



September 30, 2013 Rev 2

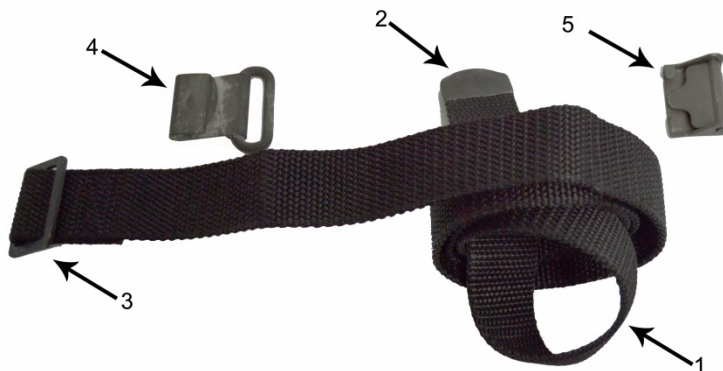
## TECHNICAL NOTE 109: INSTALLING, ADJUSTING, AND USING THE M1 RIFLE SLING

Soon after the first rifle was invented, the first shooter had to figure out how to carry it. Many of the very earliest images of a man and a rifle showed a strap or rope attached to it that allowed the man to carry it over his shoulder and keep his hands free to carry his lunch. Since those earliest beginnings, the sling has evolved from a simple carrying device to a sophisticated accessory that actually improves the accuracy of the “gun-shooter system” by steadying the rifle and reducing the movement of the rifle during recoil. It is an important tool that is often under-used.

The simplest slings are simply straps that may be adjustable for length; however, they are not useful as tactical slings.

### I. THE M1 SLING

A good example of a simple, but sophisticated tactical sling is the Marine Corps style “M1” web sling adopted during World War II. (M1 refers to the sling designation; it was used on many rifles in addition to the M1 Garand rifle.) The M1 sling is a quick-adjustable two-point sling that serves both as a carrying strap and as a precision shooting sling. It is fast and simple to use.



*Components of the M1 Sling*

The M1 sling strap assembly consists of a canvas or nylon strap (1) bearing a metal tip (2) at one end and a buckle (3) at the other end.

A metal Hook and Loop assembly (4) is slid down the strap to the buckle, and the strap is threaded through the buckle to keep the hook and loop from sliding off. The hook allows fast attachment to and removal from the lower sling swivel.



A “keeper” assembly (5) with a locking clamp installed on it is mounted over the sling with the clamp pointing to the lower end of the sling and facing the same side of the sling as the hook.



*The M1 sling being used as a carrying strap*

## II. THE “PARADE POSITION”



In the parade position, the M1 sling is attached at both front and rear sling swivels on the firearm. As the name suggests, the parade position allows easy handling of the rifle during “drill and ceremonies,” i.e. handling the rifle while marching or during inspection. It allows the rifle to be placed into rifle racks without the sling drooping across other rifles and generally getting in the way. The parade position is required for some competitive shooting events.



When installing the M1 sling for the parade position or for use as a carrying strap, the “hook and loop” end of the sling is snapped onto the buttstock’s sling swivel with the open end of the hook facing the stock.



The forward end of the sling is installed on the front sling swivel by loosening the keeper's clamp, pulling the short end of the sling out of the keeper, threading the sling through the front sling swivel, and then reinserting the sling through the keeper. This is sometimes tougher than it sounds because the strap is normally tight in the keeper.

Tighten the clamp of the keeper down hard to lock the strap and prevent it from coming loose. Properly locked, the sling will tend to remain secure: the harder the sling is pulled on during use, the tighter the clamp engages.

The sling can be easily and quickly loosened and adjusted to a length suitable to the needs of the shooter.



### *Adjusting the sling's length*

To adjust the sling, grasp the end tab of the sling and pull it outward against the locking mechanism to unlock the sling. (HINT: Leave at least a small length of the loose end of the strap exposed beyond the end of the keeper so that it may be pulled on to unlock the clamp easily.)



Tighten or loosen the sling as required, then lock it into the desired length by pushing the clamp closed. To avoid scratches on the rifle, try to select a length that minimizes contact of metal parts with the rifle.

### **III. “LOOP SLING” PRECISION SHOOTING POSITION**

The M1 sling may be quickly used in a loop sling configuration that provides good support for the rifle, thereby significantly improving accuracy.

