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# FORSTER PRODUCTS

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## NATO HEADSPACE GAGE INSTRUCTIONS

The Forster NATO Headspace Gage is designed to ensure accurate testing of chamber headspace. Headspace is the distance between the face of the breech and the base of the cartridge when the action is closed. Safety and accuracy are threatened when excessive headspace exists.

Insert the proper gage into the action. Attempt to close on the gage. **CAUTION — Never force the bolt closed on a gage.** A rifle with correct headspace should close easily and without feel on the Minimum gage but should not close on the Maximum gage. **CAUTION — Any rifle that will close on the Maximum gage may have dangerously excessive headspace and should not be fired.**

Two lengths of 7.62 NATO or 5.56 NATO Headspace Gages are available:

- **Minimum length** — This checks the rifle to see that the chamber will accept cartridges made to maximum NATO specifications. The chamber should accept (close on) the Minimum Gage.
- **Maximum length** — If a rifle closes on a Maximum length gage, its chamber is dangerously close to, or longer than, NATO's maximum chamber length. The chamber should not accept (close on) the Maximum Gage.

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What's the difference between 7.62 NATO and .308 Win? Between 5.56 NATO and .223?

Although all other case dimensions of the two cartridge cases remain the same, one important difference exists: the 7.62 NATO chambering has a longer headspace dimension than the commercial .308 chambering. Hence, the need for rifle chamber Headspace Gages specifically designed and manufactured to check the slightly longer 7.62 NATO chambers.

There can be great differences between the chambers of military rifles based on the type of action (FN, Garand, Ishapur, etc.) and also based on the amount of use the rifle has seen. Forster Products' NATO Minimum rifle chamber gages will check to see that the rifle will accept the longest (headspace dimension) NATO ammunition cases that are currently manufactured. The Forster NATO Maximum rifle chamber gage checks to see that the rifle does not have excessive headspace, which could lead to dangerous pressure problems.

Similarly, the 5.56 NATO caliber requires a slightly longer headspace than the commercial .223 caliber, which are commonly thought to be identical. For any gunsmith or armorer working with military firearms in these two calibers, these NATO Headspace Gages can make a difference in both performance and safety.

**Thank you for purchasing a Forster Precision Product. Please wear safety glasses.  
Forster Catalogs are available upon request.**