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In pursuit of practical marksmanship.

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How to build an AR-15 Lower Receiver: A Step by Step Visual Guide



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Building your first AR15 lower receiver can be a daunting task. I have put together a visual guide to help you easily understand the process involved in putting together your first rifle. I hope this guide is helpful and informative to you. Building an AR15 is not as hard as people think, and once you finish your first rifle you will likely never purchase a complete rifle again! You will be building them yourself! In this tutorial I use simple methods to build a fully functional AR15 lower receiver. You probably have all the tools you need in the garage. If you need my [current lower receiver recommendation](#), head over to [Aero-Precision](#) (opens in new window)

Good luck with your first AR15 assembly!

DISCLAIMER: If you are unsure of any assembly steps or procedures, or have no experience with building and maintaining an AR15, seek professional assistance. New Rifleman L.L.C. bears no responsibility for any damage or incorrect assembly of your

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firearm. This guide is for visual reference only. If you lack the proper tools and experience, please have your rifle assembled by an professional armorer.

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[Parts Kit](#) | [Trigger Group](#) | [Trigger Guard](#) | [Magazine Catch](#) | [Bolt Catch](#) | [Safety, Grip, Rear Takedown Pin, Receiver Extension](#) | [Front Takedown Pin](#) | [Buffer and Spring](#)

Parts Kit

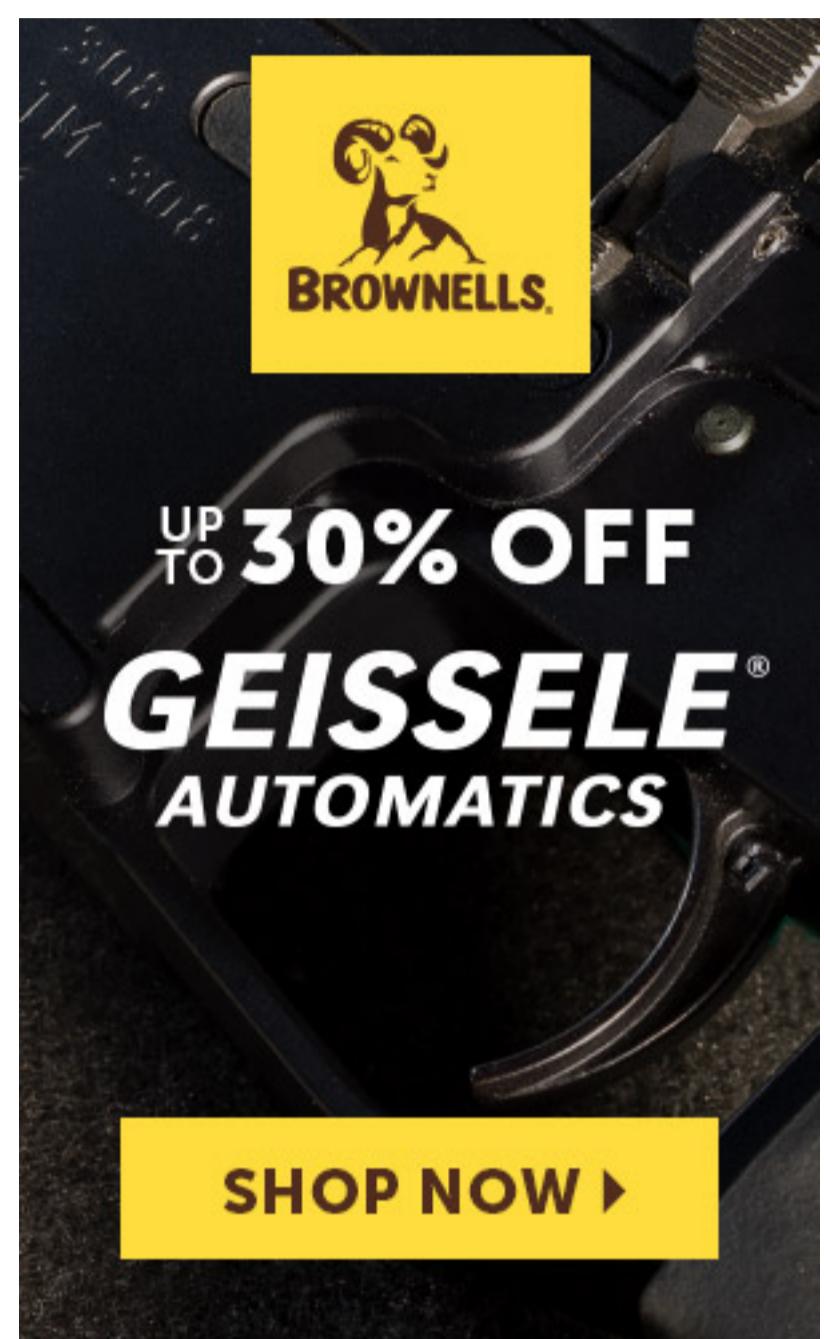
I started with a Rock River Arms parts kit and a Palmetto State Armory lower receiver.



