

Exploded View

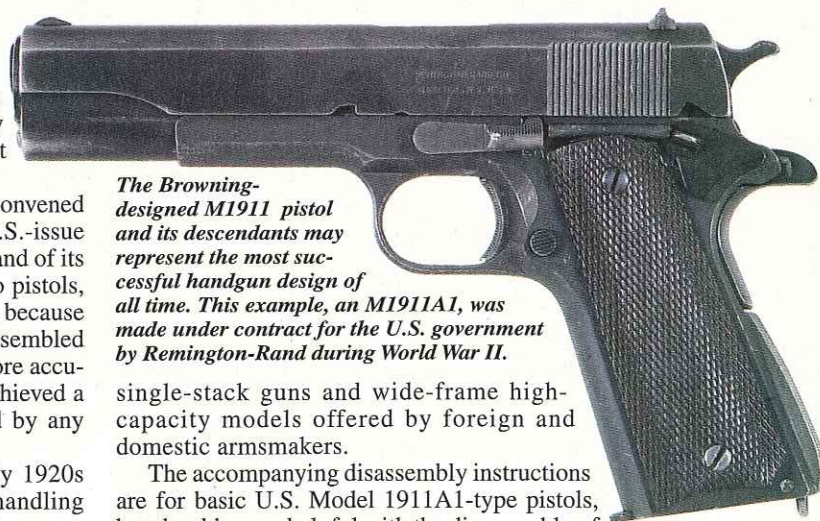
U.S. Model M1911A1 Pistol

BY BRIAN C. SHEETZ
Executive Editor

John M. Browning's .45 ACP-cal. Model of 1911 established an unprecedented place in history as both the official U.S. service pistol for nearly three-quarters of a century and as a seminal design that has been the basis for innumerable spinoffs.

The final report of the military selection board that convened in 1906-1907 for the purpose of choosing a new U.S.-issue sidearm remarked of the Colt-made Browning design and of its last surviving competitor, a Savage entry: "Of the two pistols, the board was of the opinion that the Colt is superior, because it is more reliable, more enduring, more easily disassembled when there are broken parts to be replaced, and the more accurate." Since then, the ".45" and its descendants have achieved a worldwide reputation for serviceability unsurpassed by any other handgun.

The Model of 1911 was updated during the early 1920s with several minor changes designed to improve handling qualities. They included frame scallops near the trigger, an arched mainspring housing, shorter hammer spur, Patridge-type sights, short trigger and longer grip safety horn. The improved model was designated the U.S. Model 1911A1 and was adopted in 1924. Popular, modern-day variations of the basic Browning-Colt design have led to both small-frame,



The Browning-designed M1911 pistol and its descendants may represent the most successful handgun design of all time. This example, an M1911A1, was made under contract for the U.S. government by Remington-Rand during World War II.

single-stack guns and wide-frame high-capacity models offered by foreign and domestic armsmakers.

The accompanying disassembly instructions are for basic U.S. Model 1911A1-type pistols, but should prove helpful with the disassembly of other M1911-based pistols. Be aware that additional takedown steps are required for Colt Series 70, 80 and 90-type pistols and that specialized parts and features found on many custom and competition pistols require specific tools or knowledge not covered here.

DISASSEMBLY

To ensure that the pistol is unloaded, point the muzzle in a safe direction then remove the magazine and retract the slide. Visually inspect the chamber to confirm it is empty.

Start by resting the heel of the gun on a table so both hands may be used. With the thumb, press inward on the knurled end of the recoil spring plug (30) while at the same time rotating the barrel

bushing (2) one-quarter turn clockwise to free the plug and recoil spring (35) assembly (Fig. 1). Next, withdraw the plug and recoil spring (Fig. 2) from the slide (42). If the spring does not come free easily, rotate the plug in the counter-clockwise direction to separate it from the spring. Rotate the barrel bushing counter-clockwise until it is disengaged from the slide and remove it.

