](#cite_note-26) |
| **Type 1A/B** | Original stamped receiver for AK-47. -1B modified for underfolding stock. A large hole is present on each side to accommodate the hardware for the underfolding stock. (this naming convention continues with all types) |
| **Type 2A/B** | The first milled receiver made from steel forging. It went into production in 1949. The Type 2A has a distinctive socketed metal "boot" connecting the butt stock to the receiver and the milled lightening cut on the sides runs parallel to the barrel. |
| **Type 3A/B** | "Final" version of the AK-47 milled receiver made from steel bar stock. It went into production between 1953 and 1954. The most ubiquitous example of the milled-receiver AK-47. The milled lightening cut on the sides is slanted to the barrel axis. |
| **Type 4A/B** | AKM receiver stamped from a smooth [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) [sheet](/wiki/Sheet_metal) of [steel](/wiki/Steel) supported extensively by pins and rivets. It went into production in 1959. Overall, the most-used design in the construction of the AK-series rifles. |

Both licensed and unlicensed production of the Kalashnikov weapons abroad were almost exclusively of the AKM variant, partially due to the much easier production of the stamped receiver. This model is the most commonly encountered, having been produced in much greater quantities. All rifles based on the Kalashnikov design are frequently referred to as AK-47s in the West, although this is only correct when applied to rifles based on the original three receiver types.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) In most former Eastern Bloc countries, the weapon is known simply as the "Kalashnikov" or "AK". The differences between the milled and stamped receives including the use of rivets rather than welds on the stamped receiver, as well as the placement of a small dimple above the magazine well for stabilization of the magazine.

### Replacement[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

In 1974, the Soviets began replacing their AK-47 and AKM rifles with a newer design, the [AK-74](/wiki/AK-74), which uses [5.45×39mm](/wiki/5.45×39mm) ammunition. This new rifle and cartridge had only started to be manufactured in Eastern European nations when the [Soviet Union collapsed](/wiki/Collapse_of_the_Soviet_Union), drastically slowing production of the AK-74 and other weapons of the former Soviet bloc.

## Design[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

The AK-47 was designed to be a simple, reliable automatic rifle that could be manufactured quickly and cheaply, using mass production methods that were state of the art in the Soviet Union during the late 1940s.[[28]](#cite_note-28) The AK-47 uses a [long stroke gas system](/wiki/Gas-operated_reloading#Long-stroke_piston) that is generally associated with great reliability in adverse conditions.[[22]](#cite_note-22)[[29]](#cite_note-29)[[30]](#cite_note-30) The large gas piston, generous clearances between moving parts, and tapered cartridge case design allow the gun to endure large amounts of foreign matter and fouling without failing to cycle.

### Cartridge[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Wound Profiles of Russian small-arms ammunition compiled by Dr.](/wiki/File:RussianWP.jpg) [Martin Fackler](/wiki/Martin_Fackler) on behalf of the U.S. military

The AK fires the 7.62×39mm [cartridge](/wiki/Cartridge_(weaponry)) with a muzzle velocity of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[[31]](#cite_note-31)The cartridge weight is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), the projectile weight is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[[32]](#cite_note-32) The original Soviet M43 bullets are 123 grain [boat-tail bullets](/wiki/Boat-tail_bullet) with a copper-plated steel jacket, a large steel core, and some lead between the core and the jacket. The AK has excellent penetration when shooting through heavy foliage, walls or a common vehicle's metal body and into an opponent attempting to use these things as cover. The 7.62×39mm M43 projectile does not generally fragment when striking an opponent and has an unusual tendency to remain intact even after making contact with bone. The 7.62×39mm round produces significant wounding in cases where the bullet tumbles (yaws) in tissue,[[33]](#cite_note-33) but produces relatively minor wounds in cases where the bullet exits before beginning to yaw.[[34]](#cite_note-34)[[35]](#cite_note-35)[[36]](#cite_note-36) In the absence of yaw, the M43 round can pencil through tissue with relatively little injury.[[34]](#cite_note-34)[[37]](#cite_note-37) Most, if not all, of the 7.62×39mm ammunition found today is of the upgraded M67 variety. This variety deleted the steel insert, shifting the center of gravity rearward, and allowing the projectile to destabilize (or yaw) at about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), nearly [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) earlier in tissue than the M43 round.[[38]](#cite_note-38) This change also reduces penetration in ballistic gelatin to ~[Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) for the newer M67 round versus ~[Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) for the older M43 round.[[38]](#cite_note-38)[[39]](#cite_note-39) However, the wounding potential of M67 is mostly limited to the small permanent wound channel the bullet itself makes, especially when the bullet yaws.[[38]](#cite_note-38)

### Operating mechanism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[thumb|The gas-operated mechanism of a](/wiki/File:Chinese_type_56_AK47.jpg) [Chinese AK-47](/wiki/Type_56_assault_rifle)

To fire, the operator inserts a loaded [magazine](/wiki/Magazine_(firearms)), pulls back and releases the charging handle, and then pulls the [trigger](/wiki/Trigger_(firearms)). In semi-automatic, the firearm fires only once, requiring the trigger to be released and depressed again for the next shot. In full-automatic, the rifle continues to fire automatically cycling fresh rounds into the chamber, until the magazine is exhausted or pressure is released from the trigger. After ignition of the cartridge primer and propellant, rapidly expanding propellant gases are diverted into the gas cylinder above the barrel through a vent near the muzzle. The build-up of gases inside the gas cylinder drives the long-stroke piston and [bolt](/wiki/Bolt_(firearm)) carrier rearward and a cam guide machined into the underside of the bolt carrier along with an ejector spur on the bolt carrier rail guide, rotates the bolt approximately 35° and unlocks it from the barrel extension via a camming pin on the bolt. The moving assembly has about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of free travel which creates a delay between the initial recoil impulse of the piston and the bolt unlocking sequence, allowing gas pressures to drop to a safe level before the seal between the chamber and the bolt is broken. The AK-47 does not have a gas valve; excess gases are ventilated through a series of radial ports in the gas cylinder. The Kalashnikov operating system offers no primary extraction upon bolt rotation, but uses an extractor claw to eject the spent cartridge case.[[40]](#cite_note-40)

### Barrel[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

The rifle received a barrel with a [chrome-lined](/wiki/Chrome_plating) bore and four right-hand grooves at a 240 mm (1 in 9.45 in) rifling twist rate. The gas block contains a gas channel that is installed at a slanted angle in relation to the bore axis. The muzzle is threaded for the installation of various muzzle devices such as a [muzzle brake](/wiki/Muzzle_brake) or a [blank-firing adaptor](/wiki/Blank-firing_adaptor). The standard AK-47 barrel does not counteract [muzzle rise and climb](/wiki/Muzzle_climb) as well lateral shift to the right much like the AKM's offset muzzle brake.

