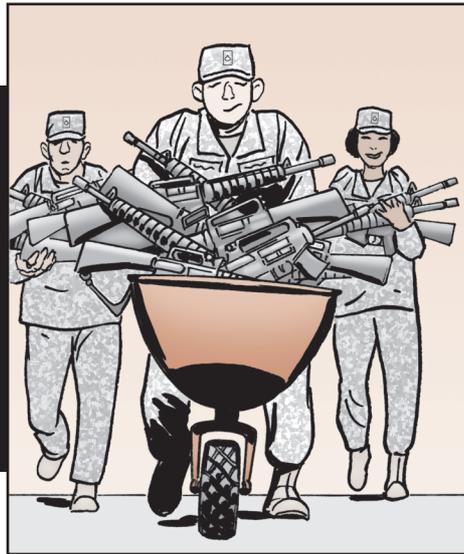


Let Field Support Support You!



Dear Editor,

Through our work repairing weapons here at the Ft Polk DOL, we've come up with several ways armorers can let their support support them:

Clean weapons thoroughly before you take them for gaging or repair. It is a waste of everyone's time to bring a dirty weapon to field support. A dirty weapon can't be gaged accurately, particularly for headspacing and barrel straightness. A dirty weapon will almost always flunk those two tests.

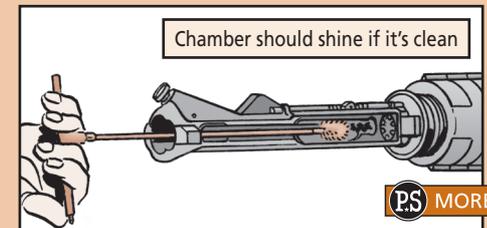
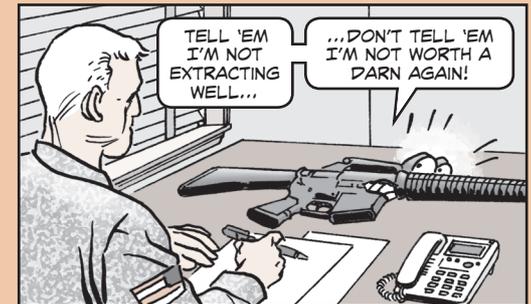
If we receive a dirty weapon, we immediately kick it right back to the unit, which means the armorer has to redo the paperwork. The armorer should check every weapon for cleanliness *before* he sends it to support.



Be as specific as possible about what's wrong when you fill out paperwork for repairs. Sometimes we receive forms that say nothing more than "Doesn't work." Then we have to try to figure out what the problem is. The more specific you are, the quicker we can repair the weapon.

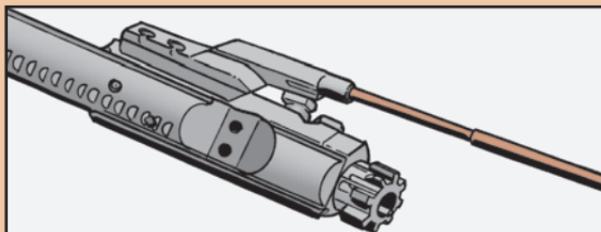
Pay special attention to the chamber. Armorers can save trips to support if they make sure the chambers of all their weapons are kept clean. A dirty chamber leads to extracting problems, which leaves shells stuck in the barrel. Once the barrel cools and contracts, it's sometimes impossible for us to get the shell out. Then we have to replace the barrel.

Some Soldiers think CLP alone will get the chamber clean. That's wrong. You need CLP (or RBC for the MK 19), a chamber brush, and lots of elbow grease to clean the chamber. A clean chamber should shine. You can check by shining a flashlight in the chamber.



Check the M16/M4 bolt carrier key. If the carrier key gets plugged up with carbon, the bolt won't go back far enough to chamber the next round. We're still finding Soldiers who are using cotton swabs to clean the carrier key. The cotton comes off inside the carrier key and plugs it up. Armorers should stress to their unit the only right way to clean the carrier key is with a worn out bore brush and CLP.

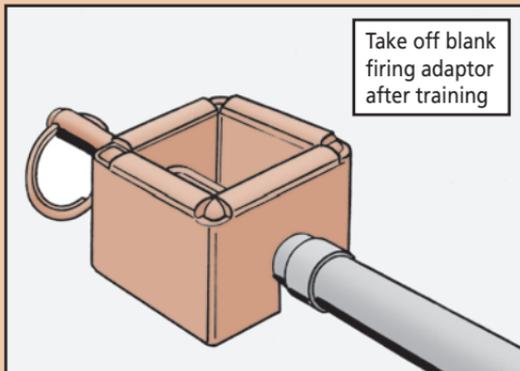
We recommend to armorers that they keep an old gas tube on hand. When they're checking weapons, they can stick the gas tube in the carrier key. If the tube sticks, they know the carrier key probably needs cleaning.



Use old gas tube to check if carrier key is OK

Remove the blank firing adapter ASAP.

Some units that spend most of their time training with blanks leave the blank adapters attached to the weapons, even when they're stored in the arms room. If the blank adapters are left on for a long time, they can become permanently stuck to the barrel. Then we have to replace the barrel. Remove the adapter when you're through training.



Take off blank firing adaptor after training

Remember that carbon hardens.

The longer you leave carbon in a weapon, the harder it is to clean out.

If carbon is left in your weapon, the next time you fire the carbon deposit just gets thicker and harder to remove. So cleaning your weapons immediately after firing will not only help your weapons, but also make cleaning easier in the future.



Editor's note: You guys are indeed the voices of experience. Thanks for sharing.

John Mayo
Terry Goynes
Ft Polk, LA

PS
END