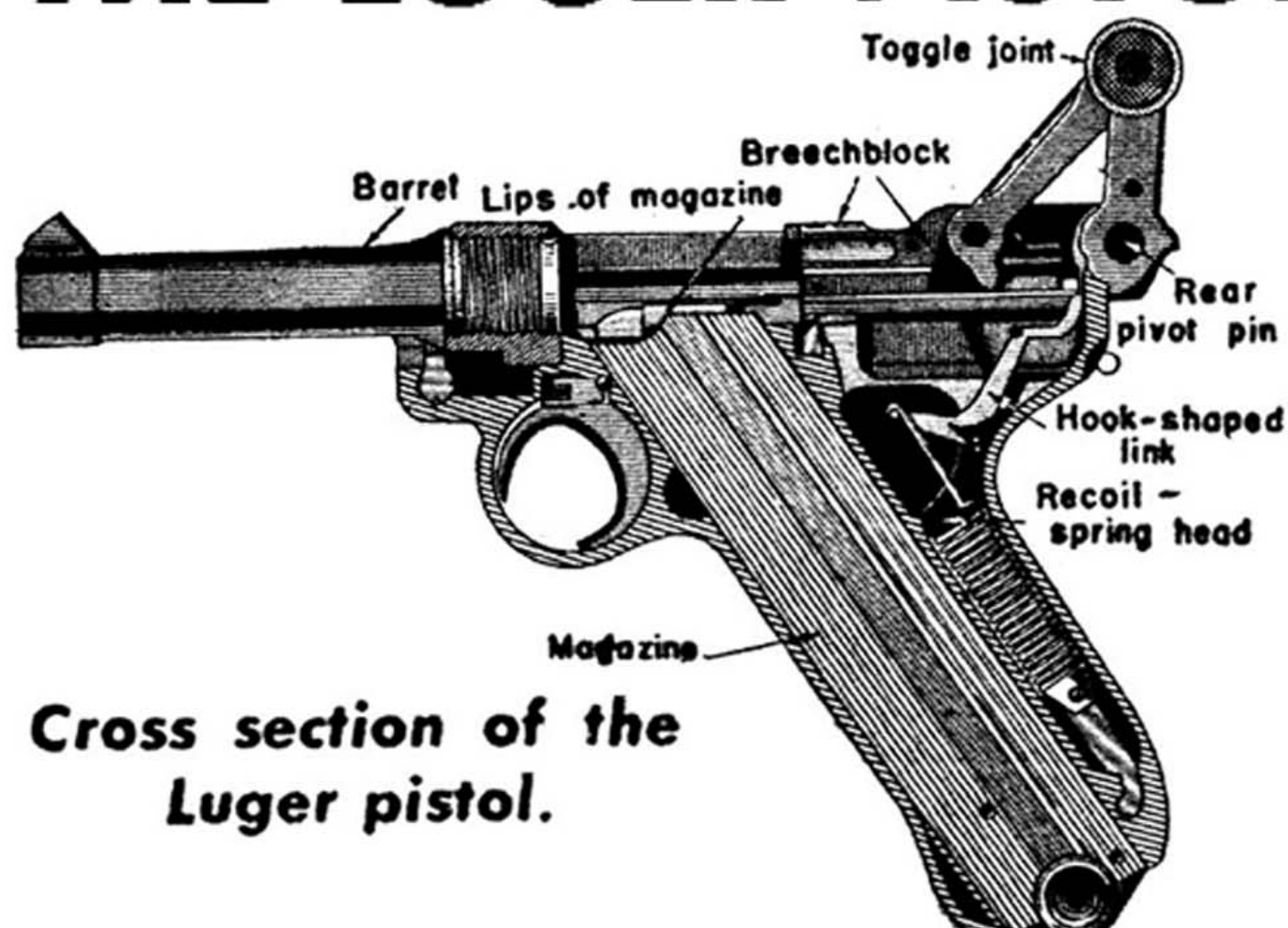


## THE LUGER PISTOL



**Cross section of the Luger pistol.**

**S**INCE 1908 the Luger pistol has been an official German military side arm. Georg Luger of the DWM Arms Company in Germany developed this weapon, known officially as *Pistole 08*, from the American Borchart pistol invented in 1893.

The Luger is a well-balanced, accurate pistol. It imparts a high muzzle velocity to a small-caliber bullet, but develops only a relatively small amount of stopping power. Unlike the comparatively slow U. S. 45-caliber bullet, the Luger small-caliber bullet does not often lodge itself in the target and thereby impart its shocking power to that which it hits. With its high speed and small caliber it tends to pierce, inflicting a small, clean wound.

**How to Identify.** The Luger may be identified readily by its exposed barrel, curved butt, and generally smooth lines.

**Characteristics.** The Luger is the most common side arm in use in the German Army. It is a semi-automatic, recoil-operated, 8-shot pistol with a caliber of 9 mm. (.354 inch). It has a toggle-joint action very similar to that of the Maxim machine gun. It is fed by an 8-round magazine that fits into the butt and is held by a magazine catch similar to that on the U. S. service automatic

### TABLE OF CHARACTERISTICS

Principle of operation	recoil-operated.
Caliber	9-mm (.354 inch).
Ammunition	9-mm Parabellum (German, British, Italian, or U. S. manufacture).
Capacity of magazine	8 rounds.
Sights:	
Front	Inverted V blade.
Rear	Open V notch, nonadjustable.
Length of barrel	4.25 inches
Weight (empty)	1 pound 14 ounces.
Range:	
Effective	25 yards.
Maximum	1,150 yards.
Muzzle velocity	1,040 feet per second.

pistol (M1911 or M1911 A1 Colt .45), and located in approximately the same relative position.

