

# CHECK GAS TUBE FIRST!

CARRIER KEY ON  
YOUR M16 OR M4  
WON'T SLIDE ON  
OR OFF THE GAS  
TUBE?

IF YOU'VE STRAIGHTENED  
OUT THE KEY WITH THE  
CARRIER TOOL, TRY  
ADJUSTING THE GAS  
TUBE LIKE THIS...



Dear Editor,

Your article on Pages 36-37 in PS 716 (Jul 12) gave a good procedure for checking the bolt carrier key on the M16 and M4. But you said in Step 4 that if the carrier key still won't mate easily with the gas tube after you've used the carrier key tool, you should replace the carrier key.

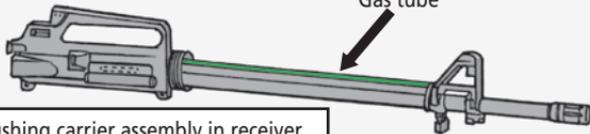
I would suggest before repairers replace the carrier key or bolt carrier assembly that they first check for a bent gas tube. Follow these steps:

1. Disassemble the bolt carrier assembly. Remove the bolt, firing pin, cam pin and firing pin retaining pin.
2. Remove the hand guards and the charging handle so you can see the gas tube.
3. Slowly insert the carrier assembly until you feel contact with the gas tube. While checking the gas tube where it enters the upper receiver, continue to push the carrier assembly into the receiver. If the gas tube is bent, you'll see movement where it enters the upper receiver.
4. The bolt carrier assembly should close under its own weight. If it doesn't, remove the bolt assembly from the bolt carrier assembly. Move the carrier assembly back and forth in the upper receiver and barrel assembly. If the gas tube hits the carrier key on the inside of the upper receiver or if the gas tube binds in the carrier key, slightly bend the gas tube in the area of the hand guard assemblies. Use your fingers only. A screwdriver can damage the end of the gas tube.

Carrier  
key



Gas tube



If gas tube moves when pushing carrier assembly in receiver, it's bent. Try adjusting end of tube with your fingers

After adjustment of the tube, check to see if the bolt carrier can be inserted and removed with no movement of the gas tube.

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*Editor's note: Excellent suggestion, Mr. Garner. Repairers can do this procedure in minutes and it may save having to replace the carrier key.*