

Replacing the earlier M52/58, the Czech Vz58 is externally similar to the Soviet AK47 though it differs internally in several aspects.

The gas system utilises a short-stroke piston to drive the action rearwards, whereas the piston and bolt carrier of the AK47 are machined in one piece. There is no facility for gas adjustment. The action is locked by a tilting bolt system, whereas the AK47 uses a rotating bolt. A simpler trigger mechanism than the AK47, combined with an axial hammer, serve to make this part of the weapon more efficient than its Soviet counterpart. Although this weapon will use all standard Warsaw Pact 7.62 mm × 39 mm ammunition, Czech-manufactured ammunition should normally be used.

Supplied in two versions, the Vz58p with either wood or fibre compound stock, fore-end and pistol grip (earlier versions used wood) and the Vz58vp with a folding metal stock (for parachute and armoured troops), the Vz58 can be fitted with a bayonet and flash hider. A bipod is also available but, when fitted, prevents the use of the bayonet. A tangent leaf rearsight is graduated to 800 m in 100 m increments. The front sight is of the protected post type.

Some 1.4 kg lighter than the AK47, the Vz58 will tend to climb rapidly on fully automatic fire, but is nevertheless a well-designed and manufactured weapon.

In service with the Czechoslovak forces.

MAS36 and M1936CR39 (folding stock) rifles

Manufacturer: Manufacture d'Armes de Saint-Etienne (France)

<i>Calibre</i>	7.5 mm
<i>Dimensions</i>	Length 101.8 cm (M1936CR39—88.64 cm (or 61.7 cm with stock folded))
	Barrel length 57.4 cm (M1936CR39—44.95 cm)
<i>Weight</i>	3.8 kg (M1936CR39—3.6 kg)
<i>Effective range</i>	500 m (M1936CR39—450 m)
<i>Operation</i>	Bolt
<i>Muzzle velocity</i>	820 m/sec
<i>Sight</i>	Front—barley corn with guards Rear—ramp with aperture
<i>Magazine</i>	5 round integral staggered-row box type

Introduced in 1936, using the then new 7.5 mm M29 cartridge, the MAS36 uses a modified Mauser type of bolt action. The main difference lies in the position of

the locking lugs which, in the MAS36, engage into the receiver directly above the trigger. Although this allows a shorter bolt stroke, it sacrifices the strength of the Mauser, which lies in its breech-locking lugs.

The 5 round magazine is loaded by using clips, or cartridges inserted singly. A bayonet can be fitted into a slot below the barrel, and when not in use is taken out, reversed, and replaced in the slot in a similar fashion to a cleaning rod.

A parachute version (designated M1936CR39) was produced with folding aluminium stock and shorter barrel. A postwar version (the M1936M51) has a built-in grenade launcher.

Although no longer in first-line service in France, the MAS36 is still used for training and may be encountered in many of the ex-French colonies.

In service with the French and French ex-colonial forces.



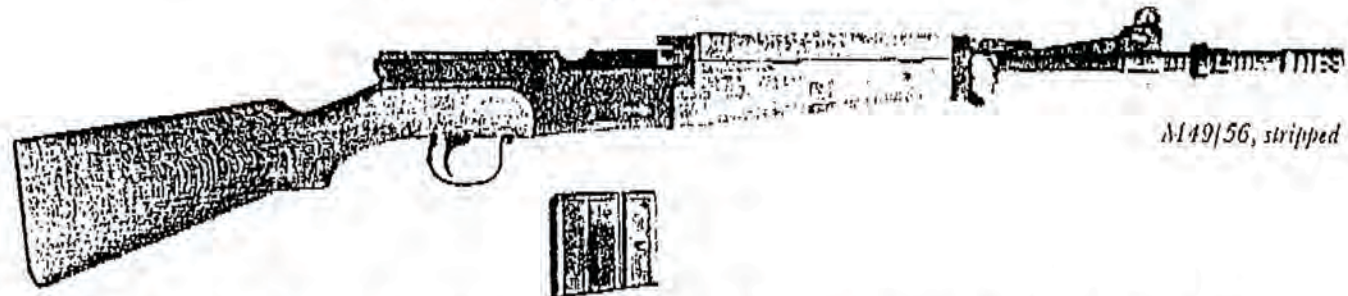
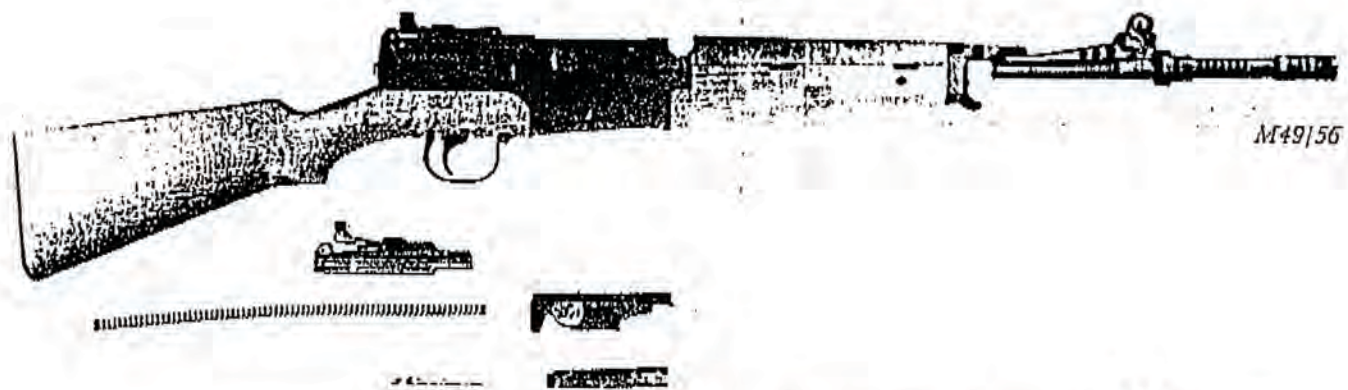
MAS 36

