

How Tight Is Too Tight For My Garand Trigger Group?

Having been an armorer for almost five years, I can say that *it would be unusual* for a CMP armorer to not notice when a rifle requires excessive effort to close the trigger guard. In many cases we find that customers are just unaware of the “normal” range of tightness that can be found with M1 rifles.

A trigger group that fits tightly is good, and should be desired by those of us seeking above average accuracy from our rifle.

Many owners of the famous semi automatic rifle of WW2 and Korea have become familiar with how easy it is to open and close the trigger guard on their rifle. These rifles are generally well broken-in, and have significant compression of the wood as well as wear on the metal parts that perform the task of locking in the trigger group. When the rifles were new they locked up much tighter. Some of the rifles we still have at the CMP that are new or almost new are good examples of how extremely tight they were when originally manufactured.

It is difficult to describe the “normal” or minimum and maximum force that should be required to close a trigger guard. As a minimum you should feel some minor resistance, and the maximum should not exceed a painful hard pounding with the palm of your hand or an equivalent strike with a mallet (I prefer the latter). Tight is good, but there is a point where parts may be damaged or broken in the process of closing the trigger guard.

If you have purchased one of our Garand rifles or one of our new stock sets, and you find the opening and closing of the trigger guard to be too difficult and tight, there is a way you can reduce the tension. If you don't consider yourself to have some mechanical talent, you may want to leave this to someone more skilled, but you can judge for yourself if you are up to the task.

How to adjust the closing tension of your rifles trigger group

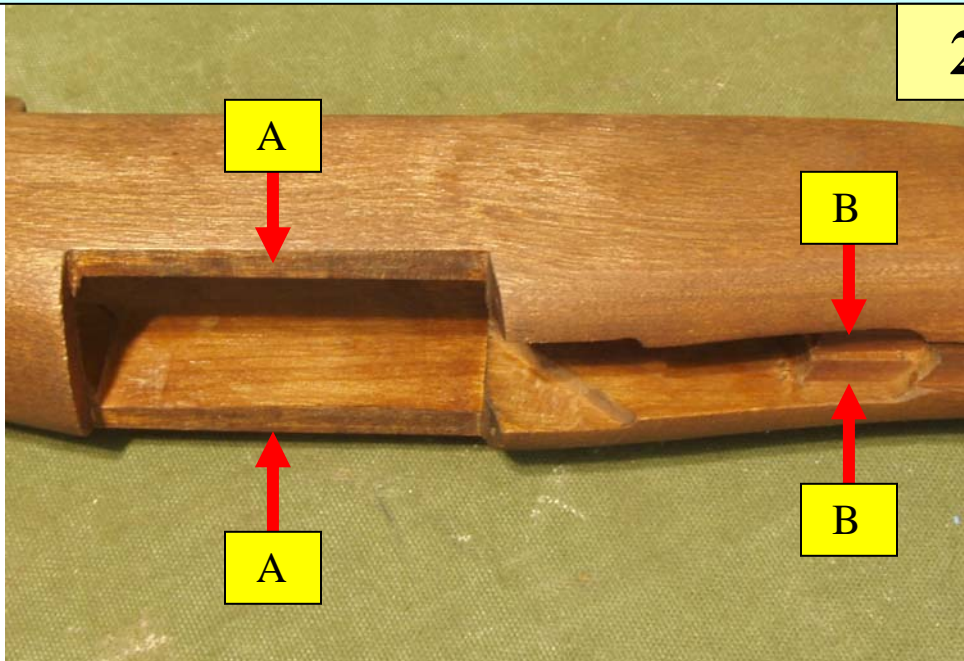
Things you will need:

- * 8” double cut bastard file or similar.
- * Wide masking tape.
- * A 2 7/8” long spacer between .180 and .210 diameter (a piece of 3/16 dowel works)
- * A Dremmel tool with a special cutting bit may also be helpful or necessary.
- * A dial caliper would also be very helpful.

