



GunDigest

G43 REVIEW

Bonus Chapter to the
Glock Reference Guide



By Robb Manning



The G43 comes with two magazines — one extended grip, the other with a standard grip. Both are six rounds.

The New G43

GLOCK USERS HAVE BEEN CLAMORING FOR A SINGLE-STACK 9MM FOR YEARS. NOW THEY HAVE ONE, AND PEOPLE ARE LINING UP ON WAITING LISTS TO GET THEIR HANDS ON IT.

By Robb Manning

Glock took heat from a lot of fans after not releasing a single-stack 9mm at the 2015 SHOT Show. Some took it a little too personally and filled the forums with overdramatic vows to never buy another Glock. Further salt was thrown on the “wounds” by fans of other makers who have had single-stack 9mms on the market for several years now.

I believe Glock was simply taking a little extra time to make sure they got it right, after taking a hit when the G42 had some issues coming out of the gate (Malfunctions when using over-powered and under-powered ammunition). It was easily remedied with modifications to a few parts, but Glock isn't a company that takes well to having reliability issues. So Glock took a little extra time with this one, and judging by my limited experience with the G43 so far, they got it right.

It's nearly identical to the G42, just slightly larger — it's essentially a thin-frame G26. To compare it to other popular carry 9mm pistols, it's roughly the same size as the Smith & Wesson Shield and Ruger LC9, and slightly smaller than the Walther PPS. In other articles I've labeled pistols of this size as micro-nines, as other authors have done, but Glock calls it a slim-line sub-compact. For the sake of this chapter, when comparing it to similar handguns, I'm going to call it a micro-nine.

The specs on the G43 are as follows, with G26 specs in parenthesis for comparison. Most of the differences are less than one-tenth of an inch. The length is 6.26 inches (6.49), height is 4.25 inches (4.17) and width is 1.02 inches (1.18). Keep in mind that published width is not slide width, which is 0.86 inch (1.04). It has a sight radius of 5.20 inches (5.39) and a barrel length of 3.39 inches (3.42). Unloaded, it weighs 17.95 ounces (21.71) with .49-inch trigger travel. The trigger pull is listed as 5.5 pounds, but I'll get into that in just a bit. It comes with two six-round magazines, one with an extended grip.

Glock put a lot of effort into making it as small as possible while still maintaining the typical shootability of a Glock. The result is a handgun slightly larger than other micro-nines that are on the market, but small enough that it can be concealed with most reasonable clothing. I've fired most of the micro-nines, and those are a "hold-on-for-dear-life" endeavor, especially for those with medium-to-large hands. Not so with the G43 — it's comfortable enough for a long day at the range. The G26 has been my primary carry gun for a while now, and the G43 has felt recoil that is only slightly more than the G26. The primary difference is that the G26 has a wider grip so it fills your hand, offering greater control.

The difference in physical size between the G42 and G43 isn't much, but I have to quantify that because in the handgun world the difference between full-size and compact is often less than one inch. Referencing Glock's published specifications, and using my Hornady digital calipers to fill in the blanks, I've come up with the following: When compared to the G42, the G43 is 1/64 inches wider, .69 inches longer, and .12 inches taller. The slide is 1/32 wider and it is 4.19 ounces heavier.



The G43 (middle) is larger than the G42 in .380 ACP (right), and the thin version of the 9mm G26 (left).

With most Glock models, when you compare the three size categories — standard, compact, and sub-compact — the differences in sizes are accounted for by “chopping” a bit off the front and the grip. As I've said elsewhere in the book, the difference in slide length is taken off forward of the ejection port — everything behind it is the same. This isn't the case

when comparing the G43 to the G42. The G43 is proportionally larger, so the G42 is a shrunken version of the G43, not cut.

It has the same grip texture as the G42, which has at its roots the Gen4 RTF, except less aggressive. It provides the perfect blend of good purchase for control, but not enough that it scrapes flesh off when carrying. I've had a couple of people voice to me their concern that it wasn't aggressive enough. Both had gotten their hands on one, but hadn't fired it yet. I didn't have any slippage at all, and it was incredibly easy to control.

