

Collecting and Shooting the Military Surplus Rifle



surplusrifle

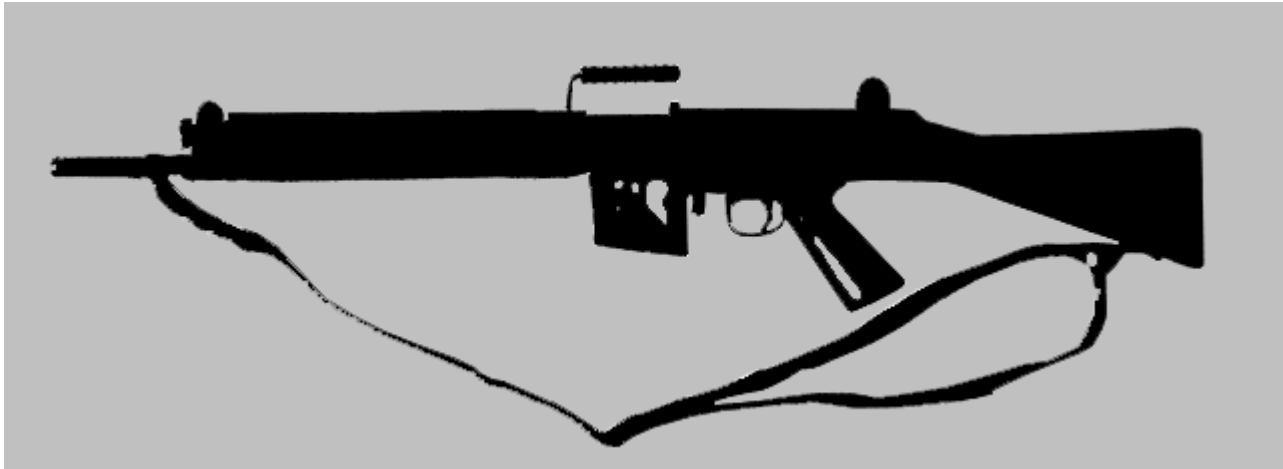
DuraCoat®
Firearm Finishes
LAUER CUSTOM WEAPONRY

Impervious to Impact, scratching, solvents and climate! Easy to apply! No pre-heating, blasting or baking required. Available in over sixty colors and 15 Peel 'N Spray CamoPak

OUR SPONSORS

Please make certain to visit our new Showcase of Sponsors!
[More!](#)

MOJO, Baby!!!
Smartest \$ you'll ever spend on your m



Setting My Sights On...Things That I Covet

Article by [Jamie Mangrum](#)

[Adobe PDF Downloadable Version of Article](#)

I have been coveting the [DSA Arms FAL carbines](#) that I always see at a local gun store for some time now. They are really hot looking little firearms. I had an Imbel receiver in a box sitting at home (don't we all?) and when I saw that the DSA [U.S. made 16 1/4 stainless steel barrel \(1\)](#) with an integral muzzle brake had been reduced in price from \$325 to only \$250 I decided it was time for me to order one and do some FAL building. I made the trek to my friend Randall's house and we installed the barrel and [headspaced](#) it.

I already had a bolt carrier, bolt, lower receiver frame, gas piston and spring. I ordered a [U.S. Made charging handle \(2\)](#) from Tapco.

I live in California, so I needed to affix a 10 round magazine so it could not be removed without the use of tools. Like an [SKS](#) I would load the magazine from the top. DSA makes a really nice, pre-made, close looking replica of the receiver cover found on some of the T-48 rifles. The T-48 was the U.S. designation for the [FAL rifle](#) while we were testing it in trials during the 1950's before the adoption of the M14. Randall made cuts in the rear of the receiver so the [DSA T-48 stripper clip receiver cover](#) would fit properly. To be honest I prefer the looks and functionality of the T-48 style receiver cover anyways because it

makes it much easier to clear malfunctions and jams from the receiver and get back into the firefight...or I mean shooting down range at your target. I ordered a new [U.S. made 10 round magazine \(3, 4, 5\)](#) and secured it. I did this with a number six shot pellet and a small pin cut to the length of the compressed magazine release spring. You install the pellet so it rests against the magazine and then slide the pin inside the magazine release spring and push this against the pellet. Then you insert the magazine release lever and bolt stop and secure both with the screw. This makes it so the magazine cannot be removed without removing the magazine release/bolt hold open screw. What is great about this method is you do not have to drill and tap the rifle and install set screws or rivets that permanently modify your rifle. What is bad about this method is it is somewhat difficult to complete. You should have more than one pin and pellet as you will possibly lose several as they fly across the room. Trust me...this will not be the only thing flying around the room. My dining room soon had colorful expletives flying around until I finally got the hang of the installation process.

