

*Til I Can Make it  
on my Own...*



## PART 4: SOME ASSEMBLY REQUIRED

BY ANDREA BOGARD

**W**ow! We've come a long way, haven't we? From caliber selection to parts sourcing, we're now ready to put it all together. I have a confession to make. I had all the parts in a box for over a month before gathering the courage to sit down and put it together. Why? I didn't know if I could truly "make it on my own."

So, what did I do? I got COVID. Yep. Confined to my house with my family for a week, what else do you do on a beautiful Saturday over Labor Day weekend? While I didn't feel all that bad, I couldn't smell or taste anything, removing barbecuing and beer drinking as fun activities. So, I built a gun.

I got the box out and put it on the counter. I unrolled some rubber backed felt gun mats on my quartz countertop and stared at the pile of parts I had accumulated. Some wise advice I received recently echoed in my head – "you eat an elephant one bite at a time." Okay, we can do this.

**Step 1:** Take two more ibuprofen to keep the COVID headache at bay.

**Step 2:** Lay everything out to see what I have and what goes where. The exploded diagram from the last installment is super helpful here!

**Step 3:** As with most shooting disciplines, start with the foundation. In this case, the Lower.

### LOWER!

Depending on what type of lower you selected, this will look different for you. I went with a stripped lower so I have a "Builders Kit" of springs, pins, detents and miscellaneous goodies.

I'm going to stop here to pass along a little bit of wisdom. Not all the handy little packages of parts you have so painstakingly sourced come with directions. I'm a big fan of reading the

instructions so imagine my dismay when I open a package of indecipherable pieces and there are NO INSTRUCTIONS.

Thanks to Dr. Google and a print-out of an exploded AR's innerds, I was able to extrapolate what I needed ([www.mcarbo.com](http://www.mcarbo.com) AR-15 Lower Exploded View is the diagram I used). Here's the process I followed. Yours may differ based on the parts and pieces you get.

1. Installed the pivot and take down pins along with their associated springs and detents.
2. Installed the magazine catch and release button, and the bolt catch and the associated springs and detents.
3. Installed the trigger and trigger pins along with the safety selector. Note: my Trigger Tech trigger came as an assembly requiring only the installation of the trigger pins and tightening of tension screws.
4. Installed the grip along with the safety detent and spring.

5. Installed buffer tube, buffer retainer and retainer spring, buffer spring and buffer.

6. Attached the buttstock to buffer tube. My lower was now complete! *Note: you may have additional/different steps based on your parts selection and build specs.*

### UPPER!

1. Assembled the bolt carrier group (BCG)
  - a. Removed side charge handle from carrier
  - b. Installed bolt in carrier
  - c. Installed cam pin in bolt
  - d. Installed firing pin in bolt
  - e. Installed retaining pin in bolt
2. Installed barrel in upper receiver
3. Installed hand guard nut
4. Installed barrel nut
5. Aligned gas tube and torqued barrel nut
6. Installed and secured gas block
7. Installed and pinned gas tube
8. Attached hand guard
9. Inserted charge handle and BCG
10. Re-installed side charge handle in BCG





So, we have assembled our lower and configured the upper. Do you remember those handy pivot pins from a little while ago? Line those babies up and put it all together.

"OMG, I made a gun," I blurted as I snapped the upper and lower together. I held her out to admire with a mixture of surprise and awe. Do you ever have something turn out far better than you expected? Like a new creative attempt in the kitchen, sometimes the outcome exceeds expectations significantly. This particular project blew past my cautiously optimistic benchmark.

As many of you know, I name my guns. There is always a reason behind the choice. Standing there quarantined in my kitchen, snuggling my freshly built gun, I heard the starting notes of one of my favorite songs come through the Bose speaker on the counter.

"*Delta Dawn, what's that flower you have on...*?" I do love me some Tanya Tucker. And, I possibly had the so-called "delta" variant. Perfect!! We have a name. Welcome to the safe, Delta Dawn.

She's beautiful, classy, sleek, sexy and fiery with just the right pop of bling. But does she shoot? Check out the video [HERE](#) of our first shots together! Note: I had a scope/rings/bases that fit so that's what I put on until I decide exactly what optic I want. I can't wait to take her on many adventures – both on the range and in the field. Follow along with the hashtag!

**#AdventuresofDeltaDawn**



As with many projects, the process is just as exciting as the final product. I hope you have enjoyed the journey thus far. I want you to know how imperative this project was from a personal standpoint and how grateful I am to have shared it with you all. Until you try, you really don't know

if you can truly "make it on your own." Now I know I can. I also know you can, too.

Did you #makeitonyourown? I'd love to repost! Send pictures and a description to [andrea@ladysooterlife.com](mailto:andrea@ladysooterlife.com) Cheers! ■

