

HANDGUNS

Series



REVOLVERS

VOL.

1

9mm police revolver (China)

Type	Double Action revolver
Caliber(s)	9mm (see text)
Weight unloaded	650 g
Length	186 mm
Barrel length	n/a
Magazine capacity	6 rounds

This new revolver has appeared in 2006 as a future armament for various elements of Chinese Police which previously were unarmed - such as traffic police, local municipal police etc. Since proposed users are mostly unfamiliar with modern small arms, it is reasonable to issue a weapon which is most simple in use - that is, the double action revolver. The ammunition, which is apparently based on old and rather anemic .38 S&W (9x20R) round, retains enough muzzle energy to pose a threat to any unprotected low-grade criminal at short ranges; and even if this gun will fail into wrong hands, any police body armor will be able to stop the bullet. The muzzle velocity for standard round is given as 220 m/s (720 fps). No bullet weights are given, but we can expect this round to be ballistically similar to .38 S&W, thus having muzzle energy about 220 Joules (160 Ft-Lbs). Other than standard round with jacketed of JHP bullet, a "less-lethal" rounds with rubber bullets are provided for crowd control. It must be noted that no official designation of this gun is known so far.



New Chinese police revolver. Note the manual safety lever located above the cylinder release latch.

Armi Chiappa "Rhino" revolver (Italy)

Type	Double Action revolver
Caliber(s)	.357 Magnum
Weight unloaded	720 g / 1.58 lbs with 2" barrel
Length	164 mm / 6.5" with 2' barrel
Barrel length	51 mm / 2", (also 101mm/4", 127mm/5" and 152mm/6")
Cylinder capacity	6 rounds

The Rhino revolver is a new offering from Italian company Armi Chiappa. This revolver was designed by Antonio Cudazzo and Emilio Ghisoni, the latter also being the designer of a line of Mateba revolvers, including the Unica semi-automatic revolver. The "Rhino" revolver, which is initially offered in "pocket-carry" self-defense version (longer barreled versions are to follow soon), is designed from the scratch to provide most controllable and accurate shooting, thanks to its specially designed trigger / hammer system and extremely low barrel axis, as the gun fires from the bottom chamber of the cylinder, rather than the top one. It must be noted that while this setup is quite rare, it is not unique - the Mateba Unica revolver also fired from the bottom chamber, as well as the Russian OTs-38. The overall layout of the revolver is optimized for concealed carry, with cylinder made with hexagonal (rather than round) cross-section, to made the gun thinner. The low barrel axis also helps to manage recoil, as its force goes straight back into the shooter's palm, and does not cause the muzzle of the gun to jump up, as it happens with traditional revolvers where recoil force is applied above the holding points, causing the gun to rotate up (jump) under recoil. The result of this layout is that the Rhino revolver has somewhat complex trigger setup.

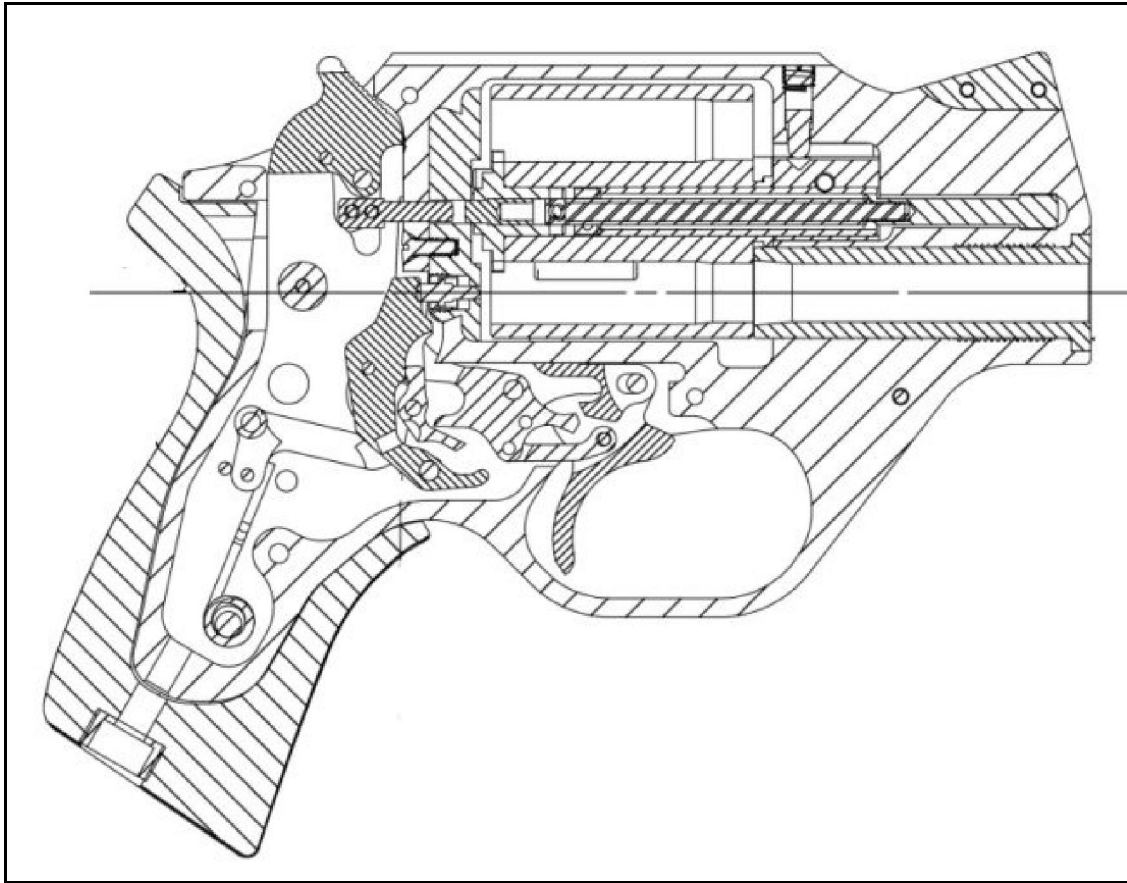
The Rhino revolver is a double / single action revolver with swing-out cylinder. Frame of the gun is made from "Ergal" aluminum alloy; cylinder, barrel and other important parts are made from high quality steel. Reloading of the cylinder is achieved by swinging the cylinder to the left, then pushing the ejector rod to extract all six spent cases at once. Once chambers are empty, fresh cartridges can be loaded into cylinder, individually or using the speedloader. Loaded cylinder then is snapped into the place and locked. The cylinder latch lever has unusual location, as it installed at the top rear of the frame, co-axially with the cocking lever ("false hammer"). To unlock the cylinder for opening operator must push the latch lever forward with his thumb.