### Fire selector[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Viet_Cong_soldier_DD-ST-99-04298.jpg)[Việt Cộng](/wiki/Việt_Cộng) soldier armed with an AK-47, standing beneath the flag of the [National Liberation Front of South Vietnam](/wiki/National_Liberation_Front_of_South_Vietnam)

The fire selector is a large lever located on the right side of the rifle, it acts as a dust-cover and prevents the charging handle from being pulled fully to the rear when it is on safe.[[41]](#cite_note-41) It is operated by the shooter's right fore-fingers and has 3 settings: safe (up), full-auto (center), and semi-auto (down).[[41]](#cite_note-41) The reason for this is that under stress a soldier will push the selector lever down with considerable force bypassing the full-auto stage and setting the rifle to semi-auto.[[41]](#cite_note-41) To set the AK-47 to full-auto requires the deliberate action of centering the selector lever.[[41]](#cite_note-41) To operate the fire selector lever, right handed shooters have to briefly remove their right hand from the pistol grip, which is ergonomically sub-optimal. Some AK-type rifles also have a more traditional selector lever on the left side of the receiver just above the pistol grip.[[41]](#cite_note-41) This lever is operated by the shooter's right thumb and has three settings: safe (forward), full-auto (center), and semi-auto (backward).[[41]](#cite_note-41)

### Sights[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[thumb|Rear sight of a Chinese Type 56, featuring](/wiki/File:AK47-rear-sight.jpg) [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) settings and omission of a battle zero setting

The AK-47 uses a notched rear tangent [iron sight](/wiki/Iron_sight) calibrated in [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) increments from [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[[42]](#cite_note-42) The front sight is a post adjustable for elevation in the field. Horizontal adjustment requires a special drift tool and is done by the armory before issue or if the need arises by an armorer after issue. The ["point-blank range"](/wiki/Point-blank_range) battle zero setting "*П*" on the 7.62×39mm AK-47 rear tangent sight element corresponds to a [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) zero.[[42]](#cite_note-42)[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) These settings mirror the [Mosin–Nagant](/wiki/Mosin–Nagant) and [SKS](/wiki/SKS) rifles which the AK-47 replaced. For the AK-47 combined with service cartridges the 300 m battle zero setting limits the [apparent "bullet rise"](/wiki/External_ballistics#Bullet_drop) within approximately [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) relative to the line of sight. Soldiers are instructed to fire at any target within this range by simply placing the sights on the center of mass (the belt buckle) of the enemy target. Any errors in range estimation are tactically irrelevant, as a well-aimed shot will hit the torso of the enemy soldier. Some AK-type rifles have a front sight with a flip-up luminous dot that is calibrated at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), for improved night fighting.[[42]](#cite_note-42)

### Furniture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

The AK-47 was originally equipped with a buttstock, handguard and an upper heat guard made from solid wood. With the introduction of the Type 3 receiver the buttstock, lower handguard and upper heatguard were manufactured from [birch](/wiki/Birch) [plywood](/wiki/Plywood) [laminates](/wiki/Laminates).[[26]](#cite_note-26) Such engineered woods are stronger and resist warping better than the conventional one-piece patterns, do not require lengthy maturing, and are cheaper. The wooden furniture was finished with the Russian amber shellac finishing process.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) AKS and AKMS models featured a downward-folding metal butt-stock similar to that of the German [MP40 submachine-gun](/wiki/MP40), for use in the restricted space in the [BMP infantry combat vehicle](/wiki/BMP_development), as well as by paratroops. All 100 series AKs use plastic furniture with side-folding stocks.

### Magazines[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[thumb|AK-47 with stamp-steel magazines](/wiki/File:Автомат_Калашников_АК-47.jpg) [thumb|"Bakelite" rust-colored steel-reinforced 30-round plastic box 7.62×39mm AK magazines. Three magazines have an "arrow in triangle"](/wiki/File:Bakelite_AK_magazines.jpg) [Izhmash](/wiki/Izhmash) arsenal mark on the bottom right. The other magazine has a "star" [Tula](/wiki/Tula_Arms_Plant) arsenal mark on the bottom right

The standard magazine capacity is 30 rounds. There are also 10, 20, and 40-round box magazines, as well as 75-round [drum](/wiki/Drum_magazine) magazines.

The AK-47's standard 30-round magazines have a pronounced curve that allows them to smoothly feed ammunition into the chamber. Their heavy steel construction combined with "feed-lips" (the surfaces at the top of the magazine that control the angle at which the cartridge enters the chamber) machined from a single steel billet makes them highly resistant to damage. These magazines are so strong that "Soldiers have been known to use their mags as hammers, and even bottle openers."[[43]](#cite_note-43)[[44]](#cite_note-44) This contributes to the AK-47 magazine being more reliable, but makes it heavier than U.S. and NATO magazines.

The early slab-sided steel AK-47 30-round detachable box magazines weigh [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) empty.[[30]](#cite_note-30) The later steel AKM 30-round magazines had lighter sheet-metal bodies with prominent reinforcing ribs weighing [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) empty.[[30]](#cite_note-30)[[45]](#cite_note-45) To further reduce weight a light weight magazine with an aluminum body weighing [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) empty was developed for the AKM that proved to be too fragile and the small issued amount of these magazines were quickly withdrawn from service. As a replacement steel-reinforced 30-round plastic 7.62×39mm box magazines were introduced. These [rust-colored](/wiki/Rust_(color)) magazines weigh [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) empty and are often mistakenly identified as being made of [Bakelite](/wiki/Bakelite) (a [phenolic resin](/wiki/Phenolic_resin)), but were actually fabricated from two-parts of AG-S4 molding compound (a [glass-reinforced](/wiki/Glass-filled_polymer) phenol-formaldehyde binder impregnated composite), assembled using an [epoxy resin](/wiki/Epoxy_resin) adhesive.[[46]](#cite_note-46)[[47]](#cite_note-47)[[48]](#cite_note-48) Noted for their durability, these magazines did however compromise the rifle's camouflage and lacked the small horizontal reinforcing ribs running down both sides of the magazine body near the front that were added on all later plastic magazine generations.[[48]](#cite_note-48) A second generation steel-reinforced dark-brown (color shades vary from [maroon](/wiki/Maroon) to [plum](/wiki/Plum_(color)) to near [black](/wiki/Black)) 30-round 7.62×39mm magazine was introduced in the early 1980s, fabricated from [ABS](/wiki/Acrylonitrile_butadiene_styrene) plastic. The third generation steel-reinforced 30-round 7.62×39mm magazine is similar to the second generation, but is darker colored and has a matte nonreflective surface finish. The current issue steel-reinforced matte true black nonreflective surface finished 7.62×39mm 30-round magazines, fabricated from ABS plastic weigh [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) empty.[[31]](#cite_note-31)Early steel AK-47 magazines are [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) long, and the later ribbed steel AKM and newer plastic 7.62×39mm magazines are about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) shorter.[[49]](#cite_note-49)[[50]](#cite_note-50) The transition from steel to mainly plastic magazines yields a significant weight reduction and allows a soldier to carry more ammunition for the same weight.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Rifle** | **Cartridge** | **Cartridge weight** | **Weight of empty magazine** | **Weight of loaded magazine** | **Max.** [**Template:Convert**](/wiki/Template:Convert) **ammunition load\*** |
| AK-47 (1949) | [7.62×39mm](/wiki/7.62×39mm) | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) | slab-sided steel [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) | 30-rounds [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)[[30]](#cite_note-30) | 11 magazines for 330 rounds [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) |
| [AKM](/wiki/AKM) (1957) | 7.62×39mm | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) | ribbed stamped-steel [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) | 30-rounds [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)[[30]](#cite_note-30)[[45]](#cite_note-45) | 12 magazines for 360 rounds [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) |
| [AK-103](/wiki/AK-103) (1994) | 7.62×39mm | [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) | steel-reinforced plastic [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) | 30-rounds [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)[[30]](#cite_note-30)[[45]](#cite_note-45) | 13 magazines for 390 rounds [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) |

