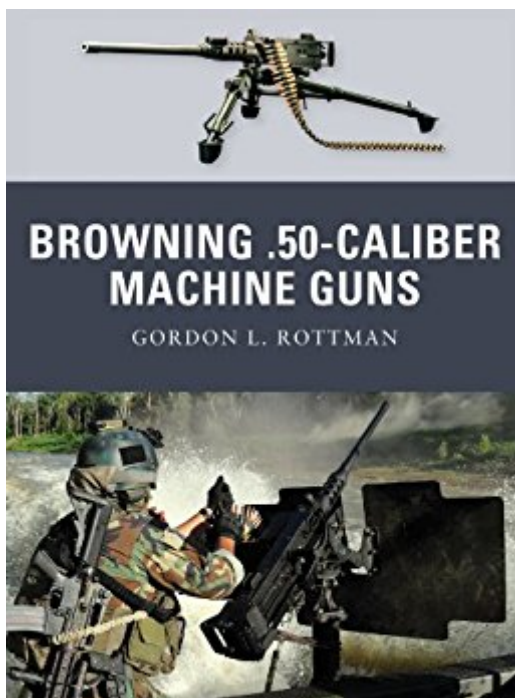


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# Browning .50-caliber Machine Guns (Weapon)



## Synopsis

The Browning "50-cal" has become the longest serving weapon in the US inventory. The "fifty" has been employed in every imaginable role for a machine gun. It is considered such an effective and reliable weapon that few countries ever attempted to develop an equivalent weapon. Even the Japanese created a copy of it during World War II when the US was producing literally thousands every month to use in every theater. This is a history of the development of this famous weapon, its most critical operational use and the variants that have been produced to keep it at the forefront of the action.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gordon Rottman delivers another great Osprey Weapon book on the 50 caliber Browning machine gun which includes the M-2 and other military machine gun variants - tripod through vehicle and aircraft. The prototype for the Browning 50 cal machine gun was developed about 100 years ago another into OEF. This volume on provides a history of development, use of the weapon and its impact. This weapon was used on WWII aircraft. in Korea and in Vietnam and modified for use as a

sniper weapon. This was the weapon which I cared for and used in the mechanized Infantry battalion I served with in the 1980s as a company grade officer. I became very familiar with these weapons and was thankful that this volume was produced. I have over 500 Osprey titles and enjoy reading and benefit from the information contained in the volumes. I consider this volume to be a welcome addition to my library.

Many books have been written about the M-2 machine gun, but this is the perfect one for me. It does not bog down the reader with too many technical details, yet you get a good mix of history of this machine gun, what it does and why it has been in service for over 90 years. As author Rottman says "There are a few who can say they were wounded by a .50 cal, those hit seldom say much more". Browning began the design based on the experiences of WW1 where the Army wanted something that packed a greater punch with more range than the .30 caliber weapons (7.62mm). It took awhile to get the right mix of rounds per minute, range, reliability, ammunition size. Early versions were water cooled, but later the air cooled weapons were perