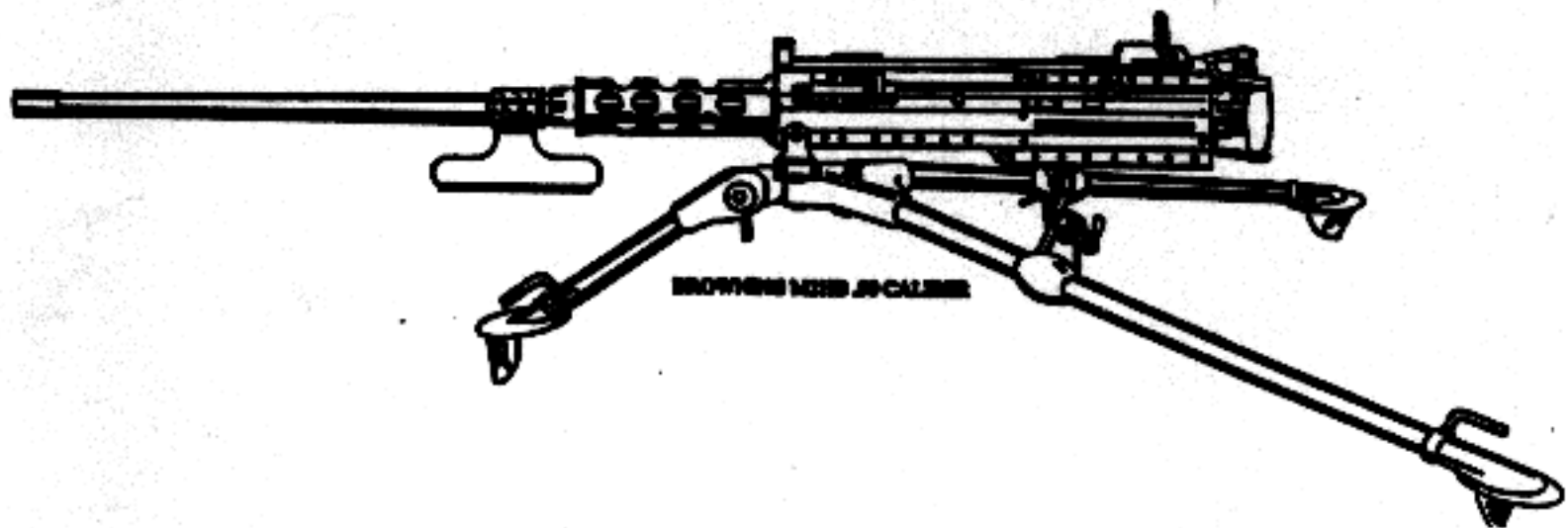


**FIELD MANUAL**

**BROWNING MACHINEGUN  
CALIBER .50 HB, M2**



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**HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**

**MAY 1972**

FIELD MANUAL

No. 23-65

HEADQUARTERS  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON, D. C., 19 May 1972

## BROWNING MACHINEGUN CALIBER .50 HB, M2

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\* This manual supersedes FM 23-65, 5 December 1955, including all changes.

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# PART ONE

## MECHANICAL TRAINING AND CREW TRAINING

### CHAPTER 1

#### INTRODUCTION

#### Section I. GENERAL

##### 1. Purpose and Scope

a. This manual is a guide for training on the Browning machinegun, caliber .50 HB, M2. It provides a sound and detailed basis for the conduct of training, to include mechanical and crew training, techniques of fire, employment, and layout and operation of machinegun ranges and courses of fire. Information in this manual is presented in a logical sequence from the basic to the more complex phases of instruction. All instruction can be given either on the range or in the vicinity (concurrent training stations).

b. The material contained herein is applicable without modification to nuclear and conventional warfare.

c. Users of this manual are encouraged to submit recommended changes or comments to improve the manual. Comments should be keyed to the specific page, paragraph, and line of the text in which the change is recommended. Reasons will be provided for each comment to insure understanding and complete evaluation. Comments

should be prepared using DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications) and forwarded direct to the Commandant, US Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, Georgia 31905.

##### 2. Roles of the Machinegun

a. The machinegun supports the infantryman in both the attack and defense. It provides the rifleman with the heavy volume of close, accurate, and continuous fire necessary to accomplish his mission in the attack. The long range, close defensive, and final protective fires delivered by this gun form an integral part of the unit's defensive fires.

b. The caliber .50 machinegun is also used to:

- (1) Provide protection for motor movements, vehicle parks, and train bivouacs.
- (2) Defend against low-flying hostile aircraft.
- (3) Destroy lightly armored vehicles.
- (4) Reconnaissance by fire on suspected enemy positions.

#### Section II. DESCRIPTION

##### 3. Principles of Operation

The Browning machinegun, caliber .50 HB, M2, is a belt-fed, recoil-operated, air-cooled, crew-operated machinegun. The gun is capable of single-shot, as well as automatic fire (fig 1).

a. *Belt Feed.* By repositioning some of the component parts, the gun is capable of alternate feed (ammunition can be fed into the weapon from the right or the left side of the receiver); however, the infantry uses only left side feed. A disintegrating metallic link belt is used in feeding.

b. *Recoil Operation.* The force for recoil operation is furnished by expanding powder gases which are controlled by various springs, cams, and levers.

c. *Air Cooling.* Maximum surface of the barrel and receiver are exposed to permit air cooling. Perforations in the barrel support allow air to circulate around the breach end of the barrel and help in cooling the parts. The heavy barrel is used to retard early overheating.