All 7.62×39mm AK magazines are backwards compatible with older AK variants.

10.12 kg (22.3 lb) is the maximum amount of ammo that the average soldier can comfortably carry. It also allows for best comparison of the three most common 7.62×39mm AK platform magazines.

Most Yugoslavian and some East German AK magazines were made with cartridge followers that hold the bolt open when empty; however, most AK magazine followers allow the bolt to close when the magazine is empty.

### Accessories[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[thumb|left|AK-47 6H2 bayonet and scabbard](/wiki/File:AK-47_bayonet_and_scabbard.jpg) [thumb|AK-103 with](/wiki/File:AK103_GP_34.jpg) [GP-34](/wiki/GP-25) Grenade Launcher [thumb|left|AK-47 with Kalashnikov grenade launcher mounted on the muzzle](/wiki/File:AK47Figure54.jpg) Accessories supplied with the rifle include a [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) long 6H3 [bayonet](/wiki/Bayonet) featuring a [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) long spear point blade. The AK-47 bayonet is installed by slipping the [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) diameter muzzle ring around the muzzle and latching the handle down on the bayonet lug under the front sight base.[[51]](#cite_note-51) All current model AKM rifles can mount under-barrel 40 mm grenade launchers such as the [GP-25](/wiki/GP-25) and its variants, which can fire up to 20 rounds per minute and have an effective range of up to 400 metres.[[52]](#cite_note-52) The main grenade is the VOG-25 (VOG-25M) fragmentation grenade which has a 6 m (9 m) (20 ft (30 ft)) lethality radius. The VOG-25P/VOG-25PM ("jumping") variant explodes [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) above the ground.[[53]](#cite_note-53) The AK-47 can also mount a (rarely used) [cup-type grenade launcher](/wiki/Rifle_grenade#Cup-type), the [Kalashnikov grenade launcher](/wiki/Kalashnikov_grenade_launcher) that fires standard [RGD-5](/wiki/RGD-5) Soviet hand-grenades. The maximum effective range is approximately 150 meters.[[54]](#cite_note-54) This launcher can also be used to launch [tear-gas](/wiki/Tear-gas) and [riot control](/wiki/Riot_control) grenades.

All current AKs (100 series) and some older models, have side rails for mounting a variety of scopes and sighting devices, such as the [PSO-1 Optical Sniper Sight](/wiki/PSO-1).[[55]](#cite_note-55) The side rails allow for removal and remounting of optical accessories without interfering with the zeroing of the optic. However, the 100 series side folding stocks cannot be folded with the optics mounted.

## Characteristics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

### Accuracy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

The AK-47's accuracy has always been considered to be "good enough" to hit an adult male torso out to about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert),[[56]](#cite_note-56)[[57]](#cite_note-57) though even experts firing from prone or bench rest positions at this range were observed to have difficulty placing ten consecutive rounds on target.[[58]](#cite_note-58) Nor could the weapon's accuracy be significantly improved with later designs, where its accuracy remained relatively mediocre.<ref name=chivers/> An AK can fire a 10-shot group of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert),[[59]](#cite_note-59) and [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)[[58]](#cite_note-58) The newer stamped-steel receiver AKM models, while more rugged and less prone to metal fatigue, are actually less accurate than the forged/milled receivers of their predecessors: the milled AK-47s are capable of shooting [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) groups at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), whereas the stamped AKMs are capable of shooting [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) groups at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[[57]](#cite_note-57) The best shooters are able to hit a man-sized target at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) within five shots (firing from prone or bench rest position) or ten shots (standing).[[60]](#cite_note-60) The single-shot hit-probability on the NATO E-type Silhouette Target (a human upper body half and head silhouette) of the AK-47 and the later developed AK-74, M16A1 and M16A2 assault rifles were measured by the US military under ideal proving ground conditions in the 1980s as follows:

[thumb|75 px|NATO E-type Silhouette Target](/wiki/File:NATO_E-type_Silhouette_Target.PNG)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Single-shot hit-probability on Crouching Man (NATO E-type Silhouette) Target**[**[61]**](#cite_note-61) | | | | | | | | | | |
| **rowspan=2|Rifle** | **rowspan=2|Chambering** | **colspan=9|Hit-probability (With no range estimation or aiming errors)** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **50 meters** | **100 meters** | **200 meters** | **300 meters** | **400 meters** | **500 meters** | **600 meters** | **700 meters** | **800 meters** |  |  |
| AK-47 (1949) | [7.62×39mm](/wiki/7.62×39mm) | 100% | 100% | 99% | 94% | 82% | 67% | 54% | 42% | 31% |
| [AK-74](/wiki/AK-74) (1974) | [5.45×39mm](/wiki/5.45×39mm) | 100% | 100% | 100% | 99% | 93% | 81% | 66% | 51% | 34% |
| [M16A1](/wiki/M16_rifle#XM16E1_and_M16A1_.28Colt_Model_603.29) (1967) | [5.56×45mm NATO](/wiki/5.56×45mm_NATO) M193 | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 96% | 87% | 73% | 56% | 39% |
| [M16A2](/wiki/M16_rifle#M16A2) (1982) | [5.56×45mm NATO](/wiki/5.56×45mm_NATO) SS109/M855 | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 98% | 90% | 79% | 63% | 43% |

Under worst field exercise circumstances, due to range estimation and aiming errors, the hit probabilities for the tested assault rifles were drastically reduced with differences without operational significance.

