



Proper headspace is of critical importance for the safe and proper functioning of the Colt AR-15/M16 rifle. Insufficient headspace can prevent proper bolt lockup while excessive headspace may lead to cartridge case separations or misfires. In most gunsmith shops, commercial gauges are used which are generally made to SAAMI or industry standard and are normally suitable for checking most sporting firearms. However, for measuring the maximum acceptable headspace on the AR-15/M16, those gauges may not be entirely suitable since Colt utilizes a special "Field" gauge that is slightly different from most commercial "Field" gauges.

Colt factory specifications call for a "Field" gauge that is 1.4736". The Brownell AR-15/M16 Headspace Gauge is precision-ground specifically to match the Colt "Field" gauge dimensions and can be used with confidence when checking Colt manufactured AR-15/M16's.



### WARNING



Never attempt to disassemble or reassemble a firearm unless you are absolutely certain that it is empty and unloaded. Visually inspect the chamber, the magazine and firing mechanism to be absolutely certain that no ammunition remains in the firearm. Disassembly and reassembly should follow the manufacturer's instructions. If such instructions are not immediately available, contact the manufacturer to see if they are available. If they are not available at all, then you should consult other reference sources such as reference books or persons with sufficient knowledge. If such alternative sources are not available and you have a need to disassemble or reassemble the firearm, you should proceed basing your procedures on common sense and experience with similarly constructed firearms.

With regard to the use of these tools, the advice of Brownells Incorporated is general. If there is any question as to a specific application it would be best to seek out specific advice from other sources and not solely rely on the general advice and warnings given.

### HOW TO USE

Proper use of this gauge is absolutely critical. Improper use can lead to inaccurate measurements, causing an unsafe rifle to be fixed, with great potential for injury to the shooter.

Follow the manufacturer's recommended procedure and remove the Bolt Carrier Assembly from the Upper Receiver. Strip the Bolt after removing it from the Bolt Carrier. By removing the Extractor and Ejector, you prevent the possibility of a false reading, caused by pressure or tension from these components on the Headspace Gauge. In addition, the amount of force required to cam the Bolt into the locked position is greatly diminished. This is especially important in situations where the Bolt will barely close on a headspace gauge. If the Extractor and Ejector are present, they can prevent the bolt from closing on the headspace gauge.

After the Bolt is properly stripped, the Bolt face should be cleaned to remove any dirt, carbon or foreign material that can cause a false reading. The chamber should also be inspected and thoroughly cleaned. Finally, the Headspace Gauge itself should be checked and any oil or grease removed.

Reinstall the Bolt Carrier with the stripped Bolt in place and position the Bolt far enough to the rear to allow the insertion of the Headspace Gauge into the chamber. Place the Headspace Gauge in the chamber, then GENTLY, CAREFULLY, move the Bolt Assembly forward. DO NOT SLAM THE BOLT CARRIER FORWARD! EXCESSIVE FORCE WILL RUIN THE HEADSPACE GAUGE AND MAY DAMAGE THE CHAMBER! Use only your thumb and forefinger to move the Bolt Assembly forward. If headspace is excessive, the Bolt **WILL** cam into position and the Bolt Carrier will move forward so that its rear is flush with the rear of the Upper Receiver. If the bolt DOES NOT cam into the locked position, the rifle does not have excessive headspace. Remember, the Bolt should NOT close on a field gauge.

# BROWNELLS<sup>®</sup>

## COLT 5.56 (.223) HEADSPACE GAUGE

### FOR THE AR-15/M16

#319-418-033



READ & FOLLOW THESE  
INSTRUCTIONS

## BROWNELLS<sup>®</sup>

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Please note that when checking headspace, the AR-15/M16 should ALWAYS be held in a normal horizontal position. DO NOT turn the rifle upside down as the Cam Pin may slide out of position and prevent retraction of the Bolt Carrier.

While not absolutely necessary, we suggest separating the Upper and Lower Receiver units. Doing so makes checking and cleaning the chamber and use of the Headspace Gauge easier.

After checking the Headspace, reinstall the Extractor and Ejector into the Bolt. Reassemble the firearm according to the manufacturer's instructions. Check for proper functioning using ACTION PROVING DUMMIES. Make sure ALL SAFETY MECHANISMS are fully functional as designed and approved by the manufacturer. If these tests prove satisfactory, test-fire the firearm with live ammunition in a SAFE and APPROPRIATE manner. IMPORTANT! If the firearm is a fully or semi-automatic design, start the live ammunition tests by first loading an ACTION PROVING DUMMY, then a live round, into the magazine. Only after several tests have been conducted in this manner should additional rounds be placed in the magazine and fired.

IMPORTANT NOTE: We cannot emphasize too strongly the importance of correct headspace. Excessive headspace can, under some conditions, cause damage to the firearm and/or injury to the user of the rifle.