

# Mitchell's Mausers

## Owner's Manual

for the

Care and Use  
of



## The Walther P-38

Presentation Grade Model



The  
World's First  
Militarily Acceptable  
Double Action Pistol!

Manufacturer's Code \_\_\_\_\_ Serial Number \_\_\_\_\_

You must be certain to read this manual and fully understand its content before attempting to use your new Walther P-38. This manual should be kept with the Walther P-38 and reviewed each time you choose to use or handle the pistol.



The P-38 is an all steel pistol. The Presentation Grade Model is classified as 'Wartime-New'. It was produced at the height of World War II in Nazi Germany. It has all of the proper proof marks and acceptance stamps appropriate to the time of production. The P-38 is military production for military service.

## Walther P38 Pistol - Parts Identification

This illustration is intended to identify all exterior component parts for easy reference as you go through this owners manual in detail.

## ***Congratulations*** ...on the ownership of your new **Presentation Grade Walther P-38!**

Your Walther P-38 comes with a...

- Velvet lined, French-fitted Presentation Case serially numbered to the gun.
- Knights Cross to the Iron Cross serially numbered to the gun.
- Owner's Manual serially numbered to the gun.



Your new Walther P-38 is a truly unique pistol in the history of firearms. Your Presentation Grade Model makes it even more valuable in the world of gun collecting. There is no known presentation grade pistol that has all three of these features.

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**To begin...** Don't even think of handling your new P-38 until you have read and become thoroughly familiar with the entire contents of this **Owner's Manual**.

## **But First, the TEN COMMANDMENTS of Gun Handling**

Because you own the Presentation Grade P-38 we expect you to be a rather sophisticated gun owner who already knows the rules, but... just in case, here they are again...for your convenience. Professional gun handling requires adherence to these rules.

1. You will **ALWAYS** handle your pistol (or any gun) as though it was loaded...even if you know it isn't.
2. Never, ever, point your pistol at anything you are not willing to destroy... even if you are sure it is empty.  
Remember, this is not a toy.
3. Always keep the pistol out of the reach of children; away from children.
4. Never touch the trigger until you are actually ready to fire. Always keep your finger alongside the trigger guard until you are ready to fire.
5. Always know your target and what is behind it. Your target must have a satisfactory backstop. Even if you miss, you **MUST** know where your bullet will go. **YOU CANNOT CALL IT BACK.**
6. If you are tired, sleepy, sick, boozy or drugged (prescription or otherwise) put the pistol away and come back another day. The pistol will wait. You **MUST** be fully alert and all of your senses intact and "up" so that you can be safe and genuinely enjoy the full potential of your new P-38.
7. Be aware of others around you. Allow no one to stand next to you while firing. The shock wave created by the bullet exiting the barrel is very strong and potentially harmful to bystanders.

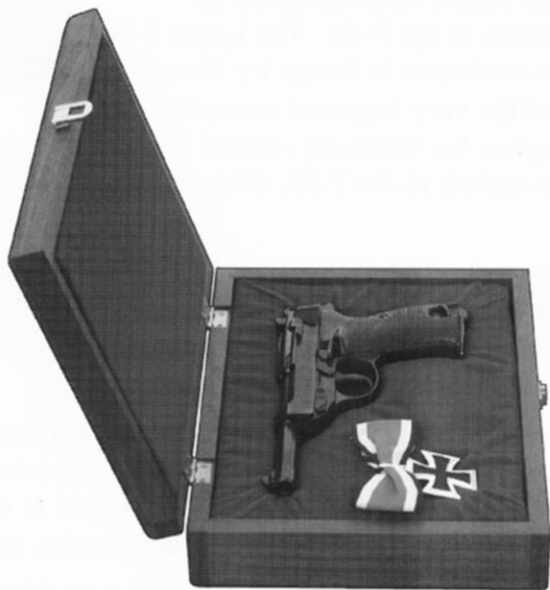
## Walther P38 Pistol

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8. Always, always wear shooting glasses and hearing guards. Make sure others around you wear shooting glasses and hearing guards.
9. Don't try any Hollywood stunts . . . always fire your P-38 at full arms length.
10. Demonstrate safe handling at all times and . . . . . Enjoy!