Armi Chiappa "Rhino" revolver with 2 inch barrel

The trigger setup is unusual as it features fully concealed hammer which is located inside the frame. To provide "Single Action" firing mode with manual hammer cocking before each shot, Rhino revolver is fitted with cocking lever ("false hammer"), which is placed at the top rear of the frame, where traditional hammer is usually located on conventional revolvers. This cocking piece / "false hammer" is connected to the concealed hammer via push link. To cock the hammer in the Single Action mode, operator must pull the spur on the cocking piece / "false hammer" back as far as it will go, and then release it. This movement will cock the concealed hammer via internal linkage, but the cocking piece / "false hammer" will return to the forward position once it is released. For Double Action firing, operator can pull the trigger as usual, and this will first cock the internal hammer and then release it at the end of the trigger pull. In the basic "concealed carry" version, the "Rhino" revolver is fitted with fixed open sights. Longer barreled versions will be available with fixed or adjustable sights.



Armi Chiappa "Rhino" revolver, cross-section diagram

SPO-JGAS 2010

Colt "Python" (USA)

Type: Double Action
Chamber: .357 Magnum
Weight unloaded: ca. 1100 g (with 4 in barrel)
Length: 240 mm (with 4 in barrel)
Barrel length: 2.5, 4, 6 or 8 inches (64, 102, 153 or 203 mm)
Capacity: 6 rounds

The "Python" revolver was introduced by Colt company (USA) in 1955. It was available in different barrel lengths, suitable for self-defence (2.5 and 4 in barrels), service (4 and 6 in barrels), hunting and target shooting (4 - 8 in variants). Early "Pythons", especially those without letters in the serial numbers (made from 1955 until mid-1960's) were indeed very accurate guns, often compared to Manurhin MR-73's or SIG P210's. Some time ago Colt discontinued the "Python" series in favor of the more modern "Kingcobra" revolver, but it is (probably) still available through Colt Custom Shop.



Colt 'Python' with 4 in (102mm) barrel

All Pythons were double-action, swing-out cylinder revolvers. Sights: blade post front sight with polymer insert; rear sights with removable sight blade are screw adjustable for both windage and elevation. Barrel is screwed into the frame and featured vented upper rib and full-length bottom rib that houses full length extractor rod.

Internal safety consist of Colt's patented transfer bar and cylinder stop (fixes cylinder when hammer is cocked).



Colt 'Python' with 2.5 in barrel



Colt 'Python Elite' with 6 in barrel

SPO-JGAS 2010

Colt 1873 Single Action Army / Peacemaker revolver (USA)

Action: Single Action

Caliber: .45 Colt, .44-40 WCF, .32-20 WCF and many others, including .22LR, .38Spl, .357Magnum, 44Spl (commercial models)

Capacity: 6 rounds

Barrel lengths: 4¾" (120mm, civilian model), 5½" (140mm, Artillery model), 7½" (191mm, Army & Cavalry model)

Overall Length 11" (279mm - with 5½" barrel); 13" (318mm - with 7½" barrel)

Weight: 1048 g (with 7½" barrel)

The Colt model 1873 revolver, universally known as the Colt Single Action, Peacemaker, or Frontier, is one of the most popular and legendary small arms in USA. It is also one of the longest living production small arms, being produced for some 130 years and still popular. The Colt 1873 was actually developed by the 1872, based on the patents granted to Charles B. Richards (cartridge conversion of the open-top percussion Colt revolvers) and W. Mason (improved ejector). In 1873, US Army adopted this revolver along with its black powder centerfire cartridge of .45 caliber, and issued it to troops in 2 models. The Army / Cavalry model had a 7½ inch barrel, and the artillery model had 5½ barrel. Both were chambered in .45 Colt (also known as .45Long Colt or .45LC). For the civilian market, Colt also initially produced same gun in .44-40 WCF and .32-20WCF, later adding more modern chamberings like .38 S&W Special (.38Spl), .44 S&W Special (.44Spl), .357 Magnum, .22LR. Civilian guns also were available in various barrel lengths, varying from 4¾ and up to 12 inches. There also was a Bisley model, which appeared near the turn of the centuries. Colt Bisleys were intended as a target guns, and had hammers with wider and lower spurs, and a different grip frame.