### Service life[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

The AK-47 and its variants are made in dozens of countries, with "quality ranging from finely engineered weapons to pieces of questionable workmanship."[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) As a result, the AK-47 has a service/system life of approximately 6,000,[[62]](#cite_note-62) to 10,000,[[63]](#cite_note-63) to 15,000[[64]](#cite_note-64) rounds.[[5]](#cite_note-5) The AK-47 was designed to be a cheap, simple, easy to manufacture assault rifle,[[65]](#cite_note-65) perfectly matching Soviet military doctrine that treats equipment and weapons as disposable items.[[66]](#cite_note-66) As units are often deployed without adequate logistical support and dependent on "battlefield cannibalization" for resupply, it is actually more cost-effective to replace rather than repair weapons.[[66]](#cite_note-66) The AK-47 has small parts and springs that need to be replaced every few thousand rounds. However, "Every time it is disassembled beyond the field stripping stage, it will take some time for some parts to regain their fit, some parts may tend to shake loose and fall out when firing the weapon. Some parts of the AK-47 line are riveted together. Repairing these can be quite a hassle, since the end of the rivet has to be ground off and a new one set after the part is replaced."[[42]](#cite_note-42)

## Variants[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[thumb|7.62×39mm cartridges from Russia, China and Pakistan](/wiki/File:AK-47_bullets_from_China,_Pakistan_and_Russia.jpg)

Early variants (7.62×39mm)

* Issue of 1948/49: Type 1: The very earliest models, stamped sheet metal receiver, are now very rare.
* Issue of 1951: Type 2: Has a milled receiver. Barrel and chamber are chrome plated to resist corrosion.
* Issue of 1954/55: Type 3: Lightened, milled receiver variant. Rifle weight is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)
* AKS (AKS-47): Type 1, 2, or 3 receiver: Featured a downward-folding metal stock similar to that of the German [MP40](/wiki/MP40), for use in the restricted space in the [BMP](/wiki/BMP-1) infantry combat vehicle, as well as by paratroops.
* AKN (AKSN): Night scope rail.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

Modernized (7.62×39mm)

* [AKM](/wiki/AKM): A simplified, lighter version of the AK-47; Type 4 receiver is made from stamped and riveted sheet metal. A slanted muzzle device was added to counter climb in automatic fire. Rifle weight is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)[[31]](#cite_note-31) due to the lighter receiver. This is the most ubiquitous variant of the AK-47.
  + AKMS: Under-folding stock version of the AKM intended for [airborne](/wiki/Airborne_forces) troops.
  + AKMN (AKMSN): Night scope rail.
  + AKML (AKMSL): Slotted flash suppressor and night scope rail.[[67]](#cite_note-67)\* [RPK](/wiki/RPK): Hand-held machine gun version with longer barrel and [bipod](/wiki/Bipod). The variants—RPKS, RPKN (RPKSN), RPKL (RPKSL)—mirror AKM variants. The "S" variants have a side-folding wooden stock.

Low-impulse variants ([5.45×39mm](/wiki/5.45×39mm))

[thumb|AK-74 and RPK-74](/wiki/File:AK-74_RPK-74_DA-ST-89-06612.jpg)

* [AK-74](/wiki/AK-74): Assault rifle.
  + AKS-74: Side-folding stock.
  + AK-74N (AKS-74N): Night scope rail.
* [AKS-74U](/wiki/AKS-74U): Compact carbine.
  + AKS-74UN: Night scope rail.
* [RPK-74](/wiki/RPK-74): Light machine gun.
  + RPKS-74: Side-folding stock.
  + RPK-74N (RPKS-74N): Night scope rail.

The 100 Series

5.45×39mm / 5.56×45mm / 7.62×39mm

* [AK-74M](/wiki/AK-74M)/[AK-101](/wiki/AK-101)/[AK-103](/wiki/AK-103): Modernized AK-74. Scope rail and side-folding stock.
* [AK-107](/wiki/AK-107)/[AK-108](/wiki/AK-107): Balanced recoil models.
* [AK-105](/wiki/AK-105)/[AK-102](/wiki/AK-102)/[AK-104](/wiki/AK-104): Carbine.
* RPK-74M / RPK-201 / RPKM and RPK-203: [Squad automatic weapon](/wiki/Squad_automatic_weapon).

Other weapons

* [Saiga-12](/wiki/Saiga-12): 12-gauge shotgun. Built on AK receiver.
  + Saiga-12S: Pistol grip and side-folding stock.
    - Saiga-12K: Shorter barrel.
  + Saiga-20 (S/K): 20-gauge.
  + Saiga-410 (S/K): .410 bore.
* [Saiga semi-automatic rifle](/wiki/Saiga_semi-automatic_rifle)
* KSK shotgun: 12-gauge combat shotgun (based on Saiga-12).
* Vepr-12 Molot: 12-gauge combat shotgun. Built on RPK receiver.
* [Bizon](/wiki/Bizon_SMG): Submachine gun with [helical magazine](/wiki/Helical_magazine). Borrows 60% of details from AKS-74U. [9×18mm PM](/wiki/9×18mm_Makarov), [9×19mm Luger](/wiki/9×19mm_Parabellum), [.380 ACP](/wiki/.380_ACP); [7.62×25mm TT](/wiki/7.62×25mm_Tokarev) (box magazine).
* [Vityaz-SN](/wiki/Vityaz-SN): [9×19mm Parabellum](/wiki/9×19mm_Parabellum) Submachine gun. Successor to the Bizon and the standard SMG for all branches of Russian military and police forces[[68]](#cite_note-68)\* [OTs-14 Groza](/wiki/OTs-14_Groza): [Bullpup](/wiki/Bullpup) assault rifle. [9×39mm](/wiki/9×39mm), [7.62×39mm](/wiki/7.62×39mm).

[thumb|AK-12](/wiki/File:AK-12_Engineering_technologies_international_forum_-_2012_01.jpg)

AK-12 series

* [AK-12](/wiki/AK-12): The AK-12 uses the same gas-operated long-stroke piston system of previous Kalashnikov rifles, with many modern features that are radically different from other guns in its family. However, in late September 2013, the AK-12 was passed over by the Russian military.[[69]](#cite_note-69)