Gather the parts into their relative part groupings:



Accuracy Testing the Vintage Colt SP1 at Looserounds.com
Kerm-Lock Universal Rail Adapter: Making Standard Hand-guards Modular Again
Two Are Better Than One: Red Dots and Irons NRA... That Was Premature.
AR15 Trigger Buyer's Guide: No Clickbait Edition



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Trigger Group Assembly

Trigger Group: pay close attention to the orientation of the springs on the hammer and trigger.

Also of note is that the hammer's spring ends will sit on top of the trigger pin... do not slide them underneath.



Note the orientation of the hammer and trigger springs in this and the following photos:



Push the disconnector spring into place here. The wide end goes down. Once installed it should be unable to fall out.



Fully seated disconnector spring.







Push the hammer down into the receiver to align the pin holes. Make sure the ends of the spring lay on top of the trigger pin, not underneath.



A punch may be needed to complete the trigger assembly.



Trigger Guard Assembly

Next is the dreaded trigger guard. Though these pictures are technically out of order this wont matter so much. Just install the trigger guard when you feel up to the task. Many new AR15 builders are intimidated by the “ears” of the lower receiver. Just support both ends and line up the trigger guard hole and you will be fine no matter what your method. Don’t start the roll pin without the trigger guard in place though for it adds support for the ears of the lower.



Magazine Catch Assembly

Magazine catch: a pretty simple component to install.

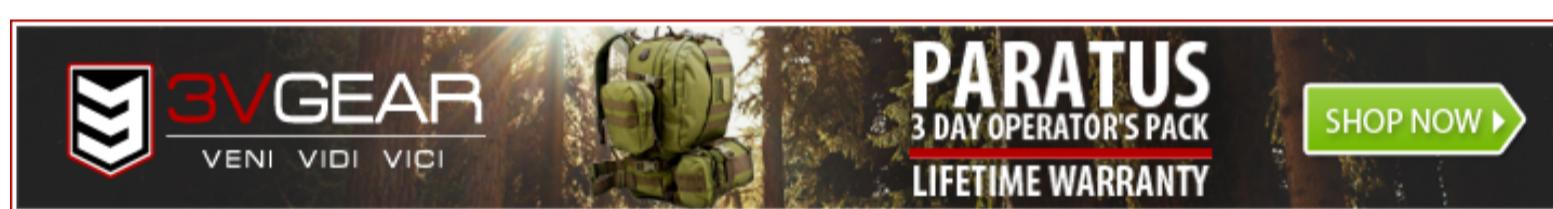


Screw the magazine catch in on the other side of the receiver. It will install by screwing in clockwise.



Bolt Catch Assembly

Bolt catch: another simple assembly. Here you need a special punch to keep from scratching your lower receiver. I don't have this tool so I utilize pliers comfortably wrapped in thick tape. I have used this method on four lower receivers to date. I have started the roll pin with a normal punch but after that I use the pliers to squeeze it into place. Simple and effective. **The spring and plunger go into the hole just below where the roll-pin will go.**



Drop the spring and plunger into the hole in the receiver before placing the bolt catch assembly in the slot

The bolt catch will be oriented as pictured. Start the roll pin with a punch and then move on to the next step.



Wrap your pliers well with thick tape and pinch the roll pin in place. You can approach from the bottom...



Or you can approach from the top.



Safety / Grip / Rear Takedown Pin / Receiver Extension Assembly

The Rear End: let's install your safety, grip, rear takedown pin, and receiver extension.

Gather the following parts: safety assembly with spring and detent, buffer retainer and spring, rear takedown pin with detent, and the grip screw.



Also gather your grip and receiver extension.



Cock the hammer to drop the rear of the trigger assembly down into the receiver. This will allow the safety to be easily installed.





Insert the safety detent spring
into the grip.



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Orient the rear takedown pin as pictured.



Drop the rear takedown detent into the hole followed by the detent spring.



Place the buffer retainer spring into the buffer retainer as shown below.





Place the buffer
retainer and spring
into the lower receiver
as shown.

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Begin to install the
receiver extension.

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As the receiver
extension is screwed
into the receiver you
must depress the
buffer retainer until
the lip of the receiver
extension overlaps the
edge of the buffer
retainer. This will be
clear in the photos to
follow.