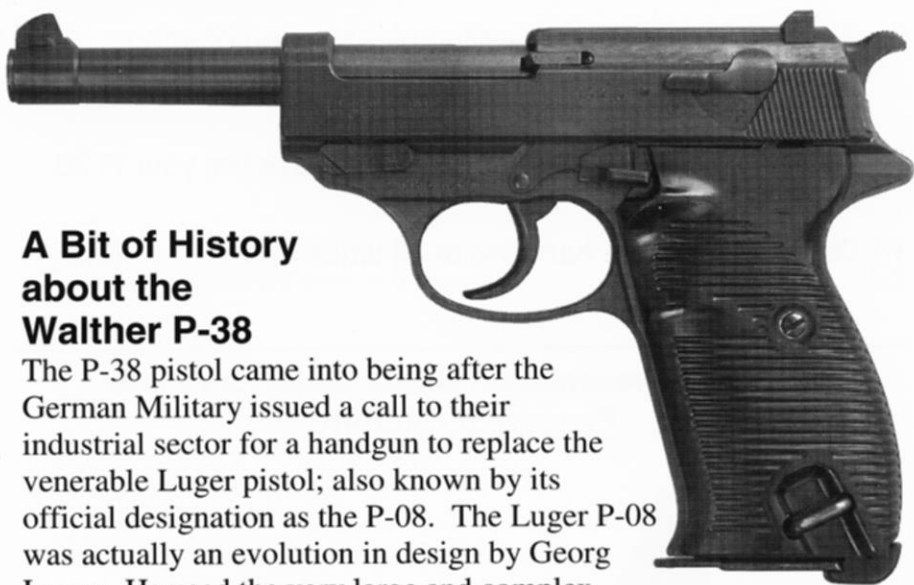
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**You own a Presentation Grade Collectors Pistol.**  
Preserve it carefully



Knights Cross





### **A Bit of History about the Walther P-38**

The P-38 pistol came into being after the German Military issued a call to their industrial sector for a handgun to replace the venerable Luger pistol; also known by its official designation as the P-08. The Luger P-08 was actually an evolution in design by Georg Luger. He used the very large and complex Borchardt design as his basis and refined that design into his pistol that came to be known as the P-08, more commonly known as the Luger.

The P-08 Luger was officially adopted by the German army in 1908, hence the designation 'P-08', 'P' for pistol and '-08' for the year 1908. The Luger was a complex, sensitive and expensive handgun.

The call to the industrial sector from the German Military came in 1935. It was to replace the P-08 with a modern, more reliable side-arm for the German military. All prominent makers at the time came forth with a variety of designs for consideration and testing.

Finally, in 1938 the German firm known as Carl Walther won the contract with their revolutionary new double-action pistol which came to be known as the 'Pistole 1938' or better known simply as the P-38. Production demands at the time were so great that the famous firm of Mauser Werke produced more P-38's than did Walther. The firm of Spreewerke in Berlin also produced P-38's but to a lesser extent.

### Some Colorful History About Your Presentation Grade Walther P-38

It is well known that during World War II, Nazi Germany was under nearly constant heavy bombardment by the USAAF and the RAF. In spite of this, German production continued, but storage and distribution suffered. Most of the production of P-38's and other small arms were shipped for safekeeping to some of their occupied countries.

Some, however, were secretly stored in nearby neutral Switzerland...but probably not for long. History suggests that the bulk of the stored arms were always needed for service and at most times, rather quickly. Nevertheless, under the press of wartime Nazi Germany, the guns were rapidly retrieved and distributed...nearly all of them. All of this was done in secret because Switzerland was a neutral country during World War II.

It happens that in their haste to retrieve their stored goods, a few P-38's were left behind. They were either overlooked or, more likely, intended to be retrieved on the next trip...which never came. The war ended and these few new-production P-38's lay in storage for some 60 years!

Free French forces were the first to overrun the area of Germany where the Walther and Mauser factories were located, but, in the chaos of war, they didn't know of the small number of P-38's left in storage in Switzerland. The French military actually resumed production of the P-38 in 1945-46 but not in the quality of the original German manufacturers. Prompted by the de-Nazification of Germany, the French later destroyed the original factory along with nearly all production records that existed at the time.

Because your P-38 is actually a 'wartime-new' pistol, we have prepared it in a form known as Presentation Grade. It qualifies for such treatment because it is the worlds first double action pistol officially accepted for the military service of any country. In keeping with its quality and wartime-new condition, your pistol is provided with its own serially numbered presentation case; engraved directly into the wood to match the gun serial number along with its Nazi

## Mitchells Mausers

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manufacturers code. Nazi codes were intended to conceal the name of the actual maker and the year of manufacture. For this reason the Walther banner logo does NOT appear on any Nazi produced P-38 further attesting to the authenticity of your Wartime-New P-38.



The P-38 is a German pistol of German design and carries with it the Iron Cross to recognize the revolutionary design of the pistol; not the tyranny of the Nazis. This particular cross is a replica of The Knights Cross to the Iron Cross, and it is serially numbered and engraved to match the serial number of the gun along with the Nazi manufacturers code. The Iron Cross is a battlefield award that dates back to the time of Napoleon. The Iron Cross has been used as a battlefield award by every German leader since 1813; the date shown on the replica cross with the P-38.

