

One advantage of a revolver is that if you have any of it, you have all of it. Not so with an auto pistol. None of the doggone things will work without the magazine. By the way, I always prefer to call the removable portion a magazine, rather than a 'clip'. To me, the term 'clip' brings to mind the old M-1 Garand clips that flew out of the gun immediately after the last shot. A magazine, by my definition, is an assembly of components that when used together, will feed the pistol fresh rounds as fired cases are ejected from the gun. A clip is exactly what the name implies, a single component that will hold rounds together until needed.

The fact that a magazine has components suggests the need to maintain the assembly. A magazine is probably the most overlooked part of an auto pistol, and possibly the most abused. Magazines are frequently dropped, either accidentally, on purpose, or during rapid reloads. Sometimes they are dropped with rounds still inside. This will compress the rounds on top of the spring on impact, and during decompression, the rounds are slammed into the delicate feed lips, possibly deforming them forever. Try to avoid dropping magazines that still have rounds loaded in them, especially on concrete.

Usually, they pick up a bit of dirt or sand, or even small gravel particles during their stay on the ground. Sometimes, heaven forbid, they are stepped on and ground into the dirt. They are frequently left loaded, compressing their springs to the max, and left unattended for years. And nearly always, the practical shooter will slam them into the gun with authority. All these actions can be abusive to what could rightly be called the most delicate part of an autoloading pistol.

I have known many shooters who cared for their guns with the greatest attention, but never once thought about disassembling a magazine. Once I asked a shooter, who was looking for a cause of malfunction, if he ever disassembled and cleaned his magazines. He replied that he had the type that could not be disassembled! Friends, I have never seen a magazine that couldn't be disassembled.

Here is how to disassemble a standard magazine with a welded on base. I selected the welded on base for three reasons. One, it's our brand and was easily available. Two, it represents most types. And three, if your magazine has a removable base, you will probably know it, and can easily figure out how to take it apart.

First, assemble a few tools. You will need a punch or nail that will fit into the holes in the magazine. You will also need a blunt object to depress the follower. I have used a magnetic screwdriver with no bit installed, but a pencil would do. A length of heavy wire to make a hook type tool will be needed as well. Follow the photo as a guide for making your own.



To disassemble the magazine, depress the follower with the blunt object and press it down to a point where it can be seen below the third hole from the top. Then let it raise back up until you can capture the spring just below it. Insert the punch completely through the magazine and release the pressure on the follower. Now the spring is captured and the follower can be removed.



You should be able to reach in with your homemade hook and grab the front of the follower. It will take a bit of tugging and manipulation, but they will normally come out without any force. In fact, you would not want to use any force for fear of bending the follower.



Once the follower is removed, turn the magazine upside down, so the spring doesn't fly away, and pull the pin out to release the spring.



Note the position of the spring before you remove it from the magazine! This is very important. Notice that the spring is bent to have a definite angle when installed properly. This angle should be placed in such a way as the high point is facing forward, so as to lift the front of the follower. All magazine springs are intended to be installed this way, no matter what the brand, and it is necessary they be installed this way to hold the follower up in front. This will feed the rounds nose up, a condition essential to good feeding. Once you have closely inspected the proper spring installation, remove it completely.



Clean the spring, follower, and inside of the magazine tube thoroughly with solvent and reassemble in reverse order. Install the spring first and make sure the raised portion of the spring faces toward the front of the magazine. Then depress the spring into the tube with your blunt object so that it can be captured with the punch the third hole down.

Now install the follower by angling it through the front of the open feed area, and work it under the feed lips themselves. Do not force anything, or try to spread apart the feed lips. All followers will reinstall with no force! Once inside the magazine, press it down on top of the spring with your blunt object and then pull out the punch holding the spring. That's all there is to it!

Lubrication is up to the individual user. Most magazines will work dry. I prefer a bit of very light lubrication, but would suggest passing it up if you frequently shoot and drop magazines in a sandy area. Some ranges are covered with sand, and in that case those shooters would never lubricate their magazines and must clean them after every match. I shoot on a one inch gravel covered range and hardly ever bother to clean a magazine, but I do lightly lube the followers frequently. However, all magazines will accumulate burnt powder and bullet lube residue, therefore they should be cleaned regularly. Now that you know how, you don't have an excuse not to.