I ordered a new [U.S. made furniture set](#) (hand guard, pistol grip, and butt stock) ([6, 7, 8](#)) and also a [U.S. made hammer, trigger and sear kit \(9, 10, 11\)](#). I put everything together and stood back grinning from ear to ear like a proud father admiring a new child. All I had left to purchase to complete the ensemble was a set of front and rear sights. I thought about going with the traditional post type front sight but then saw the [KNS Precision FAL sights](#). It is a small hooded aperture front sight that has a cross hair or duplex reticule installed. I opted for the duplex reticule as pictured in **figure 1**.

Notes on the Required U.S. Made Parts

Creating a rifle from a parts kit can be somewhat a daunting process when you consider the possible legalities involved. I have held off till now on publishing anything on building an FAL because I did not want to inadvertently do something wrong and assemble something illegal and have it sitting out in print for everyone to see (and prosecute). The approach I outlined above you will see that I went overboard with the number of U.S. Made parts that I used in my new carbine. I did this because I feel it is much better to spend a little cash up front then it is to pay hundreds of thousands of dollars later on legal fees and still face the potential of stiff fines and possible jail time. When building an FAL, according to everything I have read you need to replace 7 out of 17 identified parts with U.S. Made parts. I opted for 11, possibly 12 if the ATF counts the barrel and integral muzzle brake as 2 parts. It can be an expensive endeavor just meeting the legal requirements and this does not include the cost of tools to complete the assembly work. If you plan on building more than one rifle then potentially the one time investment is worth it. I have assembled four rifles as of this date and find the FAL to be in my opinion one of the best military rifles ever made. Plus, I think it is one of the more handsome military rifles - period.

A Note from Brownells on Building a Legal FAL Rifle or Carbine

The 1989 Importation Ban listed 20 parts that were considered by our government to be essential in the making of a non-sporting rifle and those parts are listed below. An individual that wanted to assemble a banned firearm from a parts kit could NOT use more than 10 parts that were not produced here in the U.S. and included in this list.

1. Frames, receivers, receiver castings, forging, or stampings
2. Barrels
3. Barrel extensions
4. Mounting blocks

5. Muzzle attachments
6. Bolts
7. Bolt carriers
8. Operating rods
9. Gas pistons
10. Trigger housings
11. Triggers
12. Hammers
13. Sear
14. Disconnecter
15. Buttstock
16. Pistol grips
17. Forearm, handguard
18. Magazine body
19. Magazine follower
20. Magazine floorplate

If you study an exploded diagram of a FAL, you will notice that the FAL does not have all of the parts listed above. It does have 17 of them though and those parts are listed below.

1. Barrel
2. Operating rod (in reality this is the charging handle and not an op rod but that's how our government sees it.)
3. Magazine body
4. Magazine follower
5. Magazine floorplate
6. Handguard
7. Pistol grip
8. Buttstock
9. Hammer
10. Trigger
11. Sear
12. Muzzle attachment
13. Bolt
14. Bolt carrier
15. Gas piston
16. Trigger housing
17. Frame

So, since the FAL has only 17 of the banned, imported parts and you can only use 10 parts, you must substitute seven of those parts listed above with domestically produced parts if you want to assemble a FAL from an imported kit. Below is a listing of the U.S.-made parts that are most readily available and represent probably the lowest cost.

The information above is taken from an excellent article provided from Brownells at:

Note: When reading the article ignore everything past the title of "1994 Assault Weapons Ban" as it is no longer relevant since the sunset of the assault weapon ban.

<http://www.brownells.com/asp/NS/GunTech/NewsletterArchive.aspx?p=0&t=1&i=388>



KNS Precision FAL STG-58 Front Sight

Price: \$32

KNS Precision Inc.

