

# STEYR M-A1: 9mm/40 caliber – AIMING FOR THE FUTURE

AS UNUSUAL IN DESIGN AS IT IS IN APPEARANCE, THE ADVANTAGES OF THIS RADICAL PISTOL AREN'T OBVIOUS UNTIL YOU HAVE IT IN YOUR HAND.

## Plastic Wrap

Bubits [Steyr M pistol designer] doesn't think of his brainchild as a polymer pistol. "It's more of a steel gun wrapped in polymer," he explains. "The inside is all steel."

So, of course, are slide and barrel. The slide is super-hard and finished with Tenifer. The grasping grooves are wide, 4mm grooves separated by 1mm lands. "This makes it feel less sharp to the hand, but gives the shooter a strong grasping contact," Bubits explains.

The barrel is conventionally rifled, six lands and grooves with a 1:14 twist. Bubits felt that shooters wanted to be able to run lead bullets, which are verboten with the polygonal rifling twist used in the Glock pistols and many of their clones. "You're losing 3 to 4 percent velocity, at most, compared to polygonal rifling," says Bubits of the conventionally rifled Steyr pistol barrel. [...]



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## Three Safety Modes

Fully loaded with a round in the chamber, the Steyr is described by its manufacturer as having three "safety conditions." [...]

In safety condition one, the pistol is ready to fire when drawn from the holster. [...] In this condition, it's simply draw and shoot. Trigger pull will be the same for every shot. It will be short. An "indirect firing pin safety" at the back of the frame prevents the gun from firing unless the trigger is pulled.

A lever affixed to the front of the trigger has to be depressed for the trigger to move - similar in function, though different in concept, in comparison to the triggers of a Glock or a Sigma. The pistol cycles in what the factory calls "reset action." Bubits said, "The nose of the firing pin goes behind a catch while the slide goes back. From that point on, it cannot move forward or down, being blocked by a fixed bolt inside, until the trigger is pulled."

This basically puts three mechanisms in place to prevent the pistol from firing if dropped or struck. The trigger has to be pulled to make the Steyr go "bang." [...]



Their revolutionary design and safety features place the Steyr M series light years ahead of their competition.

## Sights and Grip

The sights look weird to those of us accustomed to traditional patterns. But I found them to pick up instantly, and soon it was, no pun intended, love at first "sight."

The narrow tip of the front sight lets you see more of the target, and lets you be more precise as you center on the point of aim. It works like a post reticule in a telescopic sight. My first two shots from the pistol, fired at 25 yards, made holes that touched one another.

Alignment to a "flash sight picture" was very fast. This is where you're looking for the same sight picture you'd be using for precision slow fire, but you're running at speed and rather than hold and squeeze, you're going to almost subliminally verify the sight picture and crack off a fast shot now. It works great with a triangle front sight that rides point up.[...]

The easy trigger pull helped. What helped more was the ergonomic shape of the Steyr M9's "handle." The combination of Luger-like grip rake and the dished portion of the backstrap brought the front sight to point of intended aim instantaneously.[...]

Taken from Guns Magazine, Oct. 1999 by Massad Ayoob



- Conventional Barrel Rifling** – Can use Lead Bullets without harming the barrel
- Supported Chamber** – Shells will not explode inside your gun (Kb!)
- Universal Accessory Rail** – Will accept any tactical attachments
- Trapezoidal Sights** – For faster target acquisitions
- Ergonomical Grip** – A more comfortable and natural grip on the pistol

**W S C** WEAPONS SYSTEMS CORPORATION

Units 626-627 Mega Plaza Bldg., ADB Ave. corner Garnet Rd., Ortigas Center, Pasig City  
Tel. No.: 687-7607, Telefax No.: 687-7973, Email: sales@weapons-systems.com  
Internet Address: <http://www.weapons-systems.com>

Unit F8 Grnd flr., Makati Cinema Square Commercial Complex, Pasong Tamo Street, Makati City  
Telefax No.: 848-7522, Email: makati@weapons-systems.com