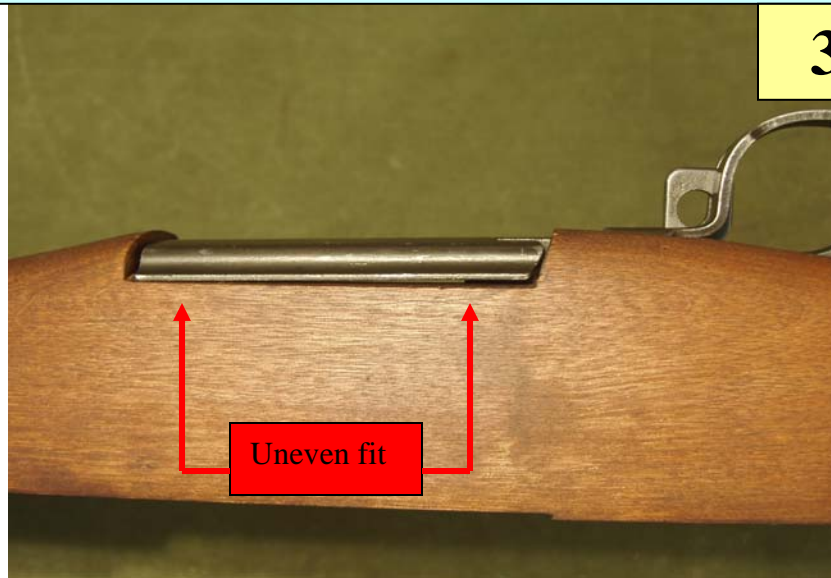
If this is as far as your trigger guard will move when you try to close it, you very likely need to adjust the fit a little



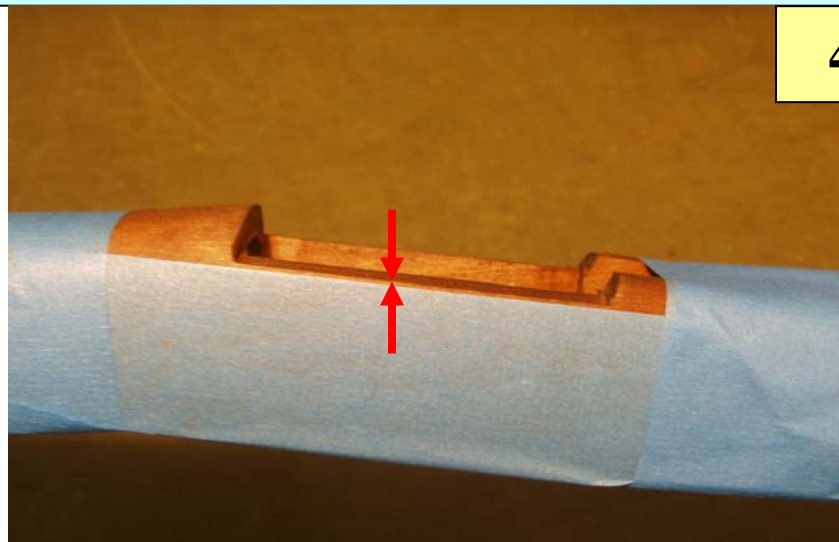
These are the four surfaces on the stock that the trigger group applies clamping pressure to in the process of locking in the trigger guard. Note that the areas marked "A" are tapered surfaces from the inside out, and the areas marked "B" are flat.



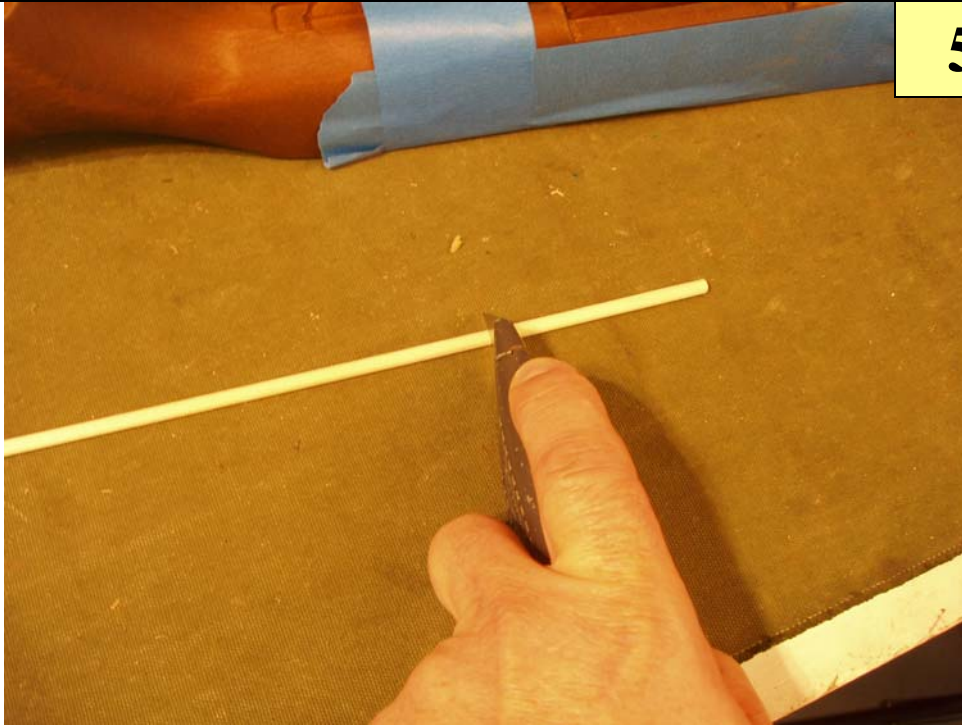
We need to check to see that the four stock surfaces that we will be working with are fitting the trigger housing evenly before we begin. If there are gaps or the surfaces are not parallel to each other or to the top surface of the stock, we will just be moving these contact points with their existing problems. It is more difficult to correct clamping surface irregularities than it is to evenly relieve these surfaces. If it appears these surfaces are out of spec, you may want to skip to diagram 19, at the end where some dimensions will be given to help you in checking your stock's possible problems.