To enhance and increase the value of your P-38 over the years, you must never let the pistol or Knights Cross or Owner's Manual or Presentation Case get separated from each other. They all have matching serial numbers and therein lies the enhanced value.

All models of currently produced double action pistols are patterned in design after the Walther P-38. The U.S. Army did not get around to adopting a double-action pistol until a half century later and even then bought the Italian Beretta Model 92; which itself is patterned after the Walther P-38!

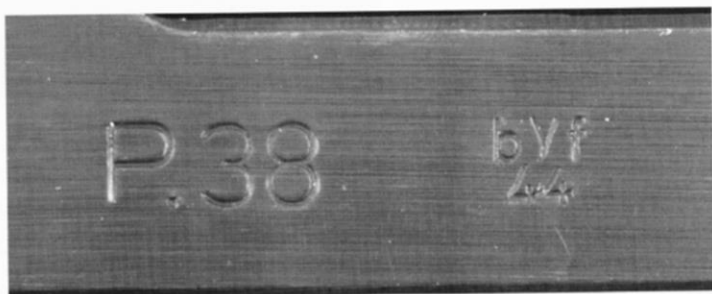


### Nazi Manufacturing Codes

Nazis in both the Mauser and Walther factories, and, to a lesser extent, other smaller manufacturers, produced the P-38. They designated codes to conceal the real manufacturer's identity and the date of production. Each part of the P-38 has the conspicuous Nazi proof marks, and the P-38 has a Nazi military acceptance stamp. Each factory had its own acceptance stamp, and it is now easy to know which factory made which pistol. Naturally the Presentation Grade P-38 has matching serial numbers on all of its major components.

When you fieldstrip your P-38 for cleaning and examination, you can easily see Nazi proof marks in varying sizes on all parts, depending on the part size.

If anything, the Nazis were meticulous and fearful of sabotage, so they were extremely careful in the production of P-38's. That is why there are proof marks on virtually every part, as well as acceptance stamps by the Military Weapons Office.



**AC** is code for the Carl Walther factory. AC is normally followed by a two number designation for the year of manufacture.

**byf** is the code for the Mauser factory. byf is normally 'stacked' above a two number designation for the year of manufacture.

**CYQ** is the code for the Spreewerke factory in Berlin. Cyq is followed by a two number designation for the year of manufacture.

## Nazi Proof Marks and Acceptance Stamps

History shows that the Nazis kept detailed records of almost everything they did. They were very secretive about many things and among them were the manufacturers' names and production quantities. Unfortunately, most of the records were lost or destroyed, and we believe they were most likely destroyed intentionally.

The P-38 pistol was meticulously built and went through rigid inspection and acceptance standards by the military.

Most P-38's were built by Walther and Mauser. Spreewerke was the next largest manufacturer; after Mauser and Walther. The manufacturers name and the year of production were included in the code.

It was the military policy that during manufacture virtually every component of the P-38 was proof-marked by a Nazi, and all major components were marked with a Nazi military acceptance stamp.

Typical of these stamps were:

The Proof-mark is a wing-spread eagle clutching a wreath in its claws with the infamous swastika inside the wreath. This appears in various sizes throughout the pistol, depending on the size of the part. Military personnel assigned to each factory supervised affixing the proof-mark. The Nazis had great fear of sabotage and therefore supervised every step of production.



The Military Weapons Office, which was responsible for final acceptance, used its own military acceptance stamp. It is on the pistol as an eagle over the letters WaA. Or in some cases it is an eagle over the numbers 135. The year of manufacture dictated the stamp in use at the time. With 2,000 pound bombs falling on them, it is likely they used the first stamp available.

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Nevertheless it is a pure accident of history that your P-38 survived the chaos of war intact and is now available to you as 'wartime-new'.

## Model Description

The Walther Model P-38 is a hand-held, semi-automatic, double-action, locked-breech, all steel pistol. It is equipped with an 8-round detachable box magazine and is fitted with an external, spring loaded, locking latch for the magazine at the bottom rear of the frame. The P-38 has fixed sights both front and rear. It is generally regulated at 50 meters. It is lethal far beyond 50 meters!



The P-38 has a loaded-chamber-indicator that can be seen and felt. It tells you that there is, or is not, a round in the chamber regardless of any other condition of the gun.



The Walther P-38 is designed to be fired at arms length only. Do not attempt any silly Hollywood stunts. Leave that to the stuntmen who use fake pistols. Your pistol is real. The 9mm Luger caliber is powerful. It has a powerful muzzle blast. Fire it at arms length only.

Revolutionary in design then, and advanced even today, the pistol has the double and single action features of a revolver in an automatic pistol. This means: the pistol may be loaded, charged, and then fired simply by pulling the trigger as in a revolver. It may also be fired by first manually cocking the hammer and then pulling the trigger, as in a revolver. Using either method, the pistol will reload itself and cock the hammer very rapidly, making ready for the next round.

