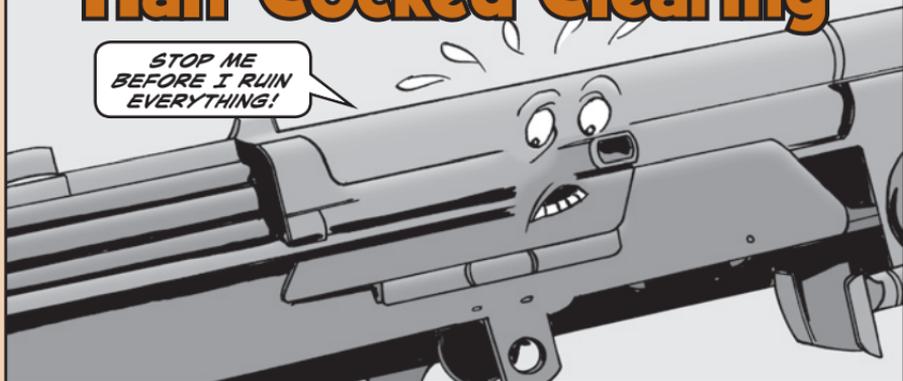


Half-Cocked Clearing

STOP ME BEFORE I RUIN EVERYTHING!



Dear Editor,

We're running into soldiers who have been told when clearing their M249 machine gun to pull back the charging handle and bolt just far enough to allow the safety to be depressed. Then they return the charging handle and bolt to the forward position. This is the wrong way to set the safety. Please tell soldiers the right way.

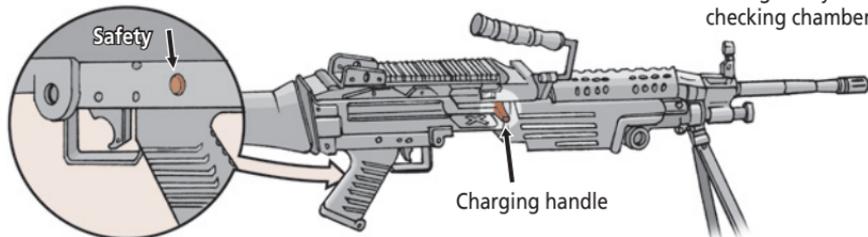
Editor's note: You bet. Soldiers should set the safety like it says on Page 2-16 in TM 9-1005-201-10:

SFC
98th Maint Co
Iraq

“Pull the charging handle all the way to the rear until the bolt is locked back. Then push the charging handle all the way forward until you hear it click. Push the safety all the way to the right until the red band is not visible.”

Now you can raise the feed tray cover and make sure there is no round in the chamber.

Push charging handle forward until it clicks before setting safety and checking chamber



Once you know the weapon is clear, lock the feed tray cover back in place. Take the M249 off SAFE, unlock the charging handle, pull the trigger, and ride the bolt forward with the charging handle. The safest way to carry the M249 is with the bolt forward. That way it can't accidentally fire.