If the trigger group fits your stock's clamping surfaces correctly, apply the masking tape to both sides of your stock as shown below. Leave about .030 showing between the tape edge and the edge of the trigger housing clamping surface, see arrows. Keep the tape line even and straight. The purpose of this tape is to give you a reference line to help guide you and keep your filing straight and even.



Cut a 2 7/8" long piece of 3/16 wood dowel or equivalent. We want to increase the diameter of the piece of dowel, so you will need to wrap it with tape and increase its diameter to .200-.210.



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Using masking tape, firmly affix the dowel in place as shown. This will provide a stable surface for the file to ride on while keeping it angled correctly.



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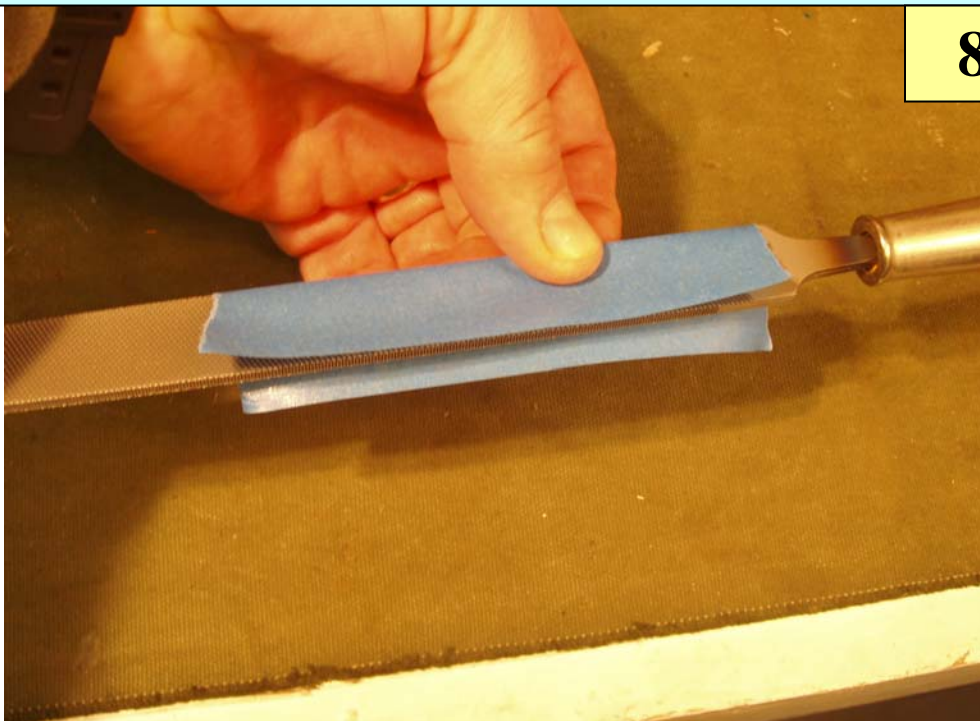
Finish securing the dowel in place.

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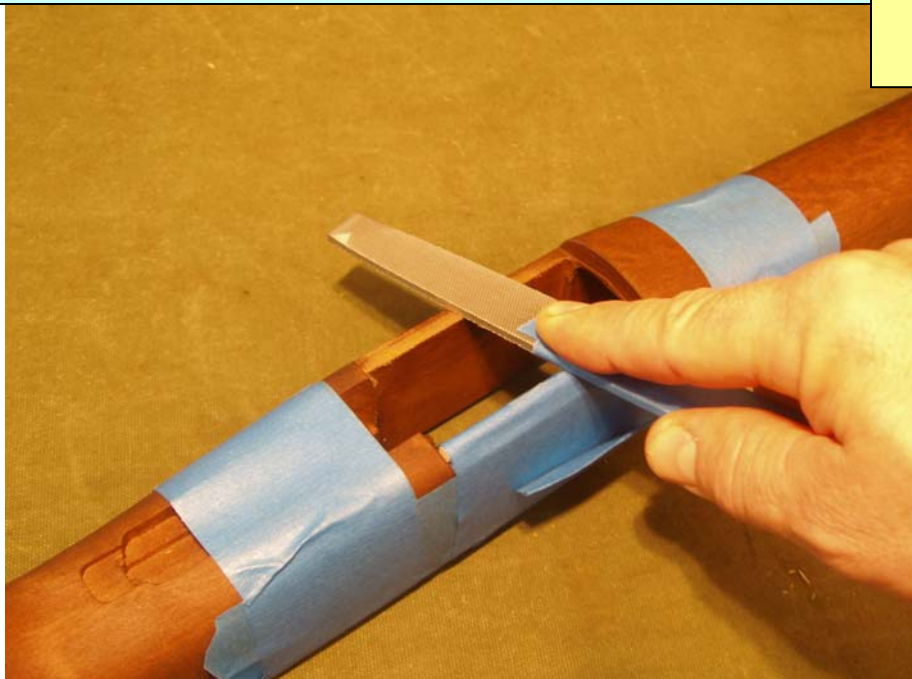
Wrap the rear half of the file with tape, this will allow the taped portion of the file to make contact and be held at a steady angle without destroying the dowel or tape.

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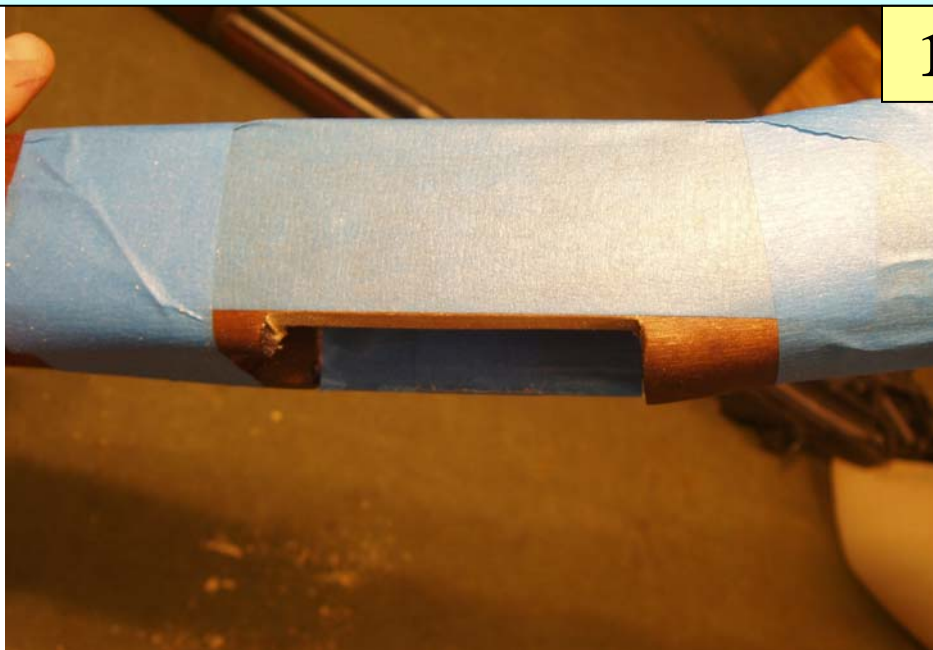
The dowel will make it possible for the file to be held at the proper angle as you file the area as shown below. Keep the file in contact with both sides as you remove material. You should start by removing a small amount.