Original Colt 1873 Single Action Army, Cavalry model, right side (made circa 1876)

US Army bought about 37 000 Colts of both Artillery and Cavalry flavors during period from 1873 and until 1893. Commercial production was ceased in 1941, with the outbreak of the World War 2, with about 370 000 guns made total. In 1956, following the popular demand for "Wild West" era guns, raised by the TV and movie "Western" films, Colt brought the Single Action back to production and still makes it. Other than Colt, several US and foreign companies also made more or less exact copies and clones of the legendary "Peacemaker", for Cowboy action shooting, hunting, general plinking and collecting.



Same gun, left side

So called "*First generation*" Colts were made from 1873 and until 1941. These guns can be recognized by the serial numbers below 357860 and with no letters. With the re-introduction of this gun by Colt in the 1956, the "*Second generation*" of the SAA came into existence. The second generation guns have serial numbers in the range from 0001SA to 73319SA. Production of the second generation SAA revolvers was ceased in 1974, but, in the 1976, with the introduction of newer machinery and production techniques, Colt brought the SAA back in the "*Third generation*". Third Generation Colt Single Action Armies have been originally offered in .45 Colt, .44 Special, .44-40 and .357 Magnum. By the 1981, Colt dropped the SAA out of production again, and for some time the legendary "Peacemakers" were available only as an expensive custom shop offerings. At the present time, Colt again offers these guns as regular products, in the .45LC, .357Mag and .44-40, and in all standard barrel lengths.

Technical description.
the Colt M1873 is a single action, six shot, solid frame revolver (as opposed to the earlier "open top" Colts or "hinged frame" S&W's). The frame actually is made from 2 parts, the cylinder frame, and the grip frame with the triggerguard, which are assembled by set of screws. The cylinder is loaded by single rounds, via side-swinging loading gate, located at the right side of the frame. Empty cases are ejected one by one, through the opened loading gate, by pulling back on the ejector rod, located under the barrel and to the right. The gun can be loaded and unloaded only when the hammer is set to half-cock position. Cylinder can be removed for cleaning and inspection by unscrewing the base pin screw, and then by pulling out the base pin (cylinder axis) forward and out of the frame.



Colt 1873 Single Action Army, Cavalry model, with 7½ inch barrel. Modern replica by EMF

Since this handgun has no special drop-proof safeties, it is strongly recommended that it should be carried with the empty chamber under the hammer (with only 5 rounds loaded). To achieve that, use the following loading procedure: Starting with the empty cylinder, load one chamber; skip one; load remaining four chambers. Now you got loaded gun that can be carried reasonably safely (when not cocked, of cause). Most versions of SAA had fixed sights. Grip panels could be wooden, rubber or ivory.



Colt 1873 Single Action Army, Artillery model, with 5½ inch barrel. Modern replica by EMF.



Colt 1873 Single Action, Civilian model, with 4¾ inch barrel. Modern replica by EMF.



*Colt 1873 Single Action Army, Bisley model, with 5½ inch barrel (note different grip and hammer shapes).
Modern replica by EMF.*



Colt 1873 Single Action Army, Buntline Special model with 12 inch barrel.

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Colt Detective Special (USA)

Data, Colt Detective Special 3rd issue (1st issue data in parentheses, where differs from 3rd issue)

Type: Double Action

Chamber: .38 Special

Weight unloaded: ?

Length: 178 mm (171 mm 1st issue)

Barrel length: 51 mm (2 in)

Capacity: 6 rounds

Colt Detective Special is one of famous Colt sixguns. Very popular among plain-cloth cops, security men and others, who needed a compact, reliable handgun. Colt Detective Special was introduced in 1927 and manufactured until 1936. Lately, Colt at least twice reintroduced this popular revolver, last time in 1973 as the Colt Detective Special 3rd issue (now discontinued).



Colt Detective Special 1st issue

The Colt Detective Special is a classic-style, swing out cylinder, double action compact revolver with fixed blade front sight and notch-style rear sights and full length ejector rod.



Colt Detective Special 3rd issue

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Colt mk. III revolvers: Trooper, Lawman, Official Police **(USA)**

Type: Double Action

Chamber: .38 Special and .357 Magnum

Weight unloaded: varies with different models and barrel lengths

Length: varies with different barrel lengths

Barrel length: 2.5, 4 or 6 inches (64, 102 or 152 mm)

Capacity: 6 rounds

The Colt mk. III family of revolvers appeared in the late 1960s as the first major development in the Colts' swing-out cylinder revolver design since early 1900s. The mk. III family consisted of the following major members:

Official Police mk. III revolver - improved version of the famous Colt Official Police, rugged service firearm chambered for .38 Special only, with fixed sights.

Lawman mk. III revolver - heavy barreled service revolver chambered for powerful .357 Magnum ammunition, with fixed sights

Trooper mk. III revolver - service and target revolver, top-of-the line in the mk. III family. Chambered for .357 Magnum ammunition, with heavy, ribbed barrel and ejector rod shroud, removable front blade and adjustable rear sights.



