

Simonov SKS (& close derivatives)

■ TYPE: RIFLE ■ ALSO REFERRED TO AS: SKS, SIMONOV



Model illustrated: Simonov SKS, Russia

Technical Information

Calibre

7.62 x 39 mm M1943

Length

1023 mm

Weight (unloaded)

3.8 kg

Barrel length

524 mm

Feed device

10-round internal box magazine

Sighting systems:

Sighting systems

Fore: Post

Rear: Tangent, notch

Operating system

Gas, self-loading

Muzzle velocity

735 m/s

Accessories

Folding bayonet

The SKS was developed in the Soviet Union during the Second World War. It is a gas-operated, self-loading rifle. The weapon's most distinctive features are the tubular appearance of the receiver, which ends abruptly at the neck of the stock, and a folding bayonet, which is permanently attached to the barrel.

PROBABLE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Region	State forces	Non-state/illicit
Western Europe	○	○
Eastern Europe	▶	○
Middle East & North Africa	▶	●
Sub-Saharan Africa	●	●
Central Asia	▶	▶
South Asia	▶	▶
East Asia	▶	▶
Pacific	○	○
North America	○	○
Central America	▶	▶
South America	○	▶

● Expect regular use ▶ Expect occasional use ○ Do not expect use

Variants and their distinguishing features

VARIANTS (Model/manufacture)

- SKS; Russia
- Type 56 'carbine'; China
- Type 63; China
- Type 63; North Korea
- M59/66; Yugoslavia (Serbia)

The Chinese Type 63 is not exactly a derivative of the SKS, but the weapon is sufficiently similar in appearance to include it in this Weapons ID Sheet. North Korean Type 68 rifles are distinguishable from Chinese Type 56 versions because they are stamped with a proof mark featuring a five-pointed star in a circle.

BARREL DESIGN

Grenade-launching muzzle



▶ M59/66

No grenade launcher



▶ All other models

GAS REGULATOR

Protrusion forward of the gas regulator



▶ Type 63, China

No protrusion



▶ All other models

MAGAZINE

20-round detachable box



▶ Type 63, China

10-round integral box



▶ All other models

BAYONET DESIGN

Triangular 'spike'



▶ Type 56
▶ Type 63, China

Single-edged 'knife'



▶ Type 63, North Korea
▶ M59/66

Points to include when recording information about the weapon:

1. Serial number, including all prefix and suffix characters
2. Characters adjacent to fire selector
3. Any other engraved/stamped information on weapon

Compiled by the Small Arms Survey with the technical assistance of the National Firearms Centre, Royal Armouries, United Kingdom. For further information or if you have identification queries, contact weaponsID@smallarmssurvey.org or call: +41 22 908 5777. This identification sheet may be downloaded in printable PDF format at www.smallarmssurvey.org/weaponsID

WARNING:

Make a full and informed appraisal of the local security situation before conducting any research related to small arms and light weapons.