The G43 has a beavertail grip for a high and tight grip for optimal control, and a large magazine release for fast reloads. Also, like the other Gen4s it uses a captured dual-spring assembly. Like the G42, it's been made as snag-free as possible by not using an extended mag release or an accessory rail. The one Gen4 feature it doesn't have is the Modular Back Strap System.

The controls are the same as any other Gen4 Glock, so transitioning between a full-size Glock to this one will be smooth as butter. If you took a picture of the control group of a G17 you could superimpose it onto a picture of the G43 control group, and it would line up pretty evenly, if not exactly. So if your thumb is accustomed to the mag release being in one spot, your muscle memory will hit the mag release on the G43.

Same with the trigger and the slide catch. They are all the same. There's a big benefit to that — when you can work your duty/carry handgun like it's second nature, transitioning to a different size Glock is also second nature.



The controls of the G43 and other 9mm Glock models are nearly identical spatially, so transitioning from one to the other uses the same muscle memory. Here, a G19 compared to a G43. Which is which? You can't tell from the controls, but other clues give it away.

When Glock released the G42, it was unique — no other Glock model was like it. With the release of the G43, it's no longer unique — the G43 is just a larger version of the G42. To clarify the discussion of parts, I want to first differentiate between two things. First, there is the official Glock Part Number. This is generally what is being referred to when Glock discusses parts commonality. The trigger mechanism housing with ejector is an example of this. They all pretty much look the same, but by Glock part number there are seven different ones. So not all Glock models list this part as being in common. Glock probably has a few hundred different parts, going by Glock part number. The barrel is another great example — every Glock has one, but there's a different Glock part number for every caliber and category, so there are over 21 different barrels.

The second item to that discussion is the Component Part. There are only 35 component parts; 34 for the earlier models that don't have a locking block pin (third frame pin). Component parts are where we talk about the Glock design that makes the Glock so unique amongst firearms. By Glock design — that is, component parts — all Glocks are the same. They have the same basic parts.

That is, until the introduction of the G42, and now the G43. These two models have four component parts that are different from all the other Glock models, and I discussed them in the G42 chapter: Slide stop lever, trigger spring, firing pin safety, and slide lock spring. If you hold these four parts next to the same four parts of other Glock models, they look completely different. You could possibly include a fifth part, the locking block pin, since all current models of Glock include this third pin, except for the G42 and G43.



When talking about Component Parts, the G43 (and G42) uses four parts that are different from the component parts of other models. (Clockwise, from the top) slide stop lever, trigger spring, firing pin safety, and slide lock spring.

Getting back to Glock part numbers, the G42 and G43 have 12 parts in common: trigger mechanism housing with ejector, trigger spring assembly, connector, slide lock spring, firing pin safety spring, magazine catch spring, trigger housing pin, sights, spring cups, EDP (Extractor, Depressor, Plunger) spring, and EDP bearing.

There are fifteen parts that are different from the G42 and completely unique to the G43, and those are: slide, frame, barrel, locking block, trigger pin, slide stop lever, slide lock, trigger with trigger bar, magazine catch, firing pin, firing pin safety, EDP rod, extractor, slide plate cover, and recoil spring assembly. The magazine is also unique, as are the five parts that it is comprised of.

The spacer sleeve is one part that is not the same as the G42, but is the same part as other Glock models. The front sight is the same across all Glock models.



The G43, disassembled.

Another noticeable difference in the G43 is the barrel hood. Glocks typically have a straight barrel hood — there are a few exceptions, but none as drastic as the G43. With most models, running a finger over the top of the slide is smooth, and when going over the barrel hood/ejection port, not much of a bump is noticed. The front half of the barrel hood on a G43 is angled down, and when a finger is run over the top of the slide a significant bump is noticed where the front of the hood meets the slide. This helps it to unlock a little easier during the firing process, when the slide is moving rearward it will clear the hood faster.



The barrel hood of the G26 (left) is straight, so it melds with the slide, whereas the G43 (right) has an angled front portion.

When the G42 was introduced, some were happy to see it was made in the USA, and some preferred that an Austrian pistol stay in Austria. Whichever side of the fence you fall on, production of the G43 is solely in Austria. You won't find a Georgia proof mark on this one — at least for the time being. Whether it could move to the US in the future remains to be seen.