Colt Lawman mk. III

The key features of all mk.III revolvers are:

- the stainless steel firing pin is mounted inside the frame and is spring-loaded; it could be activated by the hammer only via the transfer bar, which is raised into the position only when trigger is pressed; otherwise, hammer falls onto the frame and does not touch the firing pin
- cylinder rotates clockwise (when looking from behind the gun); this helps to hold proper chamber-to-barrel position, as cylinder rotation hand pressed it against the frame;
- all springs are made from stainless steel
- main spring is of coil type, instead of the old, flat V-shaped spring
- all working surfaces are heat-treated to increase service life
- the cylinder rotation mechanism is redesigned, so cylinder can be opened or closed only if the hammer is lowered; if hammer is cocked, the cylinder rotation hand protrudes from inside the frame and blocks cylinder open or close operations.



Colt Official Police mk. III



Colt Trooper mk. III

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Colt mk. V revolvers: Trooper, KingCobra, Anaconda (USA)

Type: Double Action

Chamber: .357 magnum (Trooper mk.V, King Cobra); .44 Magnum and .45LC (Anaconda)

Weight unloaded: differs with models and barrel lengths

Length: differs with models and barrel lengths

Barrel length: from 2 to 8 inches (51 - 203 mm)

Capacity: 6 rounds

The Mk. V revolvers from Colt company, such as **Trooper Mk.V**, **Lawman Mk.V**, first appeared in 1982, as an improved versions of the earlier Mk.III revolvers with same names. The improvements were not that radical, with major attention done to the trigger group: the main spring became longer, while the hammer path became shorter. This resulted in shorter lock time and helped to improve accuracy. Other improvements were less significant and mostly regarded to the manufacturing process.



Colt KingCobra with 6 inch barrel

King Cobra revolver had been in production since 1986 and discontinued in late 1990s. It was technically similar to other mk.V revolvers, and can be described as direct successor to the Trooper Mk.V. King Cobra featured more modern design with full length underbarrel lug and solid top barrel rib. Sights were fully adjustable. All King Cobra revolvers were made from stainless steel. Like the earlier Trooper revolvers, the King Cobra is an all-around, versatile gun, suitable for sport, duty, self defence and even hunting.

Anaconda revolver first appeared in 1990, and had been officially discontinued in 1999, along with many other Colt models, but brought back in 2001. Technically, the Anaconda is similar to the King Cobra, but has bigger frame and cylinder to accomodate more powerful cartridges, such as .44 Magnum and .45 Long Colt. The Anaconda revolvers featured 6 or 8 inch barrels with vented top ribs, full lenght underbarrel lugs and ajustable sights. Anaconda revolvers are made from stainless steel. Some Anaconda revolvers in .44 Magnum were manufactured with factory ported barrels, to improve the control over the recoil. The Anaconda revolvers are intended primary for sport shooting and hunting, being too big and heavy for regular duty carry.



Colt Anaconda in .45LC with 6 inch barrel



Colt Trooper mk.V with 8in barrel and mounted scope (also known as Colt Whitetailer)

Enfield No 2 Mark 1 (Great Britain)

Type: Double Action (Mark 1) or Double Action Only (Mark 1* and Mark 1**)

Chamber: .38/200 (.38S&W)

Weight unloaded: 765 g

Length: 260 mm

Barrel length: 127 mm

Capacity: 6 rounds

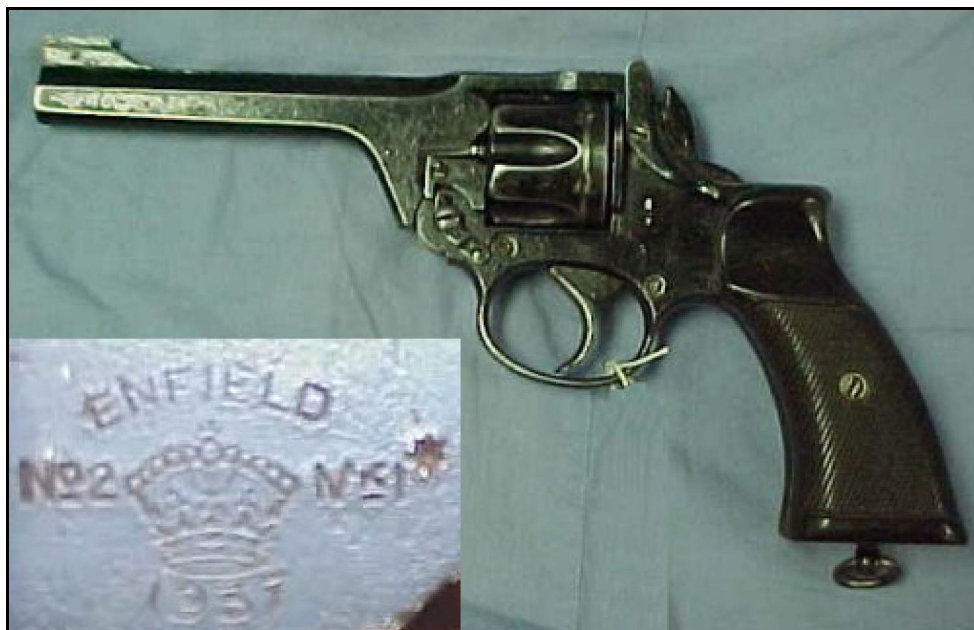
This revolver was developed at the Royal Small Arms Factory in Enfield in 1926 - 1927. The design is based on scaled down Webley Mark 6 "break-top" frame, with cylinder chambered for 6 .38/200 rounds. The hammer/trigger group was redesigned, with manual hammer safety lock added, and with separate cylinder lock. This revolver was adopted for British Military service in 1932 as Enfield revolver, .38 caliber, No.2 Mark 1. After 1938, almost all No.2 Mk1s were converted into No.2 Mark 1* configuration.



