The H&K MP5

In 1966, West German police and border guards adopted the **Maschinenpistole 5** – the fifth submachine gun to enter official service with German forces after WWII. It was the main weapon of the famous GSG9 antiterrorist unit from its inception. The MP5 first caught the public eye as the gun used by the British SAS during the Iranian embassy siege of 1980. It soon became the firearm of choice among special operators everywhere. Today, virtually all Western (and quite a few Eastern) special-ops, counterterrorist, and SWAT teams employ the MP5.

Several factors explain the MP5’s popularity despite its high price tag. It’s reliable and extremely versatile. Its closed-bolt action makes it probably the most accurate weapon of its type. Dozens of sub-variants exist, and there are few firearms with so many accessories offered. Finally, a certain air of professionalism surrounds it – if GSG9 and the SAS use it, it must be good. The MP5 has been license-made in Greece, Iran, Mexico, Norway, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the U.K.

**H&K MP5A3, 9×19mm Parabellum (Germany, 1971-)**

The original MP5 (1966-1971) had a fixed plastic stock and a straight magazine (Wt. 6, Bulk -4). The MP5A1 (1966-1971) had no stock (Acc 3, Wt. 5.3, Bulk -3). The MP5A2 (1971-) is slightly improved over the MP5 (but still Wt. 6, Bulk -4). It and the MP5A3 (in table), which has a retractable stock, are the main production models today.

The MP5A4 (1982-) has a fixed stock like the MP5A2, but offers a three-round limited burst option in addition to semi- and full-automatic (RoF 9/13). The MP5A5 (1982-) is like the MP5A4, but with a retractable stock.

The MP5N (1985-) was originally ordered by the U.S. Navy SEALs. It resembles the MP5A3 but features a new ambidextrous grip configuration, and muzzle lugs for the quick attachment of a 1.2-lb. baffle suppressor (-2 to Hearing, -1 Bulk). A 100-round twin drum (-1 Bulk, $313, 4.8 lbs.) became available in 2001.

The MP5 is also available in other calibers. In 1994, the FBI adopted the MP5/10A3 (1992-1999), in 10×25mm Auto: Dmg 3d+2 pi+, Range 280/3,100, Wt. 7.8/1.5, RoF 6/13, ST 9†, Rcl 3. The MP5/40A3 (1992-1999), in .40 S&W, was somewhat more popular: Dmg 3d-1 pi+, Range 190/2,000, Wt. 7.6/1.3, RoF 6/13. Both normally fired single shots, two-round limited bursts, and full-automatic.

**H&K MP5SD3, 9×19mm Parabellum (Germany, 1974-)**

The MP5 Schalldämpfer has an integral sound suppressor (-3 to Hearing) that lasts for some 10,000 shots. The MP5SD1 lacks a stock (Acc 3, Wt. 7.3, Bulk -3), the MP5SD2 has a fixed stock (Wt. 8, Bulk -4), and the MP5SD3 (in table) has a retractable stock. The MP5SD4, MP5SD5, and MP5SD6 (all available from 1982) add a three-round limited-burst option (RoF 9/13) but are otherwise identical to the MP5SD1, MP5SD2 and MP5SD3, respectively.

**H&K MP5K, 9×19mm Parabellum (Germany, 1976-)**

The MP5 Kurz is a shortened machine-pistol variant designed for concealed carry under a coat. It lacks a stock but features a foregrip for better two-handed control. If fired one-handed: ST 11, Rcl 3. A 15-round magazine was designed to accompany it ($27, 0.7 lb.), but the standard 30-rounder is more common.

The MP5KA1 (1976-) has only rudimentary sights (Acc 1, Bulk -2, +1 to Fast-Draw). The MP5KA4 and MP5KA5 (1982-) offer three-round limited bursts (RoF 9/13). The MP5K-PDW (1991-) is similar to the MP5K, but has the MP5N grip and a folding stock (Acc 3, Wt. 6.2, Bulk -4*), and accepts the MP5N’s suppressor.

A special attaché case (p. 31) is available that can mount any MP5K model inside ($3,000, 14.9 lbs. with gun and spare magazine). A trigger in the carrying handle lets the carrier fire the weapon while it’s still in the case. This gives -4 to Guns skill – and unless the shooter employs the proper technique, with the case braced against his midsection, Rcl rises to 3.