

US Army AK-47 Machine Gun vs. the M16 or M14

Which would you rather see the United States Army using, the AK-47 or the M16? Most people prefer the M-16 without a doubt. The M-16/M4 has superior accuracy, ergonomics, and is just as reliable as the AK with proper cleaning and lubrication. The available accessories such as rail systems, optical sights, suppressors, etc. far outweigh the available accessories for the AK system.

The AK is a fine rifle for untrained peasants, and conscripts, but for a modern Army there are far better choices.

First off the M-14 fires the 7.62 X 51mm round, also known as the .308 Winchester. The AK-47 fires the 7.62 X 39mm. These are two vastly different rounds. In military loads the 7.62 NATO drives a 150-168 grain bullet at 2550-2700fps. The 7.62 x 39mm drives a 124gr bullet at around 2100-2200fps. As you can see the 7.62 x 39mm is no where near as powerful as the 7.62 NATO. The 7.62 NATO is a full powered round, as the 7.62 x 39 is an intermediate powered round.

The 7.62 NATO is basically a shortened 30/06, while the 7.62 X 39mm is derived from the German MP-44 Sturmgewer 7.92 Kurtz.

In the M-16 series, the prefix XM denotes experimental. These weapons were never put into service for the most part, as they were prototypes. The basic receiver layout is the same, the different A2, A3, etc, denote different FCG parts and optic and sighting systems.

The AK today is for all intents and practicality, the same weapon it was in 1947. The Communist Bloc does not have the same doctrine when it comes to small arms that the west does.

I am a certified armorer for the M-16/M4 system by a current Government contractor, and I have also had several thousand rounds of experience with the AK system as well.

Due to all of that experience I can tell you that, the M-16 is not as unreliable as some claim, and that the legendary reliability of the AK is somewhat overstated.

The AK is a good weapon, but it is no where refined as the M-16 series or any other assault rifle system in use today, such as the Galil, (which is a refined AK variant) AR-70, Sig 550, Steyr Aug, and some others. The M-16 is the most widely used 5.56mm weapon in the world today. It has been the longest used standard issue rifle in US history for a reason. It works.

As far as the M-14, it is a fine rifle. All things being equal, I would choose a 7.62mm rifle as well, if I were going into harms way. But my choice would be the FN/FAL. The M-14 and the FAL were in the trial together back in the 1950 for adoption by the US military. The M-14 won the tests and was adopted by the US. The FAL was adopted by 93 other nations, and still serves today in parts of the world. Both are a good choice, but it does come down to that whole personal preference thing.

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About the Author

Victor Epan is an expert consultant for <http://www.CombatCloth.info/>. CombatCloth.info carries the best selection of combat clothing, gear, and accessories on the market: <http://www.CombatCloth.info/categories/adventure-clothing-foot-head-handwear-rain-gear-logo-apparel.html>