



## Saiga .223 Magazine Options

(updated 08-03-07)

### 1) Factory Configuration

**Note:** No Modifications to the gun. Every standard AK magazine will need to be modified. Also, you can only use steel AK mags and factory plastic ones. German Weiger steel .223 mags work good. There may be others as well.

**Skills Required:** Welding and Filing.

- a) All standard AK mags need a feed ramp added to the front. This usually involves welding up to look like the factory mags although some have had success with a screw.
- b) The top of the front of the mag needs filed slightly where it engages the bottom of the trunnion.
- c) The back face above the catch on the standard .223 AK mag needs to be filed to lock in.

### 2) Hybrid Configuration (best option)

**Note:** Both the gun and magazines are modified. This will allow use of the factory mags as well as standard plastic and steel .223 AK mags, modified AK-74 mags, and Israeli Galil orlites.

**Skills Required:** Drilling, Tapping and Filing.

- a) A bullet guide needs to be added to the front trunnion. Also, depending on reliability, you may need to grind a slight bevel in the chamber face.
- b) The factory mags need to be filed down in front to resemble the front portions of AK74 and .223 AK mags. They will not be able to be used in a different rifle unless it has a guide installed.
- c) The top of the front of the .223 AK and AK-74 mags need to be filed slightly where they engage the bottom of the trunnion.
- d) The back faces above the catch on the standard .223 AK and AK-74 mags need to be filed.
- e) AK-74 magazines will need the followers modified or replaced.
- f) The Israeli OrLite .223 mags only need the front of the outsides filed to fit in the mag opening.

### 3) Military Configuration

**Note:** The gun is modified to lock in standard plastic and steel .223 AK and AK-74 mags. Due to the modifications done to the gun, factory mags will no longer fit properly. OrLites are also a no-go.

**Skills Required:** Drilling & Tapping, Filing and Machining.

- a) A bullet guide needs to be added to the front trunnion. Also, depending on reliability, you may need to file a slight bevel in the chamber face.
- b) The bottom of the trunnion needs to be machined down slightly where the top of the mags engage.
- c) The tab sticking forward in the rear of the magwell opening needs to be filed to allow the .223 AK mags to lock in.

**Option:** To retain use of the factory mags, you may need to file down the center of the front of the magazine to clear the bullet guide. Notch it out the same as the military high capacity magazines.

## **Recommended Magazines and Mods**



**Steel .223**

**Plastic .223**

**5.45x39 AK-74**

**Galil .223**

### **.223 Synthetic Orlite (Israeli Galil):**

These mags are the easiest to modify and the most reliable I have found for use in the Saiga 223. You simply remove some thickness from the outside, enough to allow it to fit in the magwell.

The steel versions of these are another story. The rear catch needs to be lowered to allow the bolt to pick up the round in the stack. Many times it will ride over it or drag forward and cause an ugly stovepipe jam. With some metalworking they could be made to be used.



### **Steel and Plastic .223**

These magazines work good in the Saiga. The steel ones are from Germany and other eastern European origins. The most popular plastic ones are from Bulgaria although ProMag in the U.S. has recently began making a version. You need to file down the lugs (**Fig A**) on the front so they are 0.05" to 0.06" min. Make sure that each side is of equal height and flat. Also file above the rear catch (**Fig B**) on the back. Only remove a little at a time and test fit. Remove enough so that it will barely click in.



**Fig A**



**Fig B**

### **5.45x39 AK-74 Plastic, Steel or Bakelite:**

These mags are cheap and plentiful. They are my #2 choice simply due to their low price and availability. You can use plastic, bakelite and steel ones. The mods are the same. In addition to the mods listed above for the .223 mags (**Figs A & B**), the AK-74 (5.45x39) Magazines require a few other modifications.

### **Followers:**

First, you will need to replace/modify the followers due to differences between 5.45x39 and .223 ammo.



Robinson Arms sells .223 followers for this purpose. They are about \$6 and they also count as a U.S. part.

I have a new preferred method for doing the followers. I plastic welded some 1/8" thick pieces on top to duplicate the Robinson Arms followers. Took all of 2 minutes to do with a soldering iron.

For Epoxy putty. There is an in-depth and technical write-up on the Saiga-12 forum under the Tech Section. Honestly it is a pain in the butt and I will no longer do them this way.

### **Mag Body:**

I have several of these AK-74 magazines and not all of them have this issue. When there is only a few rounds left in the mag and the spring tension is at it's weakest, the left side stack will hang up.-->

Take a dremel tool and smoothen the transition so the shoulder of the cartridge will not get stuck.



### **Factory Magazines:**

Once you install one of my bullet guides, your factory magazine will no longer fit. You will need to remove the front feedramp as shown in the below pic, enough to clear the new bullet guide. Basically duplicate the geometry on the .223 and AK74's.

