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## Heckler & Koch G36 Rifle

by Roger Stenning



The Heckler and Koch G36 is a departure from the usual run of rifles that H&K make. Instead of being delayed action recoil roller block operated, it's a more conventional gas-operated design. So reliable is this design from H&K, that the Bundeswehr, the German Army, has just adopted it as their standard longarm (although it may take a few years to outfit the entire Bundeswehr with the rifles). It comes in three

'flavours'; the full-length G36, the shorter G36K (K for 'Kurtz', or short), and the heavy version, complete with bipod, the MG36; the photograph shows composite photograph of a standard HK G3 rifle above an HK G36, the full length version of the G36 system (It is worth noting that the G36 is about 36mm shorter than the G3!).

Reliability of this weapon was a major factor for H&K to maintain, since they have a reputation for producing weapons that will continue firing, no matter virtually what happens. The G36 is no exception. In recent tests, a G36 fired over 24,000 rounds put through it without malfunction. Which puts the M16A2, and most other military rifles, to shame.

Ergonomically, the rifle is virtually ambidextrous, with all operating controls duplicated on both sides of the weapon, as in all modern H&K rifles. It possesses, as standard, the H&K 'N' type selector grip, incorporating semi, full-auto, and safe modes only. Civilian exports will, it appears, only possess a modified 'N' type selector grip, capable of semi and safe modes only. The G36 series is also said to have a bolt hold-back feature on firing the last round in a magazine, but I've seen no reports to confirm or deny this. The stock, however, has a problem. It only folds to the right side of the rifle, and, in the folded position, the upper part of the stock obscures the ejection port, which will result in a round jamming in the port, if fired with the stock folded. It's apparently not a tactical folding stock, as found on the MP-series smgs and G-series rifles, but a non-tactical storage and transportability feature. It will also not lock folded if 'stacked' magazines are fitted to the rifle.

However, due to the departure in design to a gas-operated mechanism, the rifle's components are NOT compatible with any other H&K weapon systems, such as the G3, G41, and MP5 series. Tactically, this can make for complications, as the magazines are of a different design as well, made of a hard but not too fragile plastic, transparent, and completely unable to fit either an H&K G series or NATO STANAG (M16-magazine compatible) rifle either. It is, though, possible to clip up to three magazines together using the moulded-on male and female clips, much like the SIG 55x series weapons system. Since the magazines are of a proprietary design, compatibility with the STANAG system is not a feature however, as the magazine well is a completely removable part (for, one presumes, ease of maintenance), this should not pose much of a problem: H&K merely needs to design a new magazine well and receiver component to accept STANAG magazines, and that should be that.

H&K Magazines for the G36 series come in two types: The normal 30-round transparent ones, and metal 100-round double-drum magazines, similar to the U.S. made 'C' magazines.

Reportedly, firing the G36 is a joy. The rifle comes, in the German Army models, fitted with TWO (2) optical sights, a 3-power unity sight (similar to the Elcan optical sight that Canadian C7A1 (M16 look-a-likes) are

fitted with), and a red-dot single point-like sight set over that. The sights can be independently zeroed, for instance, the optical sight could be set to 300 metres, while the red dot sight could be set for 100 metres, thus allowing for both long range engagements, and short range street fighting engagements, with no re-setting of the sights required. On top of the red dot sight there is an 'emergency' iron sight with a very short sight radius, in the event that both optical sighting systems are rendered useless. This is similar to the system used on the SUSAT sights fitted to L85A1/L86A1 used by the British Army (made by Royal Ordnance, who own Heckler and Koch).

The rifle incorporates a carry handle, into the rear of which rests the 3-power and red-dot optical sights, the front of the carrying handle being a skeleton which the sight 'sees' through. It's quite a good arrangement.

It is also worth noting that, in Export versions, the optical sights are restricted to a 1.5-power scope, not a 3-power one, and the red-dot electronic sight is completely omitted, as standard.

For the purposes of Millennium's End, the following statistics should be used:

H&K G36 (Military) rifle system	
Calibre :	5.56mm
Length :	99 cm (G36, Stock extended)
	76 cm (G36, Stock folded)
	86 cm (G36K, Stock extended)
	61.5 cm (G36K, Stock folded)
Weight :	3.5 kg (G36) 3.0 kg (G36K)
Magazine :	30 rd box, 100rd double drum

Weapon	Subskill used	Speed	IA	Fire rate	Hands req'd	Eff. Range	Action	Magazine	Ammunition
H&K G36/G36K (optical and red dot sights)	Longarm/Auto	7	36	4/13	2	350	Auto	30 Box, 100 double drum.	5.56mm
H&K G36/G36K ('emergency' iron sight)	Longarm/Auto	7	31	4/13	2	350	Auto	30 Box, 100 double drum.	5.56mm