### **Safety Mechanism**

The safety lever is located on the left side of the slide at the rear. It has a protruding operating surface that is serrated on the bottom and flat on the top. It is thus designed to swing easily from 'safe' to 'fire' or from 'fire' to 'safe'. Touching the serrations means moving to the fire position and touching the flat surface means moving to the safe position. The safety lever securely swings through an arc of about 80 degrees from 'safe' to 'fire' or 'fire' to 'safe'.

The P-38 external safety lever will safely disable the firing mechanism any time the safety lever is lowered to the 'safe' position. Raising the safety lever to level, or the "fire" position will make the pistol ready to fire. Lowering the safety lever to the safe position will automatically drop the hammer safely. In this position, the pistol will not fire regardless of any effort on the trigger.

Be aware: Even though it is theoretically not possible to fire the P-38 unintentionally, even if you drop it, you must always **obey the Ten Commandments of Gun Handling!**

To fire the pistol the trigger must be pulled and held rearward throughout the firing cycle. The firing cycle is very fast! Even so, the action is designed to recognize whether or not the trigger is in the most rearward firing position throughout the firing cycle. Should you happen to drop a loaded and cocked pistol, the shock of the drop could release the sear and drop the hammer. The trigger and hammer are interconnected. The movement of the hammer will engage the firing pin block, and the trigger will move forward automatically. The trigger must be held rearward throughout the entire firing cycle and with nothing holding it rearward, it will come forward and cannot fire. Such is the design of the P-38 mechanism. It is the standard by which all double action pistols are judged.

Fire Position



Safe Position

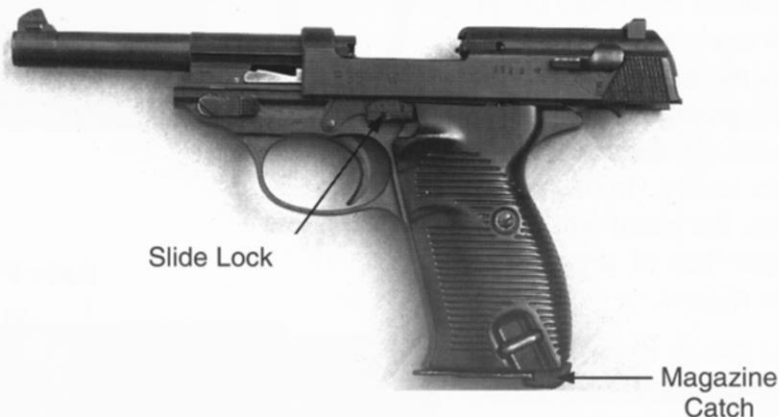


## Loading and Firing:

First, keep your finger off the trigger!

Keep the pistol pointed safely downrange!

### Slide Locked Open

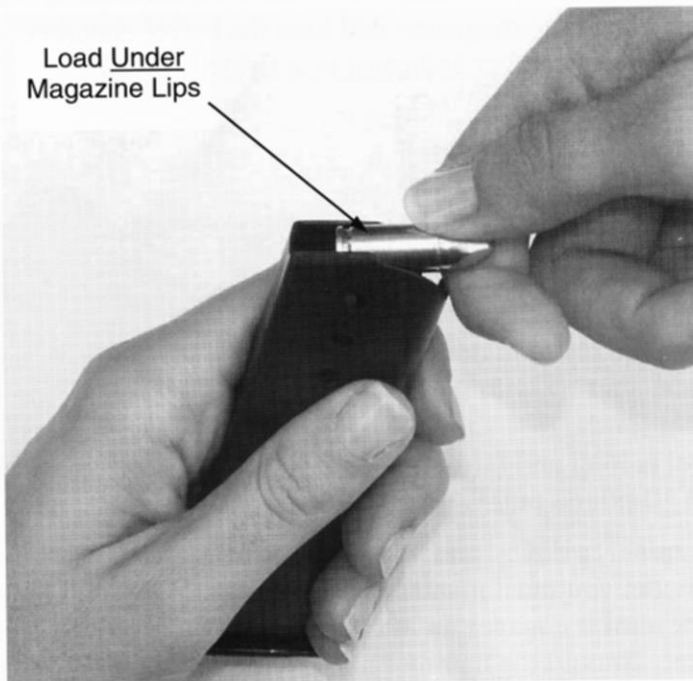


Assure the pistol is empty. Pull the slide fully rearward with the magazine in place. The slide lock will engage the slide and keep it in the rearward-most position. Remove the magazine by simply forcing the magazine latch rearward far enough to release the magazine. The magazine will not drop free. It will pop out about 1/8th inch; just enough to grasp it. Holding back the magazine catch with your thumb, use your forefinger to pull the magazine out of the frame by pulling on the magazine base protrusion, slightly forward of the front bottom of the frame. Release the latch and pull the magazine out.