The G43 shoots excellent: I have fired the six most popular micro-nines on the market, and as far as shootability, I rank it as either first, or tied for first. It should be noted that if it is called a tie, the pistol it's tied with — the Walther PPS — is slightly larger. Some of the other micro-nines can be tough to hold on to with larger hands; when you fire it, it feels like it's going to jump out, but that's not the case with the G43. When firing, it feels very similar to the G26, with a barely discernible increase in recoil.

Accuracy was surprising for me. I mostly fired it at self defense range — seven yards — and it grouped very well. The best group of the day was with Hornady Custom 147-grain XTP. Six rounds grouped into a hole not much bigger than a quarter. I used a Caldwell pistol rest so as to test the accuracy of the handgun, not me. I also fired Hornady American Gunner 115-grain XTP and 124 XTP +P, American Eagle 115-grain FMJ, Federal Premium 124-grain HST JHP and 135-grain Hydra-Shok JHP Low Recoil, Winchester 147-grain HP, and Buffalo Bore 124-grain JHP +P. With the exception to the two issues mentioned later in the chapter, all performed well and exhibited very good accuracy.



Best group of the day: Hornady Custom 147-grain XTP, six rounds, seven yards.

Even though my experience with the G43 was a very good one, it wasn't perfect. The thing most disappointing is the weight of trigger pull. Don't get me wrong — it's still a good trigger, it's just not the Glock 5.5-pound trigger that I like. Glock has deemed the trigger pull weight on every other model of Glock as safe. In fact, it's called a Safe Action Trigger. But on the G43, like the G42, Glock has determined that it should have a slightly heavier trigger pull. The representative I talked to said it's around six pounds, but my Lyman scale averaged 8.1.

I'm a fan of the standard Glock trigger, so this is disappointing. It's still a clean pull, with a crisp break and excellent reset, but there's no reason it should be heavier. If the 5.5-pound trigger is safe on all other Glock pistols, then it would be safe on a G43. As is though, it's still one of the best triggers found on a micro-nine. I would rank it tied with the PPS, or perhaps slightly behind it. A standard Glock pull weight would have put it in first place alone.

The other issue I had with the G43 involved two malfunctions out of 230 rounds fired. The first, a failure to eject with round number 64, was Federal Premium 123-grain HST JHP. The second, a failure to feed with round number 223 was Hornady 147-grain XTP.

Neither of the issues were with +P or underpowered ammo. Two rounds out of 230 isn't a lot, and compared to other handguns I've written about is still very good. But it's two more malfunctions than I had total for the other 25-plus Glocks that I fired for this book. I know that some manufacturers state that the first X-number of rounds are a break-in period, whether it be 300 rounds or 500. But that hasn't been my experience with Glock, and most of the other 25-plus Glocks were also new out-of-the-box specimens (except the Gen1 and Gen2 G17s, and the G20c and G26 from my own collection).



9mm +P & +P+			
<input type="checkbox"/> Item 244/20	115 gr.	.J&P	1400 FPS
<input type="checkbox"/> Item 246/20	124 gr.	.J&P	1300 FPS
<input type="checkbox"/> Item 248/20	147 gr.	.J&P	1175 FPS
<input type="checkbox"/> Item 249/20	115 gr.	.J&P	1300 FPS
<input type="checkbox"/> Item 241/20	124 gr.	.J&P	1225 FPS

The G43 ate through all of this, except for two rounds.

I don't want the negative to take away from the G43, though. It's an excellent little Glock that will make a perfect carry gun for a lot of people. I think it's also going to find favor as a backup for a lot of our men and women in blue. This one has been a long time coming from Glock, and it won't disappoint. Now that the single-stack 9mm has joined the swelling ranks of Glock handguns, it seems there are really only two glaring holes in their lineup — a single-stack 10mm and .40. A model chambered in .22 Long Rifle would be nice as well, since Glock is about the only major manufacturer that doesn't have one.

This Chapter is a Bonus For...

[The Glock Reference Guide](#)

By Robb Manning

Undeniably one of the most notable and influential firearms designs in the past half-century, the Glock pistol maintains its reputation as the preferred autoloading pistol for law enforcement and personal protection. With the *Glock Reference Guide* by Robb Manning, explore the evolution of the Glock pistol throughout its 50 year lifetime. Coverage of every model produced is provided, as well as detailed descriptions and 100 black and white images. [Click Here](#)