To use the M1 as a loop sling, remove the sling’s hook from the lower sling swivel. (If your firearm has quick-detachable sling swivels, just detach the sling swivel from the stock.)

Now, here’s the part many folks get wrong. Don’t put your arm through the loop of material that’s already formed below the buckle.



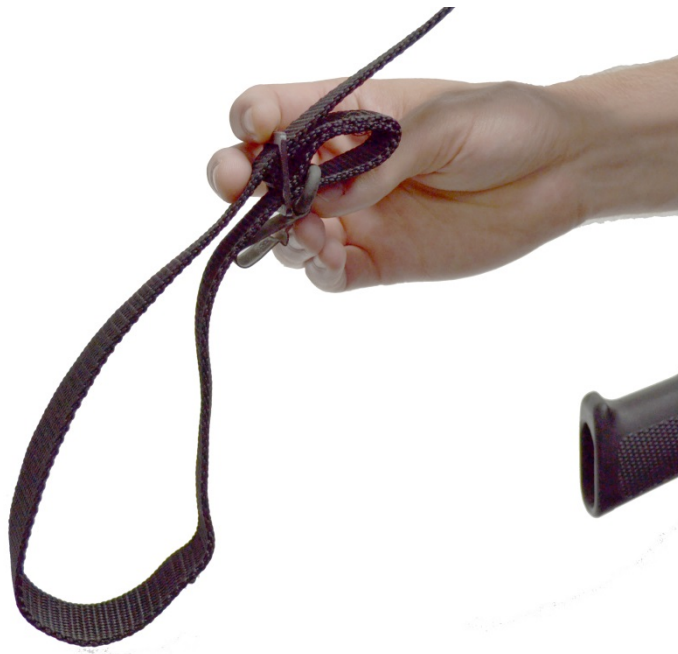
***WRONG LOOP!!!!***

Rather, create a new loop of sling material by pulling the strap out from the middle of the buckle.



***Making the correct loop for the support arm***

Grasp the loop in at the buckle.



Rotate the loop you just made  $\frac{1}{2}$  turn away from the body (clockwise looking down if shooting right handed, and counterclockwise if left handed) to prevent an uncomfortable edge of the sling from pressing against the supporting arm.



Slip the support arm through the loop and pull on the center of the sling to tighten the loop on your support arm. If you place the buckle outside of your bicep rather than close to the rifle the loop will naturally tighten itself as you apply pressure to the sling.



Wrap your arm around, then through the sling. As noted above, the half turn of the sling will prevent the strap's narrow edge from bearing on your arm.



The sling is properly positioned and the support arm is through it and holding the rifle loosely. You will next tighten the sling to increase the linkage between the rifle and your body.

Assume the intended firing position and adjust the sling to proper tension by pulling on the upper end of the strap, pulling it away from the supporting arm to unlock the keeper, and draw the sling to the position that provides proper support to the rifle.



Press the clamp in to secure the sling at the proper position. Some experimentation to locate the optimum sling length will prove useful. If your arm turns purple and you lose feeling in your fingers it's either too tight or you're having a stroke. If it's as loose as shown in the picture the rifle will move a lot during aiming and firing.



While this sling arrangement is fast to assume from the normal parade position, it can leave the raised edges of the keeper's hinge bearing uncomfortably against the back of your hand. Further, the loose end of the strap is hidden against the wrist or arm and thus difficult to adjust.

Experienced shooters therefore have a trick for making the precision sling faster, easier, and more comfortable to use. The sling is rearranged for easy access to the loose end of the sling for fast adjustment. To rearrange the sling, unlock the sling and remove the strap from the forward sling swivel and the keeper assembly from the sling. \_\_\_\_\_



*The adjuster reversed for faster tactical use (still loose)*

Install the keeper on the strap so that it faces *away* from the rifle, and with the latch pointed to the buttstock. Slip the strap through the front sling swivel back through the keeper.



The loose end of the strap falls away from the rifle. Now the flat side of the keeper is against the wrist and the loose end of the strap is hanging away from it so that it can be easily grasped. It's now easy to tug on the loose end, adjust the sling length, then press on the latch to lock the keeper in place.

Used correctly, the Loop Sling arrangement of the M1 Sling provides great reinforcement to the shooter's position and improves accuracy.

It also provides a firm attachment of the rifle to the shooter and prevents its loss during the tactical maneuvers of Military and Police officials, but prevents rapid switching of the shooting arm in an emergency. As with other tools, it should be used when and where appropriate.

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