M49 and M49/56 rifles

Manufacturer: Manufacture d'Armes de Saint-Etienne (France)

<i>Calibre</i>	7.5 mm	<i>Sight</i>	Front—blade with protecting ears
<i>Dimensions</i>	Length 110 cm Barrel length 58 cm (M49/56—52.6 cm)	<i>Magazine</i>	Rear—ramp with aperture
<i>Weight</i>	4.7 kg (M49/56—3.9 kg)	<i>Cyclic rate</i>	10 round detachable box type
<i>Effective range</i>	540 m		Semi-automatic
<i>Operation</i>	Gas		
<i>Muzzle velocity</i>	825 m/sec (M49/56—820 m/sec)		

Developed to replace the MAS36 bolt-action rifle, the M49 and the updated semi-automatic M49/56 utilise main design features from other well-proven weapons.



The gas system is similar to that of the Swedish Ljungman M42 in that, instead of the usual piston, the gas is tapped off through the gas port in the barrel and then passes down a tube, the other end of which protrudes slightly into the bolt carrier. The gas hits the carrier, forcing it to the rear and allowing the reloading cycle to take place. The weapon's tilting bolt-locking system is also that of the Ljungman and Tokarev rifles. The action remains open when the last round has been fired, and the weapon is easily field stripped.

Both the M49 and 49/56 have grenade launchers permanently attached, the sights for these being mounted on the left-hand side and top of the barrel respectively. A rubber butt cushion is issued for use with the grenade

launcher. The M49/56, but not the M49, has provision for a bayonet.

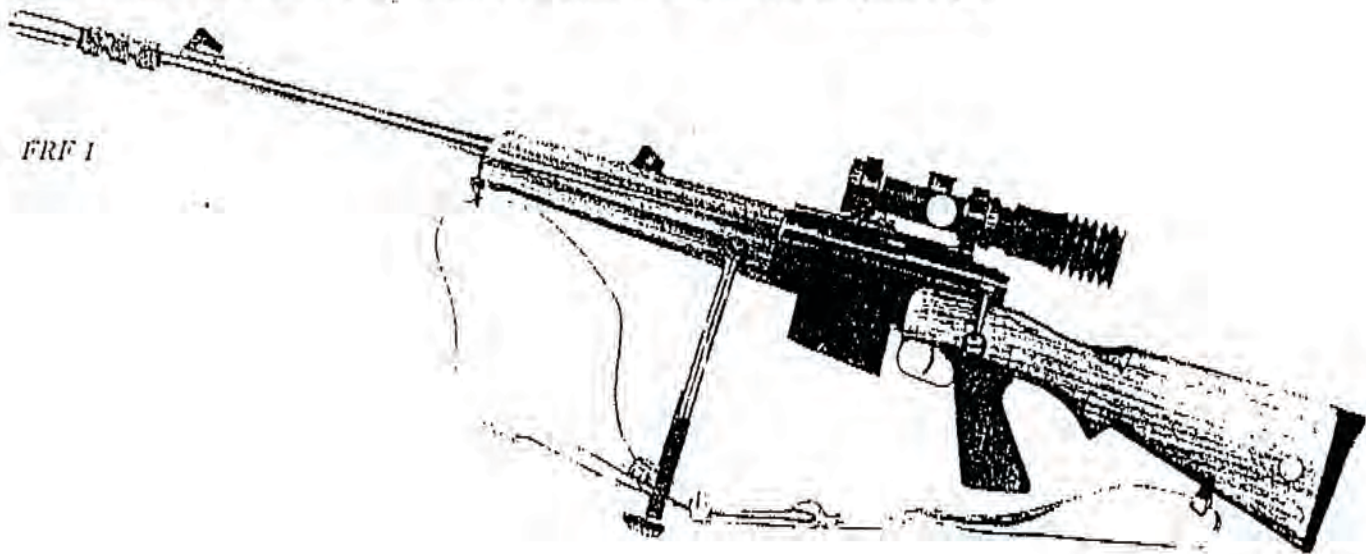
The detachable magazine (the release catch of which is mounted on the magazine itself) may be filled with single rounds or with 5 round charges (called 'stripper clips' in the USA). Both models have grooves cut in the left-hand side of the receiver to accommodate a telescopic sight. Normal sights are blade type front, and ramp with aperture rear. A luminous night sight may also be fitted.