Check the chamber and then make sure the barrel is clear, bright and shiny. If there is ANY obstruction in the barrel, don't fire until the obstruction is removed. Don't think that you can 'shoot it out' because you can't. You will wreck a perfectly good barrel, hurt yourself and possibly others around you.

Look the P-38 over carefully and make sure everything is where its supposed to be and that nothing is loose or misplaced. Look at the picture of the P-38 with callouts to be sure. The P-38 is pretty much foolproof, but it is not idiot-proof.

Satisfied that all is as it should be, proceed with loading. The magazine holds 8 rounds of 9mm Luger ammunition. It is designed for round-nose, full metal-jacketed ammunition. **Never, ever, use anything but 9mm Luger ammunition.** Not 9mm Short, not 9mm Kurtz. Nothing but 9mm Luger ammunition.



Use the base of the 9mm Luger cartridge to depress the front of the spring-loaded magazine follower and load the cartridge under the feed lips of the magazine. Continue this way of loading until 8 rounds are loaded, one atop the other.

Assure that the slide assembly is still retracted. Keep the pistol pointed downrange. You may now insert the magazine into the gripframe of the P-38 and push it in until the magazine latch automatically engages.

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At this point you have a loaded pistol with the slide retracted. Keep it pointed downrange and keep your finger out of the trigger guard.

Stand securely facing the target with both feet spread apart about shoulder width. Make sure you are not distracted in any way. Make certain of your target and its backstop. Remember that you cannot recall a bullet in flight! Even if you miss your target, you must know where the bullet will go. You are NOT holding a toy.

Satisfied that all is well and you intend to fire, you may now depress the slide lock. The slide will come forward smartly, strip the top round out of the magazine and load the barrel chamber. Notice that the loaded-chamber-indicator is activated.

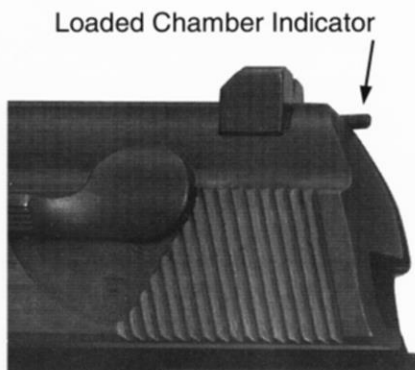
You are now holding a P-38 that is loaded AND cocked... with the safety 'off'! At this point you can fire the pistol in single action mode with a relatively light and short pull of the trigger.

If you fire the pistol in double action mode, starting with the hammer down for the first shot, the trigger travel is long and fairly heavy (about a 10-pound pull is required).

If the hammer is down, and you want to fire the first shot in single action mode, you must manually cock the pistol by pulling the hammer back until it engages an internal sear. You can't see it but you can feel it. Should the hammer not 'cock', you must cease firing and investigate the cause.

In either mode, align the sights on your selected target and put your finger on the trigger. You may fire by gently pressing the trigger face. The P-38 will fire, eject the empty case, load a fresh cartridge from the magazine and cock the hammer for the next round...all in the blink of an eye! You may continue until the magazine is empty or you choose to stop.

You are firing the powerful 9mm Luger cartridge; the same one used by the U.S. Army today! The 9mm Luger cartridge dates back





to the early part of the 20th century, having been accepted by the German army in 1908 along with the Luger pistol. The P-38 was developed around the 9mm Luger cartridge in 1935 and accepted for service in 1938.

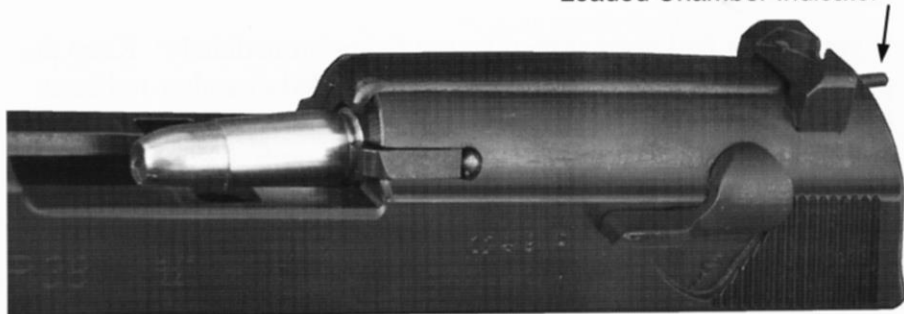
Your P-38 is a recoil-operated handgun. That means you must hold the pistol securely so that the pistol ‘feels’ resistance in your grip while firing. A limp-wrist or wimpy grip could cause a malfunction. A proper grip on any handgun is to grip it tightly enough to ‘see’ the tremors in the front sight caused by your strong grip and then back off just enough to see the front sight settle down. Then, and then only, you have the correct firing grip.