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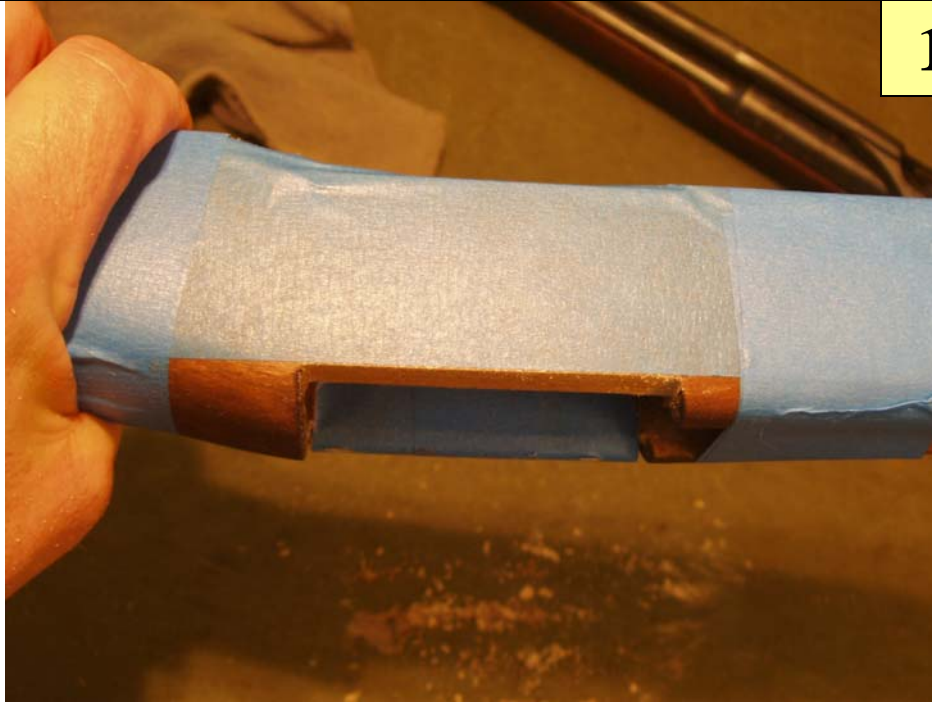
Keep checking your progress and the evenness of your filing by comparing it to the tape line. Once you have removed a small initial amount on one side, move the dowel to the other side and remove the same amount as evenly as possible.

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After you have moved the dowel and removed a similar amount evenly from the other side, you will need to check your progress.

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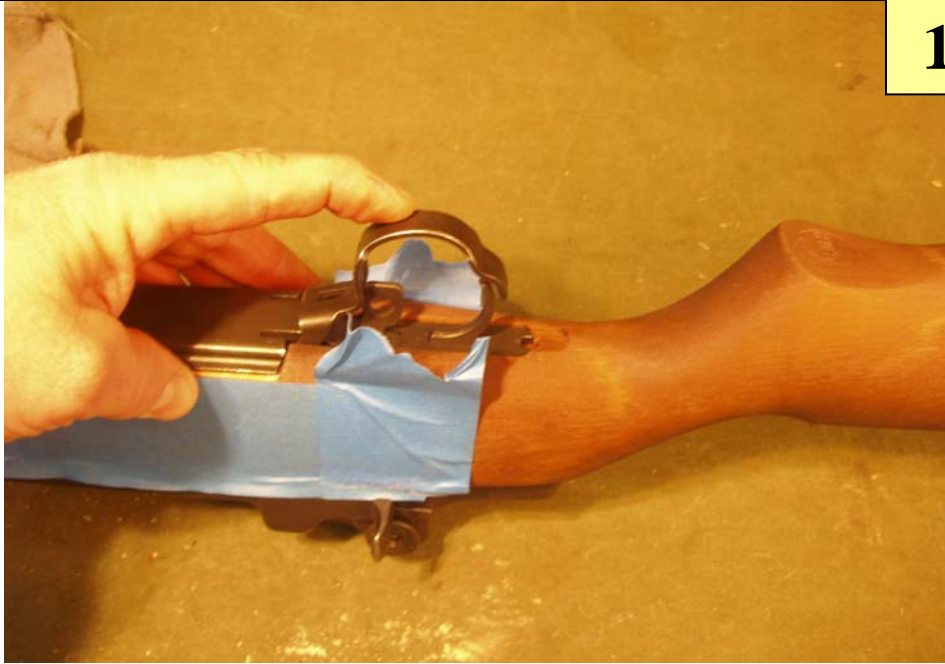
You will need to remove the dowel and enough tape so you can fit the action and trigger group in the stock without the tape getting in the way. Make sure you don't remove the tape reference lines on either side, they need to stay in place until you are finished filing.