Enfield No 2 Mark 1

Enfield No.2 Mark 1* were developed in the late 1930s for British Tank Corps, and are distinguished from early Mark 1 by spurless, Double Action Only hammers, lighter mainsprings, and re-shaped grip side plates. The spurless DAO hammers were required by Tank Corps command to avoid snagging the hammers on tank internals.

Enfield No.2 Mark 1** appeared in the 1942 as a simplified, wartime design. These guns were similar to No.2 Mark 1*, but without the hammer stop. After the 1945, all those revolvers were recalled and converted into No.2 Mark 1* configuration.



*Enfield No 2 Mark I**

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Korth revolver (Germany)

Type	Double Action revolver
Caliber(s)	.22LR, .22WMR, .38 Special and .357 Magnum
Weight unloaded	ca. 1040 g with 4" / 102mm barrel
Length	n/a
Barrel length	3" (76mm), 4" (102mm), 5 1/4" (133mm), 6" (152mm) and 8" (205mm)
Cylinder capacity	6 rounds

Korth revolvers are produced on semi-custom, limited basis by Korth Waffen company in Germany. Willie Korth designed his own revolver action during late 1950s, and started to manufacture centerfire revolvers of his own design circa 1965. Korth revolvers represent top grade of European guns; made in very limited numbers and with great deal of precision machining and hand fitting, these revolvers command prices of several thousands of US dollars or Euros. In reward, their users get excellent accuracy, great durability and luxurious finish. Over the time, Korth revolvers were made in a number of calibers and versions. Basic versions are Korth "Combat" (usually chambered in .38 Spl or .357 Magnum, with optional 9x19 cylinders and barrels 3 or 4 inches long), Korth "Sport" (basically similar to Combat but with longer barrels, also available in .22LR and .22WMR) and Korth "Target" (with adjustable orthopedic grips and target type sights).



Korth Combat revolver, .357 magnum caliber

Korth revolvers are slid frame, swing-open cylinder double action guns. Trigger is of proprietary design, with telescoped coil-type mainspring and complicated, precision made and tuned lockwork. Cylinder release lever is located next to the hammer, at the rear of the frame. Once opened, cylinders with crane could be easily removed from the frame by pressing an oval release button, located at the left side of the frame, below the cylinder. This allows for multiple cylinders for one gun, i.e. for shooting 9x19 Luger / Parabelum and .357 magnum ammunition from the same gun, with just the swap of the cylinder. Most Korth revolvers feature full-length ejector rod shroud and ventilated barrel rib. Sights are of adjustable type on al revolvers.



Korth target revolver, .22LR caliber

Manurhin MR-73 (France)

Type: Double Action

Chamber: .357 Magnum (also 9x19mm Luger/Para)

Weight unloaded: 910 g (3" barrel) or 1050 g (5.25" barrel)

Length: 204 mm or 264 mm

Barrel length: 76 mm (3") or 133 mm (5.25")

Capacity: 6 rounds

MR-73 revolvers were developed by MANURHIN company of France in 1973. MR-73 is a standart issue firearm of the french Gendarmerie, as well as of some French elite law enforcement agencies (G.I.G.N., R.A.I.D. etc). MR-73 is also a favorite European sporting arm, available also in Sport and Match (.32 SW Long or .38 Spl).



Manurhin MR-73

All MR-73s featured all-steel construction, designed to withstand extereme pressures. MR-73 barrels are manufactured by cold-hammering, resulting in long service life and extreme accuracy. Additional cylinders for 9x19mm Luger ammunition available as options, providing ability to use cheaper ammunition for ectensive training. All MR-73's had hand-assembled and ajusted actions, resulting very good to extremely high accuracy and high unit price. Reliability and service life of the MR-73s, combined with the match-grade accuracy, also brings it to the worlds' best service handguns class, along with SIG P-210.



Manurhin MR-73 - with 3" (Gendarmerie) and 5 1/4" (Sport) barrels

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Mateba Model 6 Unica auto-revolver (Italy)

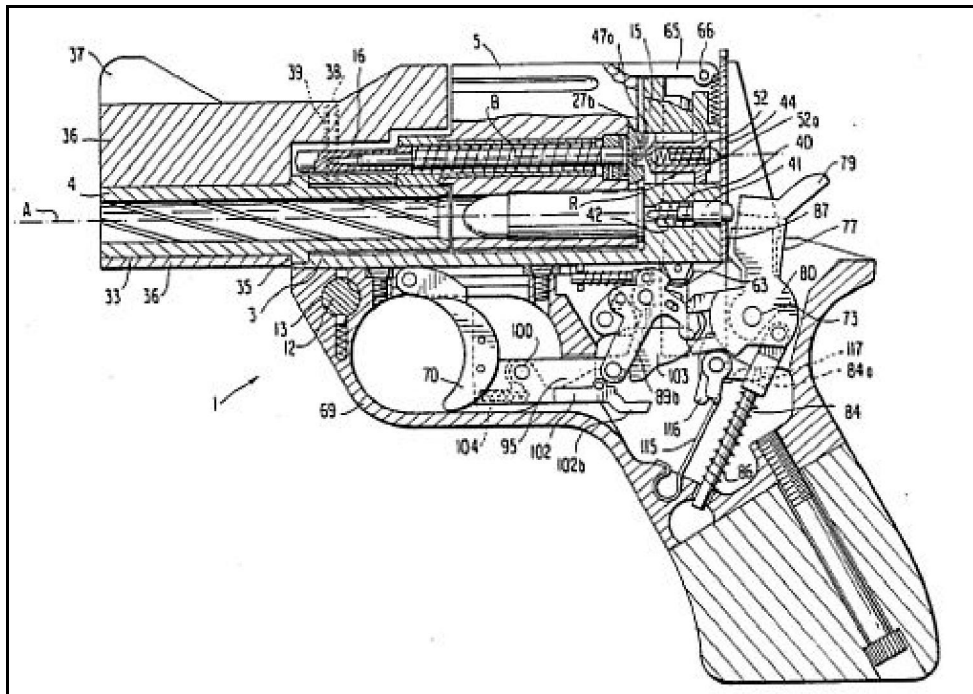
Type	Double Action semiautomatic revolver
Caliber(s)	.357 Magnum, also .44 Magnum and .454 Casull
Weight unloaded	1250 g and more
Length	depending on barrel length; 275mm with 152mm (6") barrel
Barrel length	76mm (3"), 102mm (4"), 127mm (5"), 152mm (6") and 205mm (8")
Magazine capacity	6 rounds