## Production[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

### Outside of the Soviet Union/Russia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[Kalashnikov Concern](/wiki/Kalashnikov_Concern) (formerly Izhmash) has repeatedly claimed that the majority of foreign manufacturers are producing AK type rifles without proper [licensing](/wiki/License).[[70]](#cite_note-70)[[71]](#cite_note-71) [Template:Refimprove section](/wiki/Template:Refimprove_section)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Military variant(s)** |
| **Albania** | Automatiku Shqiptar model 56 (ASH-78 Tip-1) Albanian Automatic Assault Rifle Model 56 Type-1 [Made in Poliçan Arsenal] (Straight forward copy of [Type 56](/wiki/Type_56_assault_rifle), which in turn is a clone of the Soviet [AKM](/wiki/AKM) rifle)  Automatiku Shqiptar Tipi 1982 (ASH-82) Albanian Automatic Assault Rifle Type 1982 [Made in Poliçan Arsenal] (Straight forward copy of [AKMS](/wiki/AKMS))  Automatiku Shqiptar model 56 (ASH-78 Tip-2) Albanian Light Machine Gun [Made in Poliçan Arsenal] (Straight forward copy of [RPK](/wiki/RPK))  Automatiku Shqiptar model 56 (ASH-78 Tip-3) Albanian Automatic Hybrid Rifle Model 56 Type-3 [Made in Poliçan Arsenal] (Hybrid rifle for multi-purpose roles mainly Marksman rifle with secondary assault rifle and grenade launcher capability)  Several other unnamed & unidentified versions of the AKMS have been produced mainly with short barrels similar to the Soviet [AKS-74U](/wiki/AK-74) mainly for special forces, Tank & Armoured crew also for Helicopter pilots and police. There have also been modifications and fresh production of heavily modified ASh-82 ([AKMS](/wiki/AKMS)) with [SOPMOD](/wiki/SOPMOD) accessories, mainly for Albania's special forces [RENEA](/wiki/RENEA) & exports.[Template:Or](/wiki/Template:Or) |
| **Armenia** | [K-3](/wiki/K-3_(rifle)) (bullpup, [5.45×39mm](/wiki/5.45×39mm)) |
| **Azerbaijan** | Khazri (AK-74M)[[72]](#cite_note-72) |
| **Bangladesh** | Chinese [Type 56](/wiki/Type_56_assault_rifle) |
| **Bulgaria** | AKK/AKKS (Type 3 AK-47/w. side-folding buttstock)  AKKMS (AKMS), AKKN-47 (fittings for NPSU night sights)  AK-47M1 (Type 3 with black polymer furniture)  AK-47MA1/AR-M1 (same as -M1, but in 5.56mm NATO)  AKS-47M1 (AKMS in [5.56×45mm NATO](/wiki/5.56×45mm_NATO))  AKS-47S (AK-47M1, short version, with East German folding stock, laser aiming device)  AKS-47UF (short version of -M1, Russian folding stock), AR-SF (same as −47UF, but 5.56mm NATO)  AKS-93SM6 (similar to −47M1, cannot use grenade launcher)  RKKS (RPK), AKT-47 (.22 rimfire training rifle) |
| **Cambodia** | Chinese [Type 56](/wiki/Type_56_assault_rifle), Soviet AK-47, and [AKM](/wiki/AKM) |
| **People's Republic of China** | [Type 56](/wiki/Type_56_assault_rifle) |
| **Colombia** | [Galil ACE](/wiki/Galil_ACE) |
| **Croatia** | [APS-95](/wiki/APS-95) |
| **Cuba** | AKM[[73]](#cite_note-73) |
| [**East Germany**](/wiki/East_Germany)[**[74]**](#cite_note-74) | MPi-K/MPi-KS (AK-47/AKS)  MPi-KM (AKM; wooden and plastic stock), MPi-KMS-72 (side-folding stock), MPi-KMS-K (carbine)  MPi-AK-74N (AK-74), MPi-AKS-74N (side-folding stock), MPi-AKS-74NK (carbine)  KK-MPi Mod.69 ([.22 LR](/wiki/.22_Long_Rifle) select-fire trainer) |
| **Egypt** | AK-47, [Misr assault rifle](/wiki/Misr_assault_rifle) (AKMS), Maadi ARM (AKM) |
| **Ethiopia** | AK-47, [AK-103](/wiki/AK-103) (manufactured locally at the State-run [*Gafat Armament Engineering Complex*](/wiki/Gafat_Armament_Engineering_Complex) as the Et-97/1)[[75]](#cite_note-75) |
| **Finland** | [Rk 62](/wiki/Rk_62), [Valmet M76](/wiki/Valmet_M76) (other names Rk 62 76, M62/76), [Valmet M78](/wiki/Valmet_M78) (light machine gun), [Rk 95 Tp](/wiki/Rk_95_Tp) |
| **Hungary**[**[76]**](#cite_note-76) | AK-55 (domestic manufacture of the 2nd Model AK-47)  AKM-63 (also known as AMD-63 in the US; modernized AK-55), [AMD-65M](/wiki/AMD-65) (modernized AKM-63, shorter barrel and side-folding stock), AMP-69 (rifle grenade launcher)  [AK-63F](/wiki/AK-63)/D (other name AMM/AMMSz), AK-63MF (modernized)  [NGM-81](/wiki/NGM-81) ([5.56×45mm NATO](/wiki/5.56×45mm_NATO); fixed and under-folding stock) |
| **India** | [INSAS](/wiki/INSAS) (fixed and side-folding stock), [KALANTAK](/wiki/INSAS#Variant_&_Developments) (carbine), [INSAS light machine gun](/wiki/INSAS#Variant_&_Developments) (fixed and side-folding stock), a local unlicensed version with carbon fibre furniture designated as AK-7 [[77]](#cite_note-77)---- Trichy Assault Rifle 7.62 mm, manufactured by [Ordnance Factory Tiruchirappalli](/wiki/Ordnance_Factory_Tiruchirappalli) of [Ordnance Factories Board](/wiki/Ordnance_Factories_Board)[[78]](#cite_note-78) |
| **Iran** | KLS/KLF (AK-47/AKS), KLT (AKMS) |
| **Iraq** | [Tabuk Sniper Rifle](/wiki/Tabuk_Sniper_Rifle), Tabuk Assault Rifle (with fixed or underfolding stock, outright clones of Yugoslavian M70 rifles series), Tabuk Short Assault Rifle (carbine) |
| **Israel** | [IMI Galil](/wiki/IMI_Galil): AR (assault/battle rifle), ARM (assault rifle/light machine gun), SAR (carbine), MAR (compact carbine), Sniper (sniper rifle), SR-99 (sniper rifle)  [Galil ACE](/wiki/Galil_ACE) |
| **Italy** | Bernardelli VB-STD/VB-SR (Galil AR/SAR)[[79]](#cite_note-79) |
| **Nigeria** | Produced by the Defence Industries Corporation of Nigeria as OBJ-006[[80]](#cite_note-80)[[81]](#cite_note-81) |
| **North Korea** | [Type 58A](/wiki/Type_58_assault_rifle)/B (Type 3 AK-47/w. stamped steel folding stock), Type 68A/B (AKM/AKMS), Type 88A/B-2 (AK-74/AKS-74/w. top folding stock)[[82]](#cite_note-82)[[83]](#cite_note-83) |
| **Pakistan** | [Reverse engineered](/wiki/Reverse_Engineering) by hand and machine in Pakistan's highland areas (see [Khyber Pass Copy](/wiki/Khyber_Pass_Copy)) near the border of Afghanistan; more recently the [Pakistan Ordnance Factories](/wiki/Pakistan_Ordnance_Factories) started the manufacture of an AK-47/AKM clone called PK-10[[84]](#cite_note-84) |
| **Poland**[**[85]**](#cite_note-85) | pmK (kbk AK) / pmKS (kbk AKS) (name has changed from pmK – "pistolet maszynowy Kałasznikowa", Kalashnikov SMG to the kbk AK – "karabinek AK", Kalashnikov Carbine in the mid-1960s) (AK-47/AKS)  [kbkg wz. 1960](/wiki/Kbkg_wz._1960) (rifle grenade launcher), kbkg wz. 1960/72 (modernized)  kbk AKM / kbk AKMS (AKM/AKMS)  [kbk wz. 1988 Tantal](/wiki/Kbk_wz._1988_Tantal) ([5.45×39mm](/wiki/5.45×39mm)), [skbk wz. 1989 Onyks](/wiki/Skbk_wz._1989_Onyks) (compact carbine)  [kbs wz. 1996 Beryl](/wiki/Kbs_wz._1996_Beryl) ([5.56×45mm](/wiki/5.56×45mm_NATO)), [kbk wz. 1996 Mini-Beryl](/wiki/Kbk_wz._1996_Mini-Beryl) (compact carbine) |
| **Romania** | [PM md. 63/65](/wiki/Pistol_Mitralieră_model_1963/1965) (AKM/AKMS), [PM md. 80](/wiki/Pistol_Mitralieră_model_1963/1965#PM_md._80), [PM md. 90](/wiki/Pistol_Mitralieră_model_1963/1965#PM_md._90), collectively exported under the umbrella name AIM or AIMS  [PA md. 86](/wiki/PA_md._86) (AK-74), exported as the AIMS-74  PM md. 90 short barrel, PA md. 86 short barrel, exported as the AIMR  [PSL](/wiki/PSL_(rifle)) (designated marksman rifle; other names PSL-54C, Romak III, FPK and SSG-97) |
| **South Africa** | [R4 assault rifle](/wiki/R4_assault_rifle), [Truvelo Raptor](/wiki/Truvelo_Raptor), [Vektor CR-21](/wiki/Vektor_CR-21) (bullpup) |
| **Sudan** | MAZ[[86]](#cite_note-86) (based on the [Type 56](/wiki/Type_56_assault_rifle)) |
| **Ukraine** | [Vepr](/wiki/Vepr) (bullpup, [5.45×39mm](/wiki/5.45×39mm)), Malyuk (bullpup)[[87]](#cite_note-87) |
| **United States** | Century Arms: C39 (AK47 var.), RAS47 (AKM var.), and C39v2 (AK47 var.)), InterOrdnance: AKM247 (AKM var.) M214 (pistol), Palmetto State Armory: PSAK-47 (AKM var.), Arsenal Inc: SA M-7 (AK47 var.), Destructive Devices Industries: DDI 47S (AKM var.) DDI 47M (AK47 var), Rifle Dynamics: RD700 and other custom build AK / AKM guns |
| **Vietnam** | AKM-1 (AKM), TUL-1 (RPK), Galil Ace 31/32 |
| **Venezuela** | License granted, factory under construction[[88]](#cite_note-88) |
| [**Yugoslavia**](/wiki/Socialist_Federal_Republic_of_Yugoslavia)**/**[**Serbia**](/wiki/Serbia) | M64, [M70](/wiki/Zastava_M70), [M72](/wiki/Zastava_M72), [M76](/wiki/Zastava_M76), [M77](/wiki/Zastava_M77), [M80](/wiki/Zastava_M80), [M82](/wiki/Zastava_M82), [M85](/wiki/Zastava_M85), [M90](/wiki/Zastava_M90), [M91](/wiki/Zastava_M91), [M92](/wiki/Zastava_M92), [M99](/wiki/Zastava_M99), [M21](/wiki/Zastava_M21) |