The weapon saw considerable service with the French Army in Indo-China.

In service with the French and ex-French colonial forces.

FRF1 rifle

Manufacturer: Manufacture Nationale D'Armes de Saint-Etienne (France)



7.5-mm MODEL 1949 (MAS-49)

The French MAS-49 Rifle is a gas-operated, magazine fed rifle which utilizes a direct gas thrust against the bolt carrier to operate the mechanism. This weapon is another example of the French design technique in which the good points of numerous weapons have been incorporated into one system. The bolt is cammed down in front of a shelf in the bottom of the receiver by camming surfaces in the bolt carrier similar to the Soviet Tokarev and Belgian FN actions; the gas piston and cylinder components usually found in gas operated rifles are eliminated, the gas being directed through a gas tube directly against the face of the bolt carrier similar to the Swedish Ljungman system. A grenade launcher is attached to the muzzle of the piece which can be adjusted for range by a worm gear located on the left side of the forward stock band. This weapon is simple to operate and easy to disassemble. The magazine catch is a component part of the magazine, rather than being a part of the weapon; and the magazine can be loaded through the top of the receiver by strip-clips.

FUNCTIONING

This rifle utilizes a direct gas thrust system of operation. With a loaded magazine inserted in the magazine well, or an empty magazine inserted and then loaded through the top of the receiver, the bolt handle is drawn to the rear, drawing the bolt carrier and bolt rearward to override and cock the hammer. The hammer is held to the rear by the sear when the bolt handle is released. The bolt and carrier move forward under impulse of the compressed recoil spring and the bolt strips a round from the magazine and chambers it. The bolt comes to a stop against the rear face of the barrel and the bolt carrier continues its forward movement for $9/16$ inch during which time camming surfaces inside the carrier force the rear of the bolt down in front of a shelf in the bottom of the receiver. When the trigger is pulled the sear releases the hammer which pivots forward to strike the firing pin driving it into the primer. Gas is tapped from the barrel into a gas tube mounted above the barrel. The upper forward face of the bolt carrier is drilled to a depth of $7/8$ inches to surround the rear of the gas tube when the action is closed. The gas traveling through the gas tube impinges directly against the bolt carrier in the hole in the face of the carrier, driving the carrier rearward. The carrier moves independent of the bolt for $9/16$ inches before the bolt is cammed up to unlock by the camming surfaces inside the carrier. The gas tube is still inside of the carrier for an additional $5/16$ inches rearward travel as a precaution against gas venting from the rear of the tube. The rearward movement of the bolt and carrier cocks the hammer and the piece is ready to fire again. This weapon fires semi-automatic and the trigger must be pulled for each shot.

CHARACTERISTIC DATA

Caliber	7.5-mm (M29 cidge)
Operation	Gas
Type of Fire	Semi-auto only
Rate of Fire	40 rpm
Type of Feed	Box 10 rd cap
Weight, empty	10.4 lbs
Overall length	43.2 in
Effective range	540 meters

FIELD STRIP PROCEDURE

STEP	ACTION
1.	Push down on Cover Latch.
2.	Push forward on Cover.
3.	Lift Cover up and remove rearward off the Receiver, the Recoil Spring exerts pressure on the Cover during this operation.
4.	Remove Recoil Spring.
5.	Grasp Bolt Handle and pull Bolt Carrier with assembled Bolt rearward and upward. When the dismounting notches line up the Carrier can be lifted up out of the Receiver. Lift Bolt out of Bolt Carrier and remove Firing Pin.

ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

Assemble in the reverse order. Slide Firing Pin into Bolt and assemble Bolt to Bolt Carrier, engage Firing Pin base into notch in Carrier. Slide Bolt Carrier and assembled Bolt into Receiver. Place Recoil Spring into hole in rear of Bolt Carrier. Slide Buffer Guide and Tube, carried inside of Cover into rear of Recoil Spring, and slide Cover into grooves in Receiver, push forward slightly, and down and then pull to the rear so that Cover Latch engages.

LOADING AND FIRING

To load: Grasp Bolt Handle and draw Bolt to the rear and release. Push Safety Button located on right front of Trigger Guard to "SAFE." The Safety Button cannot be put on "SAFE" unless the Hammer is cocked. Insert loaded Magazine into Magazine Well, and draw the Bolt Handle to the rear and release. Bolt will strip a round from the Magazine and chamber it. If the Magazine is not loaded when inserted into weapon, draw the Bolt Handle to the rear, the Bolt hold-open device will keep the Bolt open. Load the Magazine from the top of the Receiver from five-round strip-clips. When ten rounds have been loaded into the Magazine draw the Bolt Handle to the rear slightly and release. The Bolt will strip a round from the Magazine and chamber it.

To fire: Push Safety Button to "FIRE." Pull the Trigger. The weapon will fire. This weapon fires semi-automatic only and the Trigger must be pulled for each shot.

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