Mateba Model 6 Unica is one of the more unusual modern weapons, which combines advantages and disadvantages of two different types of handguns - semi-automatic pistols and traditional revolvers. Obviously based on 1900-wintage British Webley-Fosbery semi-automatic revolver, Mateba Model Unica adds several novel features to this old and relatively unsuccessful design. Mateba Model 6 Unica auto-revolver has been developed by Italian designer Emilio Ghisoni by late 1980s, and put into limited production by Italian company Macchine Termo Balistiche, now Mateba Srl. Basic design was developed in three calibers (and sizes), as well as in carbine versions, fitted with long 457mm (18") barrels and shoulder stocks. Revolvers of Model 6 Unica line-up apparently are still produced on limited basis.



Mateba Model 6 Unica auto-revolver in .454Casull caliber

Mateba Model 6 Unica auto-revolver utilizes two-part frame, where upper part is allowed to recoil on the rails, machined on the lower frame. Upper frame holds cylinder and barrel; lower frame hosts the trigger and hammer unit and a grip. Six-shot cylinder swings to the left for reloading, but, unlike most revolvers, cylinder crane axis is located above the cylinder (not below), and cylinder swings up and to the left, instead of more traditional down and to the left. Also unlike most other revolvers, the barrel is located coaxially with lower chamber in the cylinder (not upper); this is done to decrease muzzle flip through smaller bore axis to grip distance. Barrels are easily removable, with separate barrel jackets; therefore, barrels of various lengths can be installed on a single gun using special wrench. Upon discharge, upper frame recoils against its return spring, automatically cocking the hammer and rotating cylinder; if necessary, revolver also can be fired for first shot in traditional single or double action mode. Sights are adjustable, but again unlike most other guns, it is front sight that is fully adjustable, and rear sight is fixed; this is necessary because front sights are fixed on removable barrel shrouds. Like its much older predecessor, the Webley-Fosbery semi-automatic revolver, Mateba Model 6 Unica has advantage of significantly reduced felt recoil; however, there are some serious penalties for that, as it is also somewhat heavier than traditional revolvers of similar caliber and barrel length, is more complicated and sensitive to proper grip during discharge - gripping it too weakly may produce failures to cycle the action through insufficient recoiling movement. Also, it is sensitive to weak and mild rounds that may generate insufficient recoil, and the gun will fail to cycle the action.



Drawing from original patent (US 4,712,466 to Emilio Ghisoni) which explains the basic design of Mateba Model 6 Unica auto-revolver

Mateba MTR-8 revolver (Italy)

Type	Double Action revolver
Caliber(s)	.357 Magnum / .38 Special
Weight unloaded	1230 g
Length	265 mm (10.4")
Barrel length	76 mm (3")
Magazine capacity	8 rounds

The Mateba MTR-8 revolver is one of most unusual weapons of its class, developed during early 1980s for sport shooting, especially for rapid fire events. To achieve minimum shot-to-shot time through minimized barrel rise, designer of this weapon, Emilio Ghisoni, decided to put the barrel as low as possible.



Mateba MTR-8 revolver

To do so, he put the cylinder in front of the triggerguard, rather than above it. He also used a high-capacity cylinders, which contained 8 rounds of .357 or .38 caliber ammunition (model MTR-8), 12 rounds of .32 caliber ammunition (model MTR-12) or 14 rounds of .22LR (model MTR-14). Revolvers with capacity of up to 20 .22 caliber rounds were proposed in this lineup, but supposedly not built. Very limited manufacture of these finely made and unusual weapons was made by Macchine Termo Balistiche (Mateba) company in Italy. It is believed that MTR line of Mateba revolvers is no longer in production.

Obviously, these revolvers had limited use outside of shooting sport, as they were way too heavy and too long for everyday concealed or open carry, especially considering their relatively short barrels.

Mateba MTR-8 revolver is a double / single action revolver of all-steel construction. 8-shot cylinder is located in the frame ahead of the triggerguard, and swings out to the left for reloading. Cylinder release latch is located at the front of the cylinder, on the cylinder crane. For faster reloading, special flat clips were developed for these revolvers. Trigger unit design was also unusual - hammer is fully concealed within the frame and is located in the grip, with the long firing pin passing above the trigger towards the rear of the cylinder. Hammer can be manually cocked and de-cocked using a thumb lever, located on the frame above the left grip panel.