## Users[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[Template:Split section](/wiki/Template:Split_section)

[thumb|A map of current and former AK users](/wiki/File:AK47map.svg) [thumb|A](/wiki/File:MP_Inspects_Captured_AK-47_Vietnam.jpg) [U.S. Army](/wiki/United_States_Army) [M.P](/wiki/Military_police) inspects a Chinese AK-47 recovered in Vietnam, 1968 [thumb|A](/wiki/File:Evstafiev-spetsnaz-prepare-for-mission.jpg) [Soviet](/wiki/Soviet_Union) [Spetsnaz](/wiki/Spetsnaz) (special operations) group prepares for a mission in Afghanistan, 1988 [thumb|During the](/wiki/File:Mortar_attack_on_Shigal_Tarna_garrison,_Kunar_Province,_87.jpg) [Soviet war in Afghanistan](/wiki/Soviet_war_in_Afghanistan) in the 1980s, several sources simultaneously armed both sides of the Afghan conflict, filling the country with AK-47s and their derivatives.[[89]](#cite_note-89)

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* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[90]](#cite_note-90)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)[[92]](#cite_note-92)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[93]](#cite_note-93)[[94]](#cite_note-94)[[95]](#cite_note-95)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[96]](#cite_note-96)[[97]](#cite_note-97)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[98]](#cite_note-98)[[99]](#cite_note-99)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[100]](#cite_note-100)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu): [Type 56](/wiki/Type_56_assault_rifle) variant was used.[[101]](#cite_note-101)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[102]](#cite_note-102)[[103]](#cite_note-103)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[104]](#cite_note-104)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu): [Rk 62](/wiki/Rk_62), [Rk 95 Tp](/wiki/Rk_95_Tp).
* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[105]](#cite_note-105)[[106]](#cite_note-106)[[107]](#cite_note-107)[[108]](#cite_note-108)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[109]](#cite_note-109)[[110]](#cite_note-110)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu): [EKAM](/wiki/Special_Anti-Terrorist_Unit_(Greece)) counter-terrorist unit of the [Hellenic Police](/wiki/Hellenic_Police).[[111]](#cite_note-111)[[112]](#cite_note-112)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu):[[91]](#cite_note-91) Used by [Force One](/wiki/Force_One).[[113]](#cite_note-113)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu): Still used by TNI-AD, TNI-AL, TNI-AU, and Police[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)
* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[90]](#cite_note-90)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu): Widely used by [Israeli Special Forces Units](/wiki/Israeli_Special_Forces_Units) from the 1960's - 80's.[[114]](#cite_note-114)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[115]](#cite_note-115)[[116]](#cite_note-116)[[117]](#cite_note-117)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[118]](#cite_note-118)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu): [Type 56](/wiki/Type_56_assault_rifle) and [Type 58](/wiki/Type_58_assault_rifle) variants were used.[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu) – [Peshmerga](/wiki/Peshmerga)
* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[119]](#cite_note-119)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)[[120]](#cite_note-120)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu): [Type 56](/wiki/Type_56_assault_rifle) variant.[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[121]](#cite_note-121)[[122]](#cite_note-122)[[123]](#cite_note-123)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu): Used by the [Myanmar Police Force](/wiki/Myanmar_Police_Force) (include the Chinese [Type 56](/wiki/Type_56)).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)
* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[124]](#cite_note-124)[[125]](#cite_note-125)[[126]](#cite_note-126)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[80]](#cite_note-80)[[81]](#cite_note-81)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu): [Type 56](/wiki/Type_56_assault_rifle)[[127]](#cite_note-127) and [AK-103](/wiki/AK-103)[[128]](#cite_note-128) used.
* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag)[[129]](#cite_note-129)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu): Used by the Santiago City PNP.[[130]](#cite_note-130)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu):[[18]](#cite_note-18) Replaced by [AKM](/wiki/AKM), [Tantal](/wiki/Kbk_wz._1988_Tantal) and [Beryl](/wiki/Kbs_wz._1996_Beryl).
* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[131]](#cite_note-131)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu):[[18]](#cite_note-18) Replaced by the [AK-74](/wiki/AK-74) since 1974.
* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[132]](#cite_note-132)\* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag)[[133]](#cite_note-133)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[134]](#cite_note-134)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu): Used by the [Special Forces Brigade](/wiki/South_African_Special_Forces_Brigade).[[135]](#cite_note-135)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu): [Type 56](/wiki/Type_56_assault_rifle) variant.[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag)[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)
* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu): [Type 56](/wiki/Type_56_assault_rifle) variant was used extensively by the [Viet Cong](/wiki/Viet_Cong).[[101]](#cite_note-101)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flag](/wiki/Template:Flag)<ref name=Popenker/>
* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)\* [Template:Flagu](/wiki/Template:Flagu)[[91]](#cite_note-91)[Template:Div col end](/wiki/Template:Div_col_end)