**How to Operate. Safety.**—The safety is on the left side of the receiver as you hold the pistol in firing. It is a lever pivoted at the lower end. When the safety lock is turned down and to the rear, the safety catch is on and the pistol will not fire. With the lock in this position, the German word *gesichert* ("made safe") is exposed. To release the safety, it is necessary to push the lever forward and up; the word *gesichert* will then be

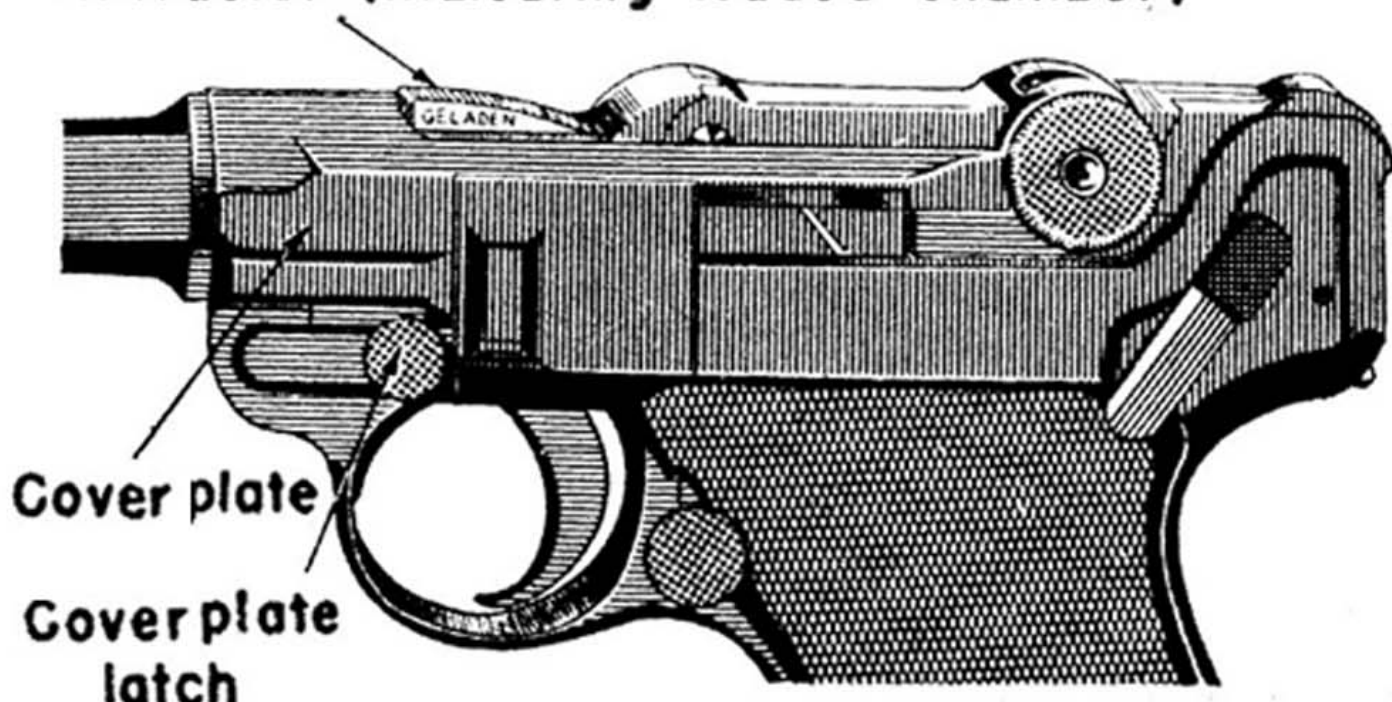
covered by the safety lever arm, and the pistol is ready to fire.

**To load and fire.**—A loaded magazine is inserted into the butt and shoved home until the magazine catch clicks. This is similar to the operation used in loading the U. S. Colt .45.

In order to move one of the cartridges forward into the chamber for firing, it is necessary to pull the toggle joint to the rear and then let it snap forward, in much the same fashion as is done with the U. S. Colt .45. With the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, grasp the knurled knobs on both sides of the toggle joint and draw the joint to the rear as far as it will go. Then release the knobs, and let the breechblock snap forward. This operation will carry forward a cartridge from the lips of the magazine into the chamber. The pistol should then be locked by moving the safety so as to expose the word *gesichert*.

It is always possible to determine whether there is a cartridge in the chamber by feeling or noting the position of the extractor. When there is a cartridge in the chamber, the front end of the extractor projects above the level of the top surface of the breechblock, exposing the word *geladen* ("loaded") on the left side of the extractor. If there is no cartridge in the chamber,

**Extractor (indicating loaded chamber)**



**Close-up of Luger pistol to show operation of extractor.**

the extractor is level with the top surface of the breechblock.

**To unload.**—First, press the magazine catch, allowing the magazine to drop out of the butt. Then, to extract any cartridge that may be in the chamber, grasp the knurled knobs of the toggle joint in the same manner as in loading. Pull the joint to the rear as far as it will come. This operation will eject any cartridge in the chamber.

**Ammunition.** Rimless, straight-case ammunition is used. German ammunition boxes will read *Pistolenpatronen 08* ("pistol cartridges 08"). These should be distinguished from *Exerzierpatronen 08* ("drill cartridges 08"). The bullets in these cartridges have coated steel jackets and lead cores. The edge of the primer of the ball cartridge is painted black. British and U. S. made 9-mm Parabellum ammunition will function well in this pistol; the German ammunition will of course give the best results.

**Material for this series of articles on enemy weapons was prepared by the War Department's Military Intelligence Service with the assistance of the Ordnance Intelligence Unit.**

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