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MP-412 Rex revolver (Russia)

Type: Double Action
Caliber: .357 Magnum
Weight unloaded: 0.9 kg
Length: 232mm (4" barrel)
Barrel length: 102mm (4") or 152mm (6")
Capacity: 6 rounds

The MP-412 revolver has been designed at IZHMECH (State-owned Russian Izhevsk Mechanical Plant, a large factory known as a prime maker of Makarov PM pistols among other things). This revolver was intended for export, as a handgun ownership is generally prohibited for ordinary citizens in Russia. First prototypes of REX (Revolver for EXport) revolver were displayed at IWA-2000 arms exhibition in Nuremberg (Germany). It is not exactly known what killed this rather interesting project, but most possibly it was a lack of market, as the biggest export market, the USA, has been closed for Russian handguns since mid-1990s, because of Clinton / Yeltsyn mutual agreement.



MP-412 Rex revolver

The MP-412 is a double action revolver with break-open frame and simultaneous extraction. The bottom frame is of composite type - it consists of a steel basic frame and a polymer envelope, which forms the grip and trigger guard. Polymer grip / trigger guard unit can be removed from steel frame if necessary. Trigger is of conventional type, double / single action, with exposed hammer. Firing pin is mounted in the frame. Barrel / cylinder group latch is located at the top rear of the frame, and is operated by two buttons that must be pushed inwards to unlock the frame. Cylinder holds 6 rounds and has an automatic ejector that throws the cases out of cylinder once barrel is fully tipped down. If necessary, automatic ejection feature can be manually switched off.



MP-412 Rex revolver, with barrel tipped down for reloading

Nagant model of 1895 (Belgium - Russia)

Type: Double Action
Chamber: 7.62mm Nagant
Weight unloaded: 750 g
Length: 230 mm
Barrel length: 114 mm
Capacity: 7 rounds

This revolver was designed in Belgium by Nagant brothers (Emile and Leon) in the late 1880s - early 1890s, and was adopted by numerous countries, including Sweden and Poland, but the major user and manufacturer was undoubtedly Russia (and later Soviet Union). Russian government adopted Nagant revolver in 1895, and local production began in 1898 (first shipments were from Belgium). It was a standard Russian sidearm until 1930, when M1895 Nagant was declared obsolete, but it was widely used and manufactured during World War 2, and manufacture was finally ceased circa 1950.



Russian-made Nagant revolver (circa 1925)

Later, some sporting revolvers, both in 7.62mm and in .22LR were developed on Nagant platform. Interestingly enough, the M1895 revolvers still can be seen carried by some security personnel in Russia, especially by Railroad Security and by some armed guards. Usually, those revolvers are 2 to 4 times older than men who carry these guns.

From technical point of view, Nagant revolvers were already almost outdated at the moment of its adoption in 1895, since newest revolvers like S&W Hand Ejectors or Colts

with side-opened cylinders were much faster to reload. On the other hand, M1895 had some unusual and interesting features, one of which was gas sealed cylinder, which made the Nagant a rare example of revolver suitable for mounting a silencer. Such a practice was known by NKVD and some Red Army special forces (recon and scouts) during WW2. Special silencer, called "Bramit device" was designed by Mitin brothers and could be mounted on the barrel.

M1895 Nagant was a solid frame, seven shot revolver with non-removable cylinder. The loading and unloading was committed via the loading gate at the right side of the frame, one cartridge by one. Spent cases were ejected by the ejector rod, which, when not in use, was concealed within the cylinder axis and swung to the side on the ejector rod link to be used. Original guns were double action ones, but Tsarists government ordered that some of M1895 should be retrofitted with Single Action triggers and issued to enlisted men, and DA guns should be issued only to the Officers and Police. In Red (Soviet) army only Double Action Nagants were issued.



Cut-out view of the M1895 Nagant revolver

The gas sealed cylinder, mentioned above, was made to use all of powder gases to propel the bullet (in most revolvers some gases escape from the gap between the cylinder face and barrel breech). To achieve that, the cylinder moves ahead a bit when hammer is cocked, enclosing a barrel breech area with recess in the front of each chamber. The cartridge, unique to that design, had long case with tapered mouth and a bullet totally enclosed inside the case. When cylinder moves forward, the cartridge case mouth entered the barrel breech and was used as additional seal. This was a complicated mechanism, useful mostly when guns were used with silencer.

Being somewhat complicated and relatively slow to reload, with ammunition of marginal power, Nagants were otherwise good guns, reliable, accurate and quite popular among the troops.

OTs-01 / TKB-0216 / RSA "Kobalt" revolver (Russia)

Type	Double Action revolver
Caliber(s)	9x18 Mak, 9x17 Browning Short
Weight unloaded	800 g
Length	200 mm
Barrel length	75 mm
Cylinder capacity	6 rounds

The OTs-01 "Kobalt" revolver, also known as RSA (*Revolver Stechkina-Avraamova*, after the names of designers, Stechkin and Avraamov) was developed in Central Design Bureau for Sporting and Hunting Arms (TsKIB SOO) in the city of Tula. This revolver appeared during early 1990s along with several other Russian-made revolvers in an attempt to provide Russian police (Militia) and private security companies with a weapon that is as simple to use as possible. The RSA / OTs-01 was never accepted as a police weapon in Russia, but it became somewhat popular as an individual weapon among private security companies, which are licensed under the Russian law to issue its personnel with firearms. It is also used by bank and armored truck security personnel in Russia. It must be noted that private sector companies are allowed to use this weapon only in 9x17 Browning Short (a.k.a. .380ACP) chambering, the 9x18 Mak version was developed strictly for Government use.



