

Magpul's MIAD Grip Kit ⁵³

By Duane Thomas

Magpul is a company that's made its reputation designing and selling aftermarket parts for AR-15s. Their MIAD (stands for Mission ADapt-able) grip kit is a modular system allowing end users to replace the stock AR-15 grip with, essentially, one customized in every dimension to meet their own needs.

The MIAD kit consists of four basic components, (1) the body, (2) frontstrap, (3) backstrap, and (4) grip core. You have a choice of multiple options in the latter three areas.

(1) Body. Most people that I know dislike the stock AR-15 grip. It's just way too small, and trigger reach is so short that proper index finger placement on the trigger requires an extremely contorted finger position where you're actually flexing it out and then back in, and rather than pressing the trigger, you're pushing to the rear with the fingertip. It's just a total loser.

To begin with, the basic grip body of the MIAD is much more hand filling than the stock grip. An AR-15 grip affixes in place with a single bolt through the top/interior of the grip and into the bottom of the receiver. To install the MIAD grip, just unscrew that bolt, switch out the stock grip for the MIAD, and replace the bolt.

(2) Frontstrap. The front of the MIAD grip body is slotted to accept any one of four optional frontstraps. These include (a) a version with a finger bump, but much smaller and better located than the stock grip; (b) basically the same shape, but incorporating a recurved trigger guard, as well; and (c) what I've wanted for decades, just a frontstrap with no finger bump at all. We also have (d) a very long frontstrap that's actually intended to fit into place with the MIAD system turned into a vertical forend grip; this requires a railed handguard and an A.R.M.S. mount.

I was in the Army, stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in the mid-1980s when the military adopted the M16A2. I instantly loved the new handguard and hated the new grip, with that dorky finger bump apparently specially designed to be where the human middle finger wants to be. I'm very, very glad the MIAD kit offers that no-finger-bump-at-all frontstrap option, and that's what I have on mine.

Though it's not a part of the MIAD kit *per se*, it's worth noting that Dillon also offers for sale Magpul's Enhanced Aluminum Trigger Guard which mimics the shape of the (b) frontstrap's recurved trigger guard, but it's a separate trigger guard all its own. This reshaped part allows a heavily gloved index finger to enter the trigger

guard without having to release the stock flat trigger guard and pull it down out of the way.

(3) Backstrap. There are three optional backstraps, each featuring an increased palm swell area. These are: (a) a flat backstrap that approximates the stock grip but with a stippled surface instead of the stock vertical striations; (b) a slightly more hand filling, very slightly arched backstrap also featuring a recurve at top filling in the hollow area at the grip/frame juncture; (c) a much larger backstrap, considerably more arched, also filling in the grip/frame juncture; this grip is the largest, and moves the hand back, increasing trigger reach, the most of all three options.

One problem I've always had with the stock grip over the years is that not only is trigger reach so short it cramps trigger pulls, but reach to the thumb safety is way too short as well, thus manipulating it

off and on is a much less smooth process than it should be.

I've actually gone to the largest backstrap on my MIAD – and I don't have particularly large hands, which will give

you some idea just how tiny is the stock grip to start with. This largest of all MIAD AR-15 grips gives me an infinitely better reach to the thumb safety. When holding the rifle at the ready, my thumb now rides the rear of the safety lever, and as the gun comes up I can just snap it down like a 1911 and ride the safety while shooting. Snapping it back on-Safe is likewise a much more ergonomic proposition, as well.

(4) Grip core. The MIAD grip, like the stock grip, is hollow. Inside the hollow area, you may snap into place any one of four modular grip cores, each one molded to store a particular item(s). These include (a) a rubber gasket covered battery compartment holding two lithium three-volt batteries, spares for a weapon-mounted light and/or electronic red dot sight; (b) a similar battery compartment, this one shaped to hold either two AA batteries (an EOtech M552 is this first thing that occurs to me here), or, with the insertion of the appropriate adaptor, two smaller AAAs; (c) a spare bolt/firing pin; (d) three extra rounds of .223 ammo.

The standard MIAD kit comes with the three-round holder; the other grip cores may be purchased as optional accessories. I tend to go for the spare battery compartment, myself, either two lithiums or two AAs, depending on what sight I'm running on the rifle, but I've noted an awful lot of people love that three-round holder.

All I can say, in summary, is that I have a MIAD grip kit installed to my personal AR-15. I can give no AR-15 mod a higher recommendation than that. **DP**



See Page 65 to order.