### Illicit trade[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|AK-47 copies confiscated from Somali pirates by Finnish mine-layer](/wiki/File:Somalimerirosvojen_rynnäkkökiväärejä_Maneesi.JPG) [Template:Ship](/wiki/Template:Ship) during [Operation Atalanta](/wiki/Operation_Atalanta), photographed in Manege Military Museum. The stocks are missing on the top three AKs

Throughout the world, the AK and its variants are commonly used by governments, revolutionaries, terrorists, criminals, and civilians alike. In some countries, such as Somalia, Rwanda, Mozambique, Congo and Tanzania, the prices for Black Market AKs are between $30 and $125 per weapon and prices have fallen in the last few decades due to mass counterfeiting.[[136]](#cite_note-136) In Kenya "an AK-47 fetches 5 head of cattle (about 10,000 Kenya shillings or 100 U.S. dollars) when offered for barter but costs almost half that price when cash is paid."[[137]](#cite_note-137) There are places around the world where AK type weapons can be purchased on the [Black Market](/wiki/Black_Market) "for as little as $6, or traded for a chicken or a sack of grain."[[138]](#cite_note-138)[[139]](#cite_note-139)[[140]](#cite_note-140) The AK-47 has also spawned a cottage industry of sorts and has been copied and manufactured (one gun at a time) in small shops around the world (see [Khyber Pass Copy](/wiki/Khyber_Pass_Copy)).[[141]](#cite_note-141)[[142]](#cite_note-142) The estimated numbers of AK-type weapons vary greatly. The Small Arms Survey suggest that "between 70 and 100 million of these weapons have been produced since 1947."[[143]](#cite_note-143) The World Bank estimates that out of the 500 million total firearms available worldwide, 100 million are of the Kalashnikov family, and 75 million are AK-47s.[[1]](#cite_note-1) Because AK-type weapons have been made in many countries, often illicitly, it is impossible to know how many really exist.[[144]](#cite_note-144)

## Cultural influence and impact[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[Template:Quote box](/wiki/Template:Quote_box) [left|thumb|180px|Flag of Mozambique](/wiki/File:Flag_of_Mozambique.svg)

During the [Cold War](/wiki/Cold_War), the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, as well as United States and other NATO nations supplied arms and technical knowledge to numerous countries and rebel forces around the world. During this time the Western countries used relatively expensive automatic rifles, such as the [FN FAL](/wiki/FN_FAL), the [HK G3](/wiki/Heckler_&_Koch_G3), the [M14](/wiki/M14_rifle), and the [M16](/wiki/M16_rifle). In contrast, the Russians and Chinese used the AK-47; its low production cost and ease of manufacture allow them to make AKs in vast numbers.

In the pro-communist states, the AK-47 became a symbol of third-world revolution. During the 1980s, the Soviet Union became the principal arms dealer to countries embargoed by Western nations, including Middle Eastern nations such as Iran, Libya, and Syria, which welcomed Soviet Union backing against Israel. After the [fall of the Soviet Union](/wiki/History_of_the_Soviet_Union_(1985–1991)), AK-47s were sold both openly and on the black market to any group with cash, including drug cartels and dictatorial states, and more recently they have been seen in the hands of Islamic groups such as [Al-Qaeda](/wiki/Al-Qaeda), [ISIL](/wiki/Islamic_State_of_Iraq_and_the_Levant), and the [Taliban](/wiki/Taliban) in Afghanistan and Iraq, and [FARC](/wiki/FARC), [Ejército de Liberación Nacional](/wiki/Ejército_de_Liberación_Nacional) guerrillas in Colombia.[[145]](#cite_note-145) [thumb|180px|Kalashnikov Vodka](/wiki/File:Kalashnikov_Vodka_(5604438939).jpg)

In Russia, the Kalashnikov is a tremendous source of national pride.[[146]](#cite_note-146) "The family of the inventor of the world's most famous assault rifle, Mikhail Kalashnikov, has authorized German engineering company MMI to use the well-known Kalashnikov name on a variety of not-so-deadly goods."[[147]](#cite_note-147) In recent years, Kalashnikov Vodka has been marketed with souvenir bottles in the shape of the AK-47 Kalashnikov.[[148]](#cite_note-148)[[149]](#cite_note-149) There are also Kalashnikov watches,[[150]](#cite_note-150) umbrellas,[[151]](#cite_note-151) and knives.[[152]](#cite_note-152)[[153]](#cite_note-153) In [Izhevsk](/wiki/Izhevsk), Udmurt Republic, the Kalashnikov Museum (also called the AK-47 museum) opened on 4 November 2004. This city is in the [Ural Region](/wiki/Ural_Region) of Russia. The museum chronicles the biography of General [Kalashnikov](/wiki/Mikhail_Kalashnikov) and documents the invention of the AK-47. The museum complex of Kalashnikov's small arms, a series of halls, and multimedia exhibitions are devoted to the evolution of the AK-47 assault rifle and attracts 10,000 monthly visitors.[[154]](#cite_note-154) Nadezhda Vechtomova, the museum director, stated in an interview that the purpose of the museum is to honor the ingenuity of the inventor and the hard work of the employees and to "separate the weapon as a weapon of murder from the people who are producing it and to tell its history in our country."