Pull the slide (42) rearward until the small clearance notch is aligned with the slide stop (43) lug. Push the slide stop right to left, and pull it out of the frame (Fig. 3). Pull the frame to the rear and off the slide. The recoil spring guide (36) may then be lifted off the slide. Push the barrel link (3) forward and slide the barrel

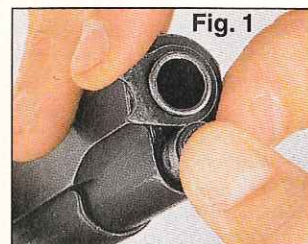


Fig. 1

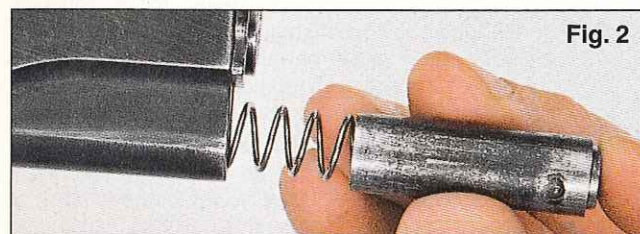


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

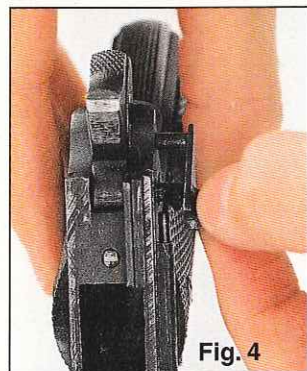


Fig. 4



Fig. 5

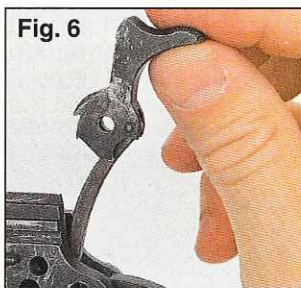


Fig. 6

(10), link (3) and link pin (4) out of the slide's front.

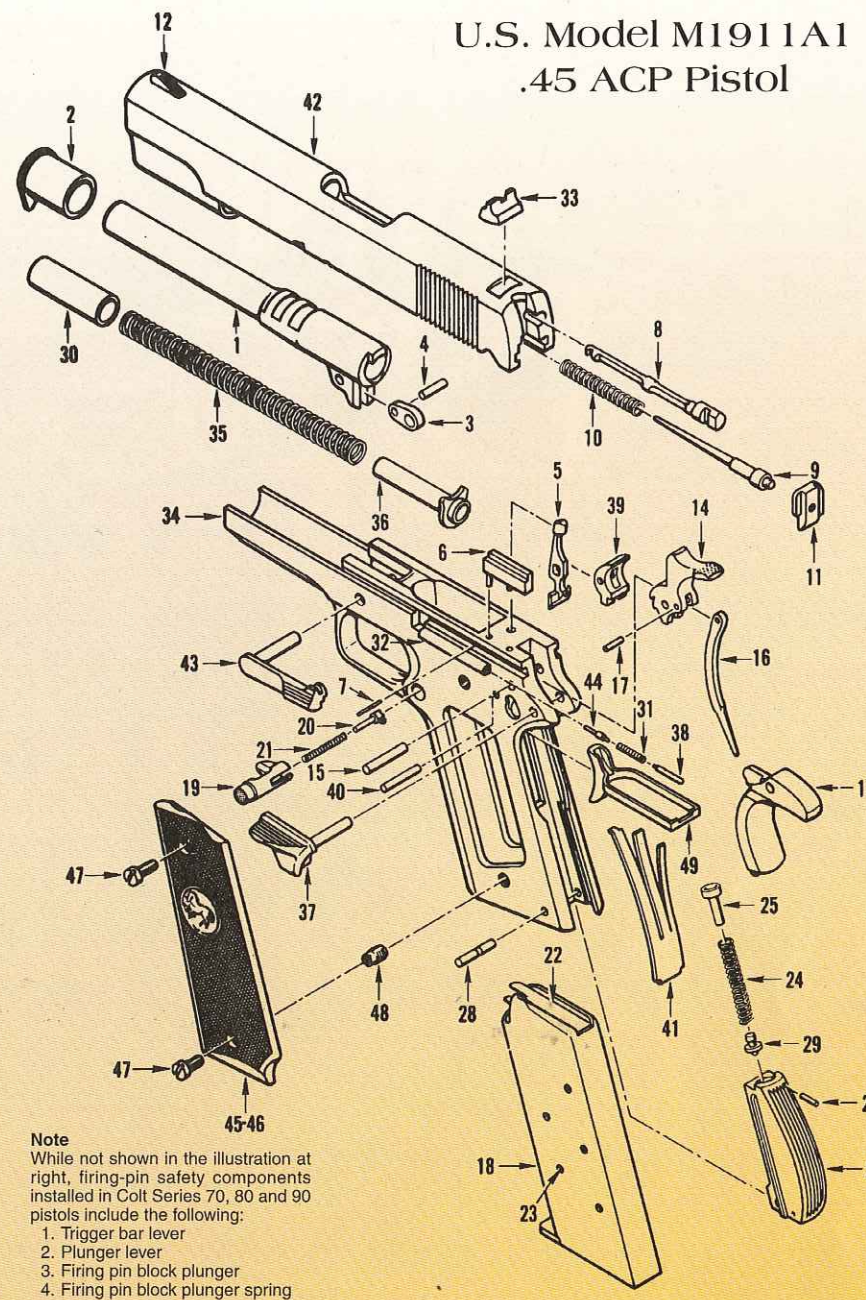
With the hammer cocked, rotate the safety lock (37) nearly to the "on" position. It may now be pulled to the left and away from frame (Fig. 4). Next, remove the hammer pin (15) from the frame (Fig. 5). Then, lift out the hammer assembly (Fig. 6), which