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Measure your progress by the movement of the trigger guard toward locking up with the tightness you find acceptable. Make sure that you go slow and verify that the trigger group is fitting the stocks four contact surfaces evenly without gaps as shown in photo #3.

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Remember that your trigger group will never fit tighter than it does now. Time and use will cause wear and wood compression, try to leave it just a little tighter than you may desire.

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If enough material was removed to cause the trigger group to tilt and leave a gap (the red arrow identifies the area and shows an extreme and unlikely gap), then the rear contact surfaces labeled **B** (as shown in photo #2) will need to be lowered to correct the tilt. The trigger group's closing tension may be significantly affected as you level the trigger group's fit, so make sure you remove material from the rear contact surfaces as you remove material from the front surfaces, but only as necessary to keep the trigger group level.

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These are the recommended Dremmel end mill bits that should be used to lower the rear contact areas. I prefer the larger one. They should be readily available at stores that sell Dremmel accessories.

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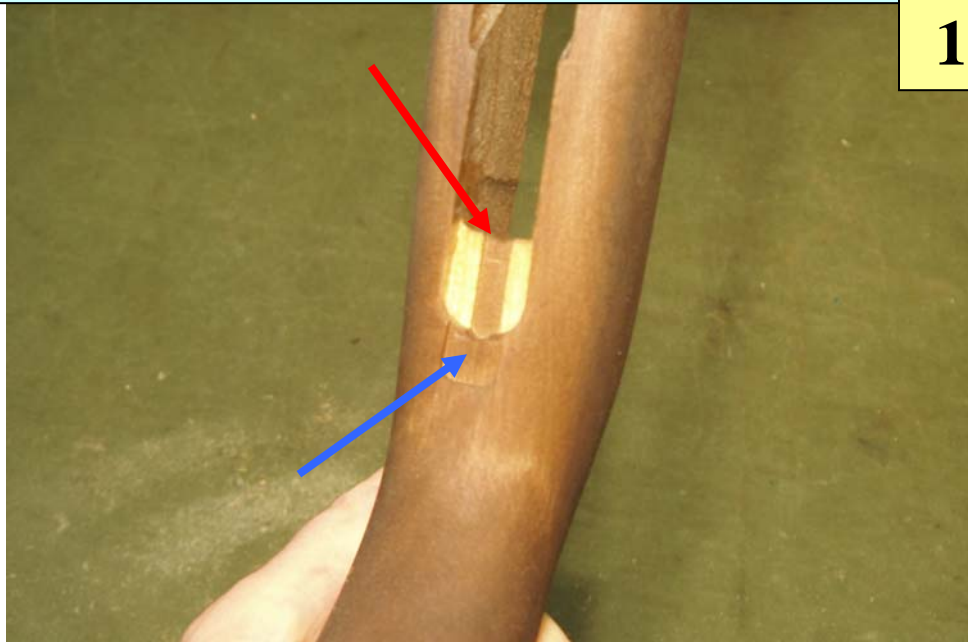


Try to remove only a little at a time and as evenly as possible. Remove only enough to level out the trigger group's fit.



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When you have the trigger group's fit and lock up tension the way you want it, you will need to check two other areas to see if you might need to increase clearance. The red arrow shows an area that may interfere with the trigger's full range of travel. The blue arrow shows an area where the trigger guard and its hook must have clearance and not touch the stock.



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You have arrived at the end of this article, and as promised the measurements of the two key areas we are concerned with are shown below. I checked a number of original GI and new replacement stocks and found the measurement ranges shown below to be common. The measurements at the rear involve surfaces that are flat, and other than the lower points being recessed are not very difficult to obtain. The forward area is much more difficult to get a useful measurement of because the top and bottom surfaces are all tapered. The dimensions shown for this forward area are from the inside edges or high points and are not very useful except to compare with your stock. If your stock's measurements are much less than the range shown, you may not be able to correct any irregularities before you reduce the clamping tension to the point where it is too loose.

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