### If You Change Your Mind...

...and choose not to fire, for any reason, take your finger out of the trigger guard. Then simply lower the safety lever to the downward ‘safe’ position. The hammer will automatically and safely drop on the firing pin block. Your pistol is still loaded but is safe. Notice that the loaded-chamber-indicator still indicates that there is a round in the chamber.

Remove the magazine and then retract the slide fully rearward. This will extract and eject the loaded round from the chamber. Holding the slide rearward, manually engage the slide-lock. Confirm that the chamber is empty. The pistol is now safe and empty. If you choose to proceed, simply follow the loading and firing instructions in this section. If you choose not to proceed, make sure the pistol is empty, make sure it is clean and drop the slide by depressing the slide lock, put the safety lever in the down safe position and safely store your pistol.

Loaded Chamber Indicator



## Government Safety Warnings:

### WARNING

Discharging firearms in poorly ventilated areas, cleaning firearms, or handling ammunition may result in exposures to lead and other substances known to the State of California to cause birth defects, reproductive harm, and other serious physical injury. Have adequate ventilation at all times. Wash hands thoroughly after exposure.

### NOTICE

If you leave a loaded firearm where a child obtains and improperly uses it, you may be fined or sent to prison or both.

In light of everything contained in this manual, keep three things in mind:

1. Be alert!
2. Be aware!
3. Be Safe!

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## Failure to Fire

Upon firing, there will be sound, fury and muzzle blast. All of this is normal and required. You must feel reassuring recoil each time the P-38 is fired.

If you do not feel normal recoil, stop firing immediately! Keep the pistol pointed downrange and check the loaded-chamber-indicator to know that there is actually a round in the chamber. You could have an underloaded cartridge, a so-called 'squib' load that will not have enough pressure to move the bullet all the way out of the barrel.

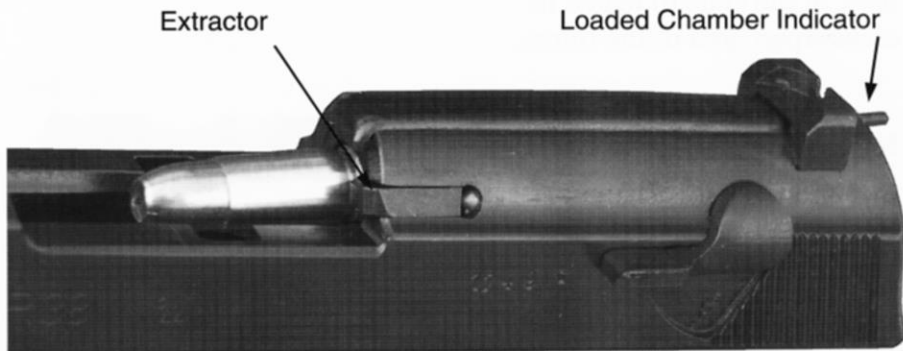
Normally a failure to fire is associated with defective ammunition,

also known as a 'hang-fire'. It may fire at any time. Keep the P-38 pointed down range. After about 30 seconds, you may remove the defective round by pulling the slide all the way to the rear and the round will eject. Properly discard it. Latch the slide lock to keep the slide open. Remove the magazine.

Check the barrel to make sure it is clear by making sure you can see all the rifling, all the way, and that there are no obstructions in the barrel.

A failure to feed a round to the chamber could be caused by a defective or unlatched magazine catch. Make sure the magazine is seated properly and that the catch functions normally.

A failure to extract / eject will cause the pistol to 'jam'. A new cartridge will try to get into the chamber, while the failure to extract will allow the spent case to stay in the chamber, causing the 'jam'. First, keep the pistol pointed downrange. Then clear the jam. Remove the magazine. Then manually retract the slide to the rearmost position and lock it back with the slide-lock. The fresh cartridge will fall out. Remove the spent cartridge from the chamber. Examine the breech face of the slide to assure that the extractor, located on the left side of the front part of the slide, is in place and active. It is a spring-loaded, hook-like device. If it is either unmovable or if it moves loosely, stop firing and replace the extractor and its spring.



## Disassembly and Cleaning

Your P-38 is an engineering marvel of simplicity, function, safety and reliability. You must keep it clean and lightly oiled at all times.

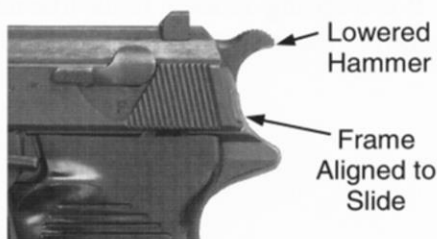
To field-strip your P-38, you must first make sure that it is empty.