3168 N. State Hwy. 16
Fredericksburg, TX 78624

Phone: 1-830-997-9391

Email: sales@knsprecisioninc.com

URL: <http://www.knsprecisioninc.com/SIGHTS FN FAL STG-58.htm>

Note on Installation of the Front Sight Post

I chose not to document the installation process in great detail. On most FALs the front sight installs with the following parts:

Belgian Front Sight



Coil Spring #010 Fixing Plate #011

The coil spring goes in first and then the fixing plate sits on top of the spring with the curvature pointing upwards. The sight post screws down compressing the fixing plate against the spring. The small tabs will fit into the small slots in the front sight housing.

The parts can be ordered from:

<http://www.dsarms.com/item-detail.cfm?ID=010&storeid=1&image=fsbelsprngplat.gif>

For the rear sight I went with [DSA's U.S. Made Tactical Para Steel Rear Sight](#) with positive click windage knob. I think the original FAL aperture style rear sight is a phenomenal rear sight but since I was installing this on a carbine I thought the Para style with protective wings would fit the over-all look better. I also liked the idea of having a knob for windage as a opposed to loosening screws and sliding the rear sight back and forth.

figure 2



Tactical Para Steel Rear Sight with positive click windage knob, U.S. Made

Price: \$59.95

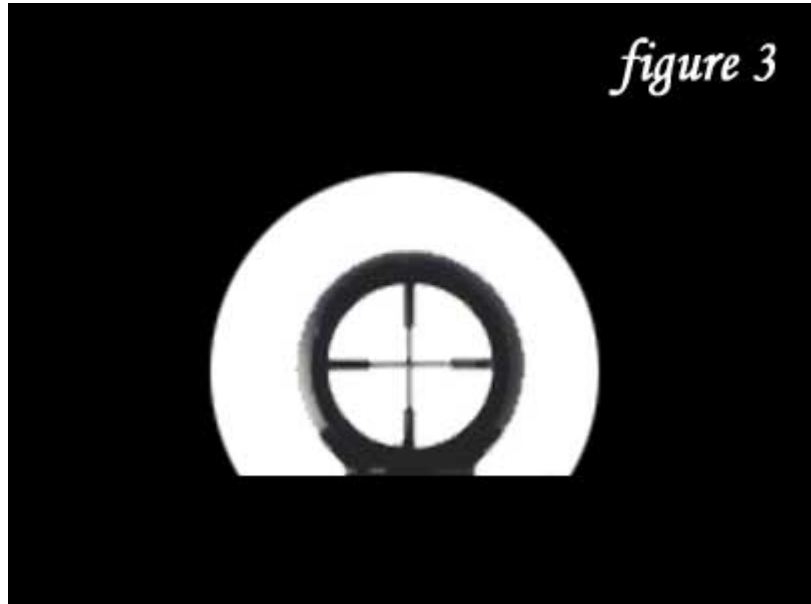
DSA, Inc.
P.O. Box 370
Barrington, IL 60011

Phone: (847) 277-7258

Email: dsarms@earthlink.net

URL: <http://www.dsarms.com/item-detail.cfm?ID=DSA110&storeid=1&image=rsightpara.gif>

Note on Installation of the Rear Sight
I chose not to document the installation process in great detail. On most FALs the rear sight installs with two screws. Slide the rear sight in place with the windage adjustment knob on the right hand side. Center the sight and install the left and right rear sight screws.
The parts can be ordered from:
http://www.dsarms.com/subcats.cfm?Category=07&storeid=1



The sight picture is great as pictured in **figures 3 & 4**. It is really easy to center the front aperture in the rear aperture while laying the crosshairs of the reticule directly over the target. It is kind of like having a solar powered scope.



figure 5

Figure 5 shows my completed project. Between you and I, I now have a hankering to see what the [U.S. Made Olive Green Furniture](#) would look like on my creation. Heck, I have already ordered one while writing this. Heck, I think you always need something to look forward to.



figure 6



Accuracy was pretty good. I am still breaking in the barrel but **figures 6 & 7** represent my two best targets out at 100 yards. I like the sight setup and do not have any problem recommending them for installation on any FAL.

[Adobe PDF Downloadable Version of Article](#)

[Site Disclaimer](#)

Article by [Jamie Mangrum](#)