The proliferation of this weapon is reflected by more than just numbers. The AK-47 is included in the [flag of Mozambique](/wiki/Flag_of_Mozambique) and its [emblem](/wiki/Emblem_of_Mozambique), an acknowledgment that the country's leaders gained power in large part through the effective use of their AK-47s.[[155]](#cite_note-155) It is also found in the coats of arms of [East Timor](/wiki/Coat_of_arms_of_East_Timor) and the revolution era [Burkina Faso](/wiki/Coat_of_arms_of_Burkina_Faso), as well as in the flags of the [Hezbollah](/wiki/Flag_of_Hezbollah) and [New People's Army](/wiki/New_People's_Army).

Some Western countries associate the AK-47 with their enemies; both Cold War era and present-day. For example, Western movies often portray criminals, gang members and terrorists using AK-47s. For these reasons, in the U.S. and Western Europe the AK-47 is stereotypically regarded as the weapon of choice of insurgents, gangsters and terrorists. Conversely, throughout the [developing world](/wiki/Developing_world), the AK-47 can be positively attributed with [revolutionaries](/wiki/Revolutionaries) against foreign occupation, [imperialism](/wiki/Imperialism), or [colonialism](/wiki/Colonialism).[[145]](#cite_note-145) The AK-47 made an appearance in U.S. popular culture as a recurring focus in the [Nicolas Cage](/wiki/Nicolas_Cage) film [*Lord of War*](/wiki/Lord_of_War) (2005). Numerous monologues in the movie focus on the weapon, and its effects on global conflict and the [gun running](/wiki/Gun_running) market.[[156]](#cite_note-156) In 2006, Colombian musician and peace activist [César López](/wiki/Cesar_Lopez) devised the [*escopetarra*](/wiki/Escopetarra), an AK converted into a guitar. One sold for US$17,000 in a fundraiser held to benefit the victims of [anti-personnel mines](/wiki/Anti-personnel_mine), while another was exhibited at the United Nations' [Conference on Disarmament](/wiki/Conference_on_Disarmament).[[157]](#cite_note-157) In Mexico, the AK-47 is known as "Cuerno de Chivo" (literally "Goat's Horn") because of its curved magazine design and is one of the weapons of choice of Mexican drug cartels. It is sometimes mentioned in Mexican folk music lyrics.[[158]](#cite_note-158)

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

* [Comparison of the AK-47 and M16](/wiki/Comparison_of_the_AK-47_and_M16)
* [List of Russian inventions](/wiki/List_of_Russian_inventions)
* [List of Russian weaponry](/wiki/List_of_Russian_weaponry)
* [List of assault rifles](/wiki/List_of_assault_rifles)
* [Table of handgun and rifle cartridges](/wiki/Table_of_handgun_and_rifle_cartridges)
* [Overview of gun laws by nation](/wiki/Overview_of_gun_laws_by_nation)

## Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

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## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

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## Bibliography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

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* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
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* Honeycutt Jr, Fred L. and Anthony, Patt F. *Military Rifles of Japan.* (1996) *Fifth Edition*, 8th printing; Julin Books. ISBN 0-9623208-7-0.
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
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* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)
* [How the AK-47 Rewrote the Rules of Modern Warfare](http://www.wired.com/magazine/2010/11/ff_ak47/all/1) – Three-part article by [C. J. Chivers](/wiki/C._J._Chivers), for [*Wired Magazine*](/wiki/Wired_(magazine))
* *Ружье. Оружие и амуниция* 1999/3, pp. 18–21 has an article about the AK-47 prototypes
* М.Т. Kalashnikov, "[Кто автор АК-47?](http://www.kalashnikov.ru/upload/medialibrary/8c5/04_07.pdf)" (Who is the author of AK-47?) – an article rejecting some of the alternative theories as to the authorship of the AK-47, *Kalashnikov* magazine, 2002/2, pp. 4–7 (in Russian)
* М. Degtyaryov, "[Неочевидное очевидное](http://www.kalashnikov.ru/upload/medialibrary/910/018_023.pdf)" – an article comparing the internals of the StG 44 and AK-47, *Kalashnikov* magazine, 2009/4, pp. 18–23 (in Russian)
* "[В преддверии юбилея...](http://www.kalashnikov.ru/upload/medialibrary/499/018_022.pdf)" Transcription of the commission report on the testing round from the summer of 1947; no winner was selected at this point, but the commission held Kalashnikov's, Dementiev's and Bulkin's designs as most closely satisfying TTT number 3131. *Kalashnikov* magazine, 2009/8, pp. 18–22 (in Russian)
* "[Путёвка в жизнь](http://www.kalashnikov.ru/upload/medialibrary/843/016_022.pdf)" Report/letter on the final round of testing, 27 December 1947, declaring Kalashnikov's design the winner. *Kalashnikov* magazine, 2009/9, pp. 16–22 (in Russian)
* Articles on the 1948 military trials: "[На пути в войска](http://www.kalashnikov.ru/upload/medialibrary/b62/064_066.pdf)" and "[ПЕРВЫЙ В ДИНАСТИИ](http://www.kalashnikov.ru/upload/medialibrary/c06/008_013.pdf)", *Kalashnikov* magazine, 2009/10-11
* [Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[Template:Wiktionary](/wiki/Template:Wiktionary) [Template:Wikiquote](/wiki/Template:Wikiquote) [Template:Commons](/wiki/Template:Commons)

* [US Army Operator's Manual for the AK-47 Assault Rifle](/wiki/S:AK-47_Operator's_Manual)
* [AK Site – Kalashnikov Home Page](http://kalashnikov.guns.ru/) [Template:Wayback](/wiki/Template:Wayback)
* [Nazarian's Gun's Recognition Guide (MANUAL) AK 47 Manual (.pdf)](http://www.nazarian.no/images/wep/284_US_Army_AK47.pdf)
* [The Timeless, Ubiquitous AK-47](http://www.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,1964810,00.html) – slideshow by [*Time*](/wiki/Time_(magazine)) magazine
* [Legendary Kalashnikov: Story of AK-47 Rifle](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UQtFYkvascA) ([RT's](/wiki/RT_(TV_network)) Documentary)
* [AK-47: The Weapon Changed the Face of War](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=6539945) – audio report by [*NPR*](/wiki/NPR)
* [The AK-47: The Gun That Changed The Battlefield](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=130493013) – audio report by [*NPR*](/wiki/NPR)
* [AK-47 Documentary: Part 1](http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=na2_Nw31BBI) & [Part 2](http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=PB1VuBWTyvY) by [*Al Jazeera English*](/wiki/Al_Jazeera_English)
* [AK-47 Full Auto, U.S. Army in Iraq](https://archive.org/details/AkmAk-47TypeFullAutoIraqU.s.Army) from the [*Internet Archive*](/wiki/Internet_Archive)
* [Years of the gun: A political history of the AK-47 in Pakistan](http://www.dawn.com/news/1076328) by [*Dawn News*](/wiki/Dawn_News)

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