includes the hammer (14), hammer strut (16) and hammer strut pin (17).

Using the hammer strut as a punch, drift out the mainspring housing pin (28) (Fig. 7). Slide the mainspring housing (27) downward and off the frame. (Fig. 8). The grip safety (13) may now be lifted out. Next, lift out the sear spring (41)

PARTS LEGEND

1. Barrel
2. Barrel bushing
3. Barrel link
4. Barrel link pin
5. Disconnecter
6. Ejector
7. Ejector pin
8. Extractor
9. Firing pin
10. Firing pin spring
11. Firing pin stop
12. Front sight
13. Grip safety
14. Hammer
15. Hammer pin
16. Hammer strut
17. Hammer strut pin
18. Magazine assembly
19. Magazine catch
20. Magazine catch lock
21. Magazine catch spring
22. Magazine follower
23. Magazine spring (not shown)
24. Main spring
25. Main spring cap
26. Main spring cap pin
27. Main spring housing
28. Main spring housing pin
29. Main spring housing pin retainer
30. Recoil spring plug
31. Plunger spring
32. Plunger tube
33. Rear sight
34. Frame
35. Recoil spring
36. Recoil spring guide
37. Safety lock
38. Safety lock plunger
39. Sear
40. Sear pin
41. Sear spring
42. Trigger bar lever
43. Slide stop
44. Slide stop plunger
45. Stock, left hand
46. Stock, right hand (not shown)
47. Stock screw (four required)
48. Screw bushing (four required)
49. Trigger



Note
While not shown in the illustration at right, firing-pin safety components installed in Colt Series 70, 80 and 90 pistols include the following:
1. Trigger bar lever
2. Plunger lever
3. Firing pin block plunger
4. Firing pin block plunger spring



Fig. 7

(Fig. 9), and remove the sear pin (40).

Lift out the sear (39) and disconnecter (5), noting the relationship between these parts to facilitate reassembly. Depress the magazine catch (19) from the left side while rotating the catch lock (20) one-quarter turn counter-



Fig. 8

clockwise using the lip of the sear spring as a screwdriver. The catch assembly may then be lifted out of the frame.

Remove the trigger (49) through the rear of the frame.

Using the tail of the hammer strut, push out the barrel link pin, freeing the link from the barrel. Again using the hammer strut, depress the firing pin (9) while pushing the firing pin stop (11) downward. This frees the stop for removal downward and off the slide. The firing pin may now be pulled out and separated from its spring (10). With the hammer strut, pry out and remove the extractor (8) rearward and out of the back of the slide. Reassembly is in the reverse order.

Remember that all of the above instructions may not be applicable to Mark IV Series 70 and newer Colts, which



Fig. 9

Drawing furnished by Colt's Manufacturing Company, Inc.