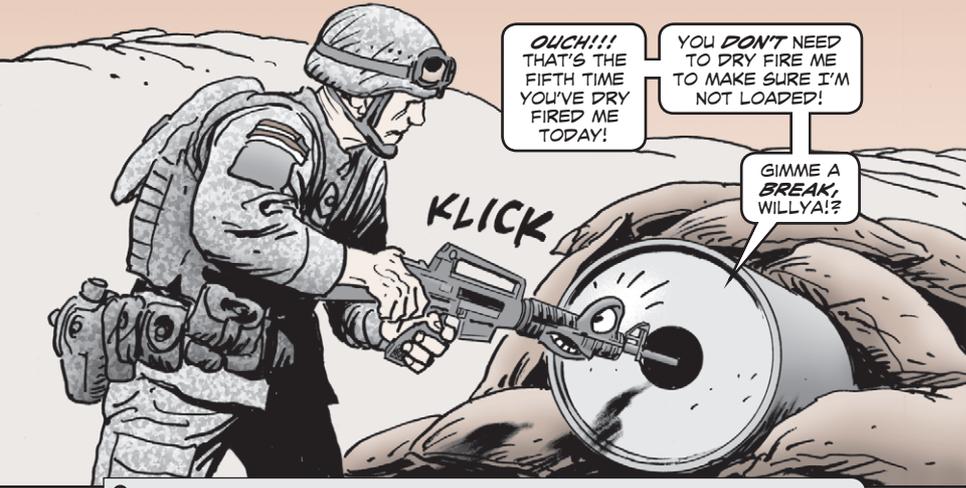


IS DRY FIRING *BAD*?



Dear Half-Mast,
 Here in Iraq we dry fire our weapons into a clearing barrel at almost every entry control point. That means some days we're dry firing a weapon as much as 12 times. We're wondering if all this dry firing hurts our weapons?
 SFC C.F.

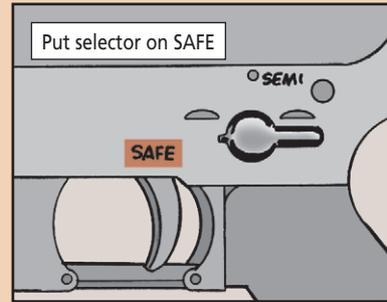
Dear Sergeant C.F.,

You bet repeated dry firing hurts your weapons. It slams the bolt on an empty chamber without the cushion of a cartridge case to help absorb the impact. So repeated dry firing will lead to increased wear and damage to the bolt and chamber. If the damage or wear isn't caught during PMCS and the bolt or barrel isn't replaced, the weapon could fail in combat.

All that dry firing isn't necessary to make sure a weapon isn't loaded. Every weapon's -10 TM gives the procedure for clearing a weapon and making sure it's safe. Commanders can save wear and tear on weapons by having soldiers do the -10 procedure instead of dry firing.



1. Point the weapon in a safe direction and place the selector lever on SAFE.



2. Press the magazine catch button and remove the magazine.

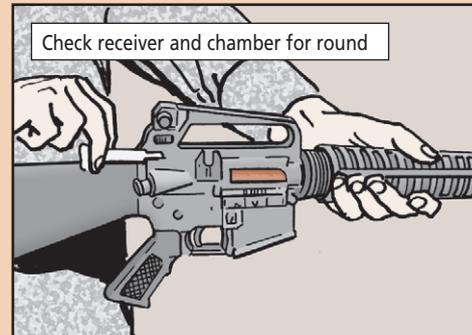


3. Pull the charging handle back to lock the bolt open.

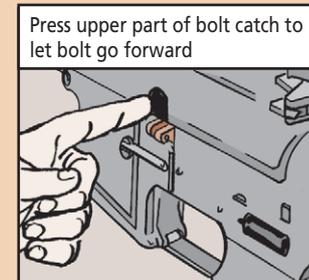


4. Press the bottom of the bolt catch and let the bolt move forward until it engages the bolt catch. Let the charging handle slide back into place. Make sure the selector is still on SAFE.

5. Check the receiver and chamber to make sure they contain no ammo.



6. With the selector still on SAFE, let the bolt go forward by pressing the upper portion of the bolt catch.



You can do this check in three minutes and save the wear and tear on your rifle or carbine that dry firing causes. And all the machine guns and the M9 pistol have similar quick clearing checks in their -10 TMs.

Half-Mast