



M-14 Carbine, 20" barrel, ARMS mount, AR-15 Flashider, US GI fiberglass stock

M-14 Carbine, 18 1/2" barrel, Choate Mini 30 Flashider, Folding Stock

M-14 Folding Stock

If you attach the folder so that it slopes down when extended, recoil will slam the top tube into your cheek with enough force to HURT. Mounting the folding stock straight to the bore, or even sloping slightly upwards, works better to maximize comfort during recoil. For some people, with cheekbones in the wrong place, a folding stock on an M-14 may give a cheek weld that is too high to comfortably use the issue iron sights. For these people, if they really must have a folder on their M-14, the best solution will be to mount a scope.

While the folder makes the rifle a lot more versatile, it does change the way the rifle balances. The folding stock M-14 balances best for me when I also chop back some of the barrel. In fact, all M-14 rifles balance and handle better for me if I chop the barrel to 18 1/2" to 20". The resulting M-14 "Carbines" or "Bush Rifles" are compact, fast, and a lot easier to carry around.

M-14, 18 1/2" barrel, Folding Stock extended

You can make your own M-14 folder for a lot less than the price of a store bought Springfield Armoury folder. First get a Butler Creek folder for the Winchester 1200 shotgun, and a GI wood stock. The Winchester 1200 stock profile, with a shallow "V" notch, may seem like it is more work to duplicate, but the Winchester style is wider at the mounting point, and give the best results. The Butler Creek folder is an inch shorter than the Choate, and fits average sized people better. The BC stock is also cheaper than the

Choate, and the ones I've handled recently seem to lock up as tightly, or even better than the Choate.



Lay out the "V" notch behind the receiver on the GI wood stock so that the trigger is the right distance from the pistol grip, and so that the top of the folder, when extended, is close to parallel with the top of the action. Check that when folded the top tube of the folder is BELOW the action screw on the right side of the M-14 stock. Later you will

be removing some wood here, to relieve the stock for the top tube when folded.

After you have the notch duplicated on your GI wood stock, disassemble the Butler Creek folder. You will see two holes in the pistol grip/bracket. Use two 1 1/2" long thin black drywall screws here. Be careful when drilling for the screws that you don't drill at an angle into the receiver area. Mix up some epoxy, smear it over mounting surfaces and screws, and screw down the mounting block.



After the epoxy has set up, wrap some duct tape around the pistol grip and mounting part to protect it while you work. Take a 1/2 round rasp and start whittling until the M-14 stock blends into the Butler Creek pistol grip. Reassemble the folder to the mounting block, and close the folder. You will see that the top tube interferes with the right side of the M-14 stock. Take the 1/2 round rasp and relieve this area until the stock closes. Clean off all old finish [oven cleaner works well for this] and sand to clean

dry raw wood to provide a good foundation for paint. Paint interior with Black hi temperature "stove" paint. Paint exterior with "Truck Bed Liner" paint, which gives an "orange peel" mottled finish that is durable and attractive. Be careful not to build up too much paint at bedding surfaces as this can change accuracy and/or the trigger pull [possibly to the point of making the action unsafe].



Shortening the Barrel to make an M-14 Carbine:

The folder looks and balances best on an M-14 carbine, with a shortened 18 1/2" to 20" barrel. Before whacking a chunk off of your M-14 barrel, check legal requirements as to minimum barrel length and min. OAL. 16" will be the legal minimum barrel length if you are Yankee, or 18 1/2" if you are a Canuck. If adding a folding stock, check for minimum legal OAL, and if a pistol grip folder is legal in your jurisdiction.



18 1/2" barrel, Choate Mini 30 Flashider

18 1/2" barrel, Smith "NAVY" gas ring front sight

20" barrel, AR-15 Flashider, rifle is scoped so no front sight or rear sight

Realistically, for firearms chambered in 7.62 NATO, 18 1/2" is about the optimum compromise for barrel length. Any slight gain in handling by going shorter is offset by massive increases in muzzle blast and decreases in velocity. If you really want to duplicate 7.62X39 Russian ballistics in your M-14, why not just buy a Ruger Mini-30?

As for accuracy with the M-14, you'll probably find that the barrel plays only a small part in overall performance. If the crowning is done properly, there will probably be negligible accuracy changes due to cutting the barrel. For the simplest shorty, and to allow restoring to original, just take off the original GI front sight/flash hider from the 22" barrel. If you are mounting a scope, there is no real need for a front sight. If a front sight is required, the easiest to install is the Smith "NAVY" Gas Cylinder Lock design, which looks very much like an H & K front sight.

You want to be careful when cutting a GI CHROME lined barrel. To do the job professionally, you'll need a lathe, a barrel vice, and an action wrench. Pull the barrel, strip it, and set it up in the lathe. The muzzle end should be supported with a live center, with the barrel also supported near the cut with a steady rest. With a chromed barrel, make the initial cut a bit forward of desired finished length, and plug the barrel at the cutoff point with a bullet. Use a sharp carbide bit and work from the inside to the outside to finish the crown. Otherwise, the chrome can flake off while being worked, and this would NOT be a good thing for accuracy.

Then, if desired, turn a 1/2" X 28 TPI shoulder at the muzzle to fit a standard AR-15 Flash hider. One of Smith's AR-15/ .30 Caliber muzzle brakes could be substituted here. [Note I said .30 Cal, not .22 Cal].



GI M-14 Flashider

Choate Mini-30 Bird Cage "slip on" flashider ears milled to accept GI M-14 front sight

If you prefer a longer sight radius or don't want to thread the end of the barrel, I have fitted some of

these carbines with Choate Mini-30 combination Front Sight/Bird Cage "slip on" flash hidere. This requires turning the inside of the Choate part to match the OD of your barrel at the cutoff point. I can't give you exact dimensions here, as cutoff point and barrel OD variations will determine the final size. This method gives a very professional appearance, which closely duplicates the original Öin miniature. However, in reality, any "Flash elimination " from either of these shorty flash hidere is negligible.

To get the open sights to work with a shorty barrel, the rear sight aperature leg may need to be ground down as much as possible, to allow it to travel lower. Leave enough at the end to prevent the rear sight from coming all the way out if raised too high. You will probably find that the Choate front sight is still much too low. If you have access to a milling machine, you can mill the top ears of the Choate front sight into a dovetail which is an exact copy of the M-14 front sight mounting block. This closely duplicates the original in appearance. The Smith front sight has a removable/adjustable post, which should be close in height, however with the Smith you do get slightly shorter sight radius.

Larry Z., October 10th 2004