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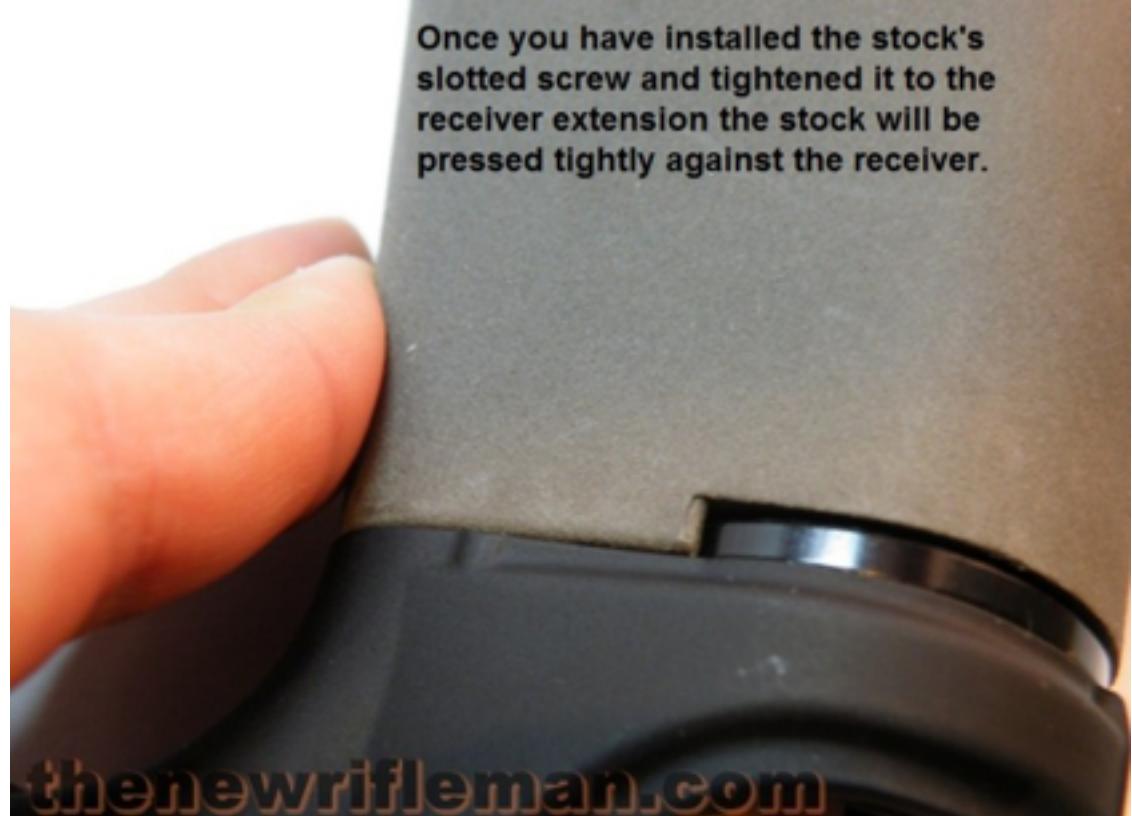
The A2 stock assembly requires a spacer. This spacer will go at the end of the receiver extension. Make sure your receiver extension is tightly and securely installed into the lower receiver.



Slide the A2 stock assembly over the receiver extension. It will trap the takedown pin's spring and detent assembly.



Once you have installed the stock's slotted screw and tightened it to the receiver extension the stock will be pressed tightly against the receiver.



Front Takedown Pin Assembly

The Front Takedown Pin: follow this tried and true method. Be careful as one slip can and will send the detent flying. Do this in an uncluttered area where you can easily find the detent should it pop out and fly off into the sunset. I built this inside my light-box for safety. Not too many places the detent can go inside a box.

Time to install the front takedown pin.



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Drop the spring into the hole on the lower receiver as shown.



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Use pliers to push the detent into the hole. The spring is very stiff and pliers are a much better option than your fingernails.



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Push down on the detent with a stiff, flat object such as a razor blade. Here I use a scraper with a thick handle. Let go of the pliers and pick up your front take down pin. Keep pushing the detent into the lower receiver and place the front takedown pin above the pin and tool.



Remove the flat tool and push the pin into the lower receiver. The detent will slide into the slot on the takedown pin.



Buffer and Spring Assembly

Cock the hammer and push the buffer spring and buffer into the receiver extension.





Your AR 15 lower receiver is now finished! I hope you found this tutorial helpful! Please feel free to share it to help others with their rifle build and good luck with your new rifle!



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[AR15 Buyer's Guide](#)
[Red Dot Sight Guide](#)
[Variable Optics Guide](#)
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