The OTs-01 "Kobalt" / RSA revolver is a conventional double-action revolver with exposed hammer and side-opening cylinder that holds 6 rounds. Since ammunition, for which this revolver is intended, is rimless, cartridges are loaded into flat steel clips prior to loading into the cylinder. Loading and extraction is performed using this clip, with all 6 rounds at once. Revolver also can be fired when loaded with loose cartridges (no clip) but in this case extraction would be problematic.

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OTs-20 "Gnom" revolver (Russia)

Type	Double Action revolver
Caliber(s)	12.5x40R
Weight unloaded	1100 g
Length	250 mm
Barrel length	100 mm
Cylinder capacity	5 rounds

This monstrous revolver was developed circa 1993 by Central Design Bureau for Sporting and Hunting Arms (TsKIB SOO) in the city of Tula. It was developed under the R&D program "Udar" (blow), initiated by Russian MVD (Internal Affairs Ministry) which, at the time, was looking for a more versatile and powerful sidearm for 'street' police, to replace old and venerable Makarov PM pistols. New revolver was to have greatly enhanced stopping power with standard ammo (lead bullet), and to have significant penetration effect against steel plate with special Armor Piercing round (steel pointed bullet). Other types of ammo include less-lethal rounds with rubber bullets or tear gas. New ammunition was developed by shortening 32 gauge shotgun shells to 40mm, and loading these with appropriate propellant and projectiles. It seems that the whole concept of the "Udar" R&D program, the large-bore police revolver, was met with little enthusiasm by actual users, and only few OTs-20 revolvers were made during mid- and late 1990s



OTs-20 "Gnom" revolver with laser aiming module at the front of the frame and sample rounds of ammunition

The OTs-20 "Gnom" revolver is a conventional double-action revolver with exposed hammer and side-opening cylinder that holds 5 rounds. The only departure from 'the usual' in this revolver is that it has a smooth (non-rifled) chrome-lined bore, and thus its accuracy is adequate only for very short-range encounters.

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OTs-38 silent revolver (Russia)

Type	Double Action revolver
Caliber(s)	7,62x42 SP-4
Weight unloaded	880 g (with integral laser sight)
Length	191 mm
Barrel length	n/a
Magazine capacity	5 rounds in special flat clip

The OTs-38 (ОЦ-38) revolver is one of most unusual revolvers ever made. It was developed by the TSKIB SOO (Central Bureau for Sporting and Hunting Arms, a division of famous KBP organization, located in Tula, Russia) on request from Russian FSB (Federal Security Service). Because of its specific nature, OTs-38 is a limited production item, and it is being used by various Special Purpose law enforcement units. The OTs-38 is an integrally silenced weapon, which produces almost no sound and absolutely no flash upon firing. It is built as alternative to PSS silent pistol, and uses same special, integrally silenced ammunition known as SP-4. The OTs-38 is one of the last designs by the late I. Ya. Stechkin, a famous Russian gun designer.



OTs-38 revolver, left side. Note that hammer is cocked and locked by manual safety. The button that controls built-in laser sight is visible above the trigger guard.

OTs-38 resembles a traditional double-action revolver but it has many uncommon features. For the start, it has a more or less common exposed hammer with double-action trigger, but the action fitted with ambidextrous manual safety which allows for safe "cocked & locked" carry, for fast and accurate first shot. Next, the OTs-38 fires from the bottom chamber of the cylinder, as opposed to most revolvers that fire from upper chamber. Therefore, the barrel axis of OTs-38 is relatively low and muzzle jump is minimal. The large cylindrical housing, located above the barrel of OTs-38, contains an integral laser pointer / sight. The cylinder fixture is also of most unusual nature. The cylinder axis is hinged to the frame at the front, so once cylinder release (at the left side of the frame) is pushed forward, the cylinder can be swung open to the right and forward (while on most modern revolvers cylinders are swung down and to the left). Upon the opening of the cylinder, an automatic ejector partially withdraws the clip with rounds (or empty cases) from cylinder. This unusual cylinder mounting is essential to provide minimum play between the firing chamber in cylinder and barrel throat, since the SP-4 bullets are of pure cylinder shape, and thus cannot self-align itself with the barrel upon firing, unlike most conventional bullets that have conical or ogive nose shape. Since SP-4 ammunition is rimless, it is loaded into OTs-38 using special flat clips that hold 5 rounds together.



OTs-38 revolver, right side. Hammer is lowered and safety is off.

As said above, OTs-4 is fitted with integral laser sight. It is also fitted with traditional fixed iron sights, that have contrast white inserts.



OTs-38 revolver, top view with cylinder opened for reloading. Note the most unusual way of cylinder opening.



SP-4 silent ammunition loaded into 5-round OTs-38 flat clip

Mechanically, this new revolver is a rather conventional design, with double-action trigger and swing-out cylinder. The firing pin is mounted in the frame, and a coil mainspring is located in the grip frame. Barrel is enclosed into separate jacket, styled after American Dan Wesson revolvers. The most unusual thing about this revolver is an additional manual safety lever, which is located on the left side of the frame, above the cylinder latch. Apparently, this safety blocks the firing pin. The sights are of open type, with rear sight blade being adjustable for windage.



Ammunition of a new revolver: left, with standard bullet, right - with black rubber "less lethal" bullet