

Sample Instruction Guide

AR-15 Firing Pin Replacement

by Lynn Houston

Method:

I conducted a phone interview on this subject with an armorer for a police department in Ulster County, New York. I also engaged in online research using the websites of gun manufacturers and credentialed subject matter experts. This sample guide demonstrates my skills in synthesizing and summarizing information, properly applying a technical vocabulary, and writing clear instructions.

Problem:

A blunted or damaged firing pin will keep the weapon from properly discharging. To diagnose this problem, first make sure that the ammunition itself is not defective. One of the signs of a broken firing pin is the lack of a depression (or too light of a depression) on the cartridge primer. It should be noted that the use of too much lubricant on the bolt carrier group can mimic a damaged firing pin. If the weapon is not firing properly, verify that the firing pin hole is free of oil. If neither faulty ammunition nor excess oil is the problem, then proceed with the removal of the old firing pin and installation of the new one.

Tools Needed:

- A small pair of plyers
- A new firing pin

Preparation:

As is standard when conducting any maintenance on a firearm, first double-check that the weapon is not loaded.

Directions:

1. Push the rear rake-down pin toward the right in order to separate the lower receiver from the upper receiver.
2. Pull back the charging handle and remove the Bolt Carrier Group (BCG).
3. Using a small pair of pliers, pull out the Firing Pin Retaining Pin, a cotter pin embedded into the outside of the BCG facing.
4. Tip the BCG mechanism backwards and the firing pin will slide out of the bottom.
5. Verify that the tip of the firing pin has not broken off. If it has, and it remains lodged in the bolt, use the tip of a pair of pliers to push it through.
6. Insert new firing pin into BCG.
7. Replace Firing Pin Retaining Pin.
8. Make sure that the bolt of the BCG is in the out position.
9. Reinsert BCG into upper receiver so that it aligns with the grooves in the Charging Handle.