Look at the loaded-chamber-indicator to see that there is not a round in the chamber. Remove the magazine and make sure the magazine is empty. Then pull the slide all the way back and manually engage the slide lock. Make sure there is no round in the chamber. You may now proceed with disassembly.

Rotate the barrel-lock downward and clockwise as far as it will go. It must move in an arc about 120 degrees from lock to unlock.



With the upper slide assembly now unlocked, grasp the pistol and disengage the slide-lock being careful not to allow the slide to snap forward. It is under heavy spring pressure. Lower the slide just enough to align the back of the slide to match its counterpart area of the frame.

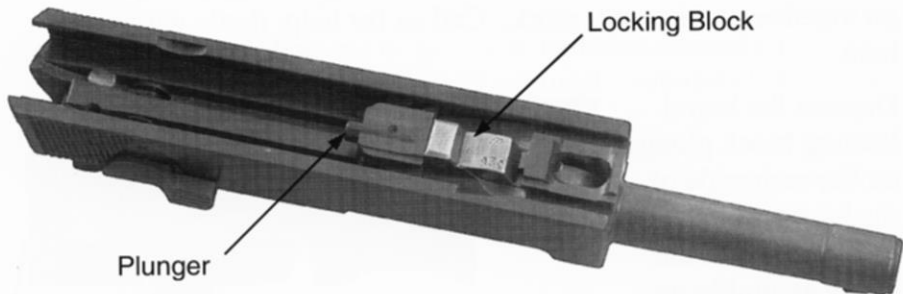


Now grasp the P-38 in one hand and grasp the hammer in your other hand, pull the trigger and allow the hammer to slowly lower itself onto the slide. Release the hammer and the trigger.



## Walther P38 Pistol

Now simply remove the whole upper assembly forward on the slide rails and off the frame. You now have three pieces: the upper assembly, the frame assembly, and the box magazine...all separated as shown.



Turn the slide / barrel assembly upside down. The barrel has a heavy, spring-loaded, plunger-activated locking block in it. Holding the slide in your left hand, upside-down, depress the plunger that is sticking out about 1/4<sup>th</sup> inch. Next, slide the barrel forward and out of the slide.

You now have a frame assembly, slide assembly, barrel assembly and magazine...all separated as shown.

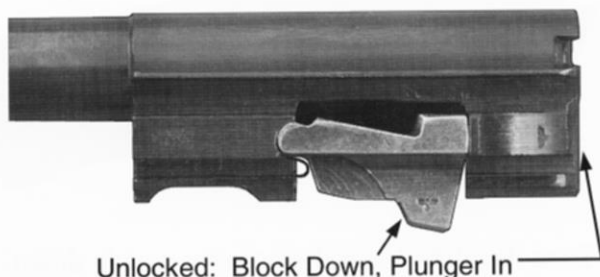


Further disassembly is not recommended because all operating surfaces are sufficiently exposed for cleaning and oiling. If further disassembly is desired, you may place an order for an Armorer's Manual that describes full detail-strip of the P-38. Only accomplished, knowledgeable persons should detail-strip the P-38 beyond this point.

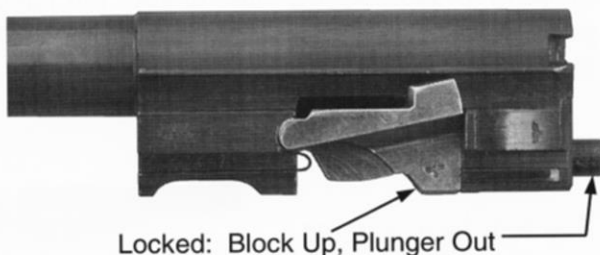
## Re-assembly

After you have cleaned and lightly oiled ALL surfaces of your P-38, you may reassemble the pistol. It goes back together easily. You can't do it wrong. If you do something wrong, it simply won't go together and it won't work. Call us for help; that's why we're here.

Depress the barrel locking block plunger on the underside of the barrel all the way in and re-insert the barrel assembly into the slide assembly. Now depress the block until the plunger protrudes.



Align the rails of the slide and the frame and slide the whole upper assembly onto the rails of the frame. Push it all the way to the rear and engage the slide lock.



If the ejector is standing in the way, simply push it down out of the way and the slide assembly will go right on. Rotate the upper assembly-locking lever counter-clockwise, as far as it will go. It must move completely to a rearward level position.

