

Liberator FP-45 Pistol

The FP-45 was a crude, single-shot pistol designed to be cheaply and quickly mass-produced. It had just 23 largely stamped and turned steel parts that were cheap and easy to manufacture. It fired a .45 ACP pistol cartridge from an unrifled barrel. Due to this limitation, it was intended for short range use, 1–4 yards (1–4 m). Its maximum effective range was only about 25 feet (8 m). At longer range, the bullet would begin to tumble and stray off course. The original delivered cost for the FP-45 was \$2.10/unit, lending it the nickname "Woolworth pistol". Five extra rounds of ammunition could be stored in the pistol grip.

The *Liberator* was shipped in a cardboard box with 10 rounds of .45 ACP ammunition, a wooden dowel to remove the empty cartridge case, and an instruction sheet in comic strip form showing how to load and fire the weapon. The *Liberator* was a crude and clumsy weapon, never intended for front line service. It was originally intended as an insurgency weapon to be mass dropped behind enemy lines to resistance fighters in occupied territory. A resistance fighter was to recover the gun, sneak up on an Axis occupier, kill or incapacitate him, and retrieve his weapons.

Authorized distribution of fewer than 25,000 of the half million FP-45 pistols shipped to Great Britain for the French resistance. about the other half of the pistols scheduled for shipment to the Pacific. The Army then turned 450,000 *Liberators* over to the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), which preferred to supply Resistance fighters in both theatres with more effective weapons whenever possible.

A few were distributed to the Philippine Commonwealth Army, Philippine Constabulary, and resistance fighters.

After the war, a large number of Liberator pistols were melted down into scrap. However, many thousands survived and remained in circulation, and are now sought after as collector's items.

Production information		Technical specifications	
Country of origin	United States of America	Action	Breech-loaded
Manufacturer	General Motors Guide Lamp Div.	Length	5.6 in (14 cm)
Designer(s)	George J. Hyde	Barrel length	3.9 in (9.9 cm)
Year(s) designed	May 1942	Weight empty	1 pound (0.45 kilograms)
Production began	June 1942	Feed system	Single shot
Production ended	August 1942	Effective range	3 yards (2.7 metres)
Number built Est.	1,000,000	Muzzle velocity	820 ft/s (244 m/s)
Weapon type	Single-shot pistol		
Caliber	.45 ACP		

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