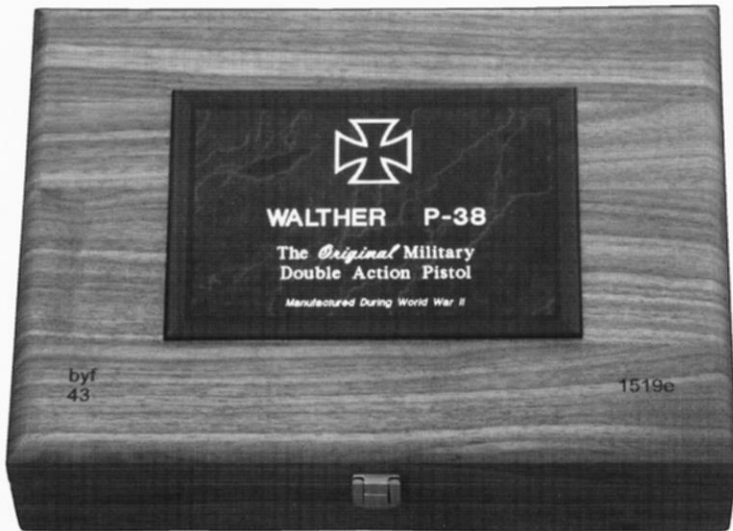
Next, insert the empty magazine.

Release the slide-lock and the upper assembly will snap smartly forward. Move the safety lever to the safe position, and the hammer will automatically fall on the internal firing pin block.

Confirm that the loaded chamber indicator indicates an empty chamber. Oil the P-38 very lightly and place it in your presentation case. The P-38 will 'crush' its velvet bed and it will create an impression of itself in the velvet in the upper lid.

### Care of your Presentation Case

The presentation case is made of fine American Walnut. It requires only care as would be required with a fine piece of furniture. Simply rub it occasionally with high-grade furniture polish. Be careful not to stain the rich velvet lining inside the presentation case.

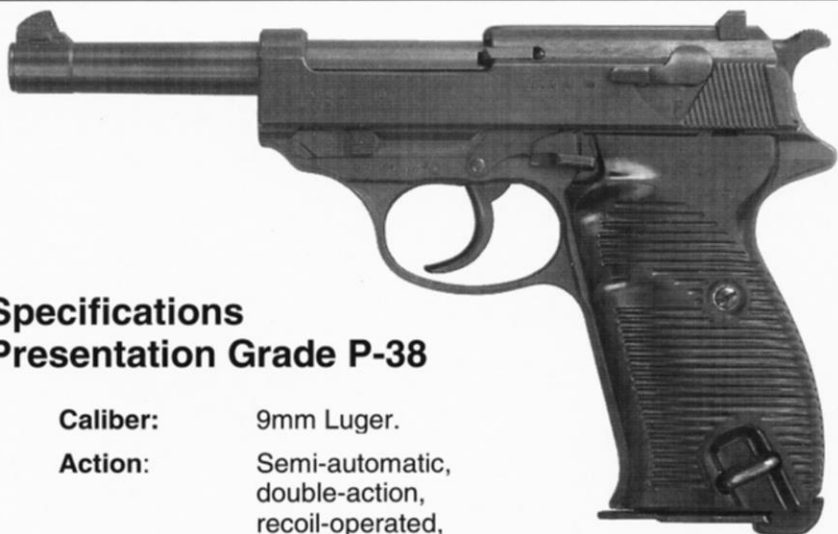


The velvet lining is done in a French-fitted style. The velvet should be brushed occasionally, only to keep dust from degrading the color. Direct sunlight will absolutely fade the velvet in a short time.

The presentation case is fitted to receive the Knights Cross to the Iron Cross immediately under the barrel. The ribbon and Oak Leaf float freely above the Cross and require no maintenance. The cross has its own 'bed' and fits in the bed while the Oak Leaf and ribbon will be 'crushed' into the velvet above the cross.

You have a real piece of the war. It has been preserved by an accident of history.

Preserve it well for your next generation.



## Specifications Presentation Grade P-38

- Caliber:** 9mm Luger.
- Action:** Semi-automatic, double-action, recoil-operated, with loaded-chamber-indicator.
- Material:** All steel.
- Magazine:** Detachable box, 8-round capacity.
- Length:** 8.5 inches overall.
- Height:** 5.4 inches overall.
- Sights:** Fixed.
- Barrel length:** 5 inches.
- Rifling:** 6 groove, right twist, 1 turn in 9 inches.
- Weight:** 27.5 ounces, empty.
- Condition:** *Wartime-new, all parts have Nazi proof marks and Nazi acceptance stamps, together with matching serial numbers on all major components.*

The P-38 is an all steel pistol. It is made of dissimilar metals, but still all steel and blued. Bluing by its nature begins to 'brown' after about 50 or 60 years, depending on the metal. After about 100 years it will be almost completely bluish-brown. You can see this phenomenon in any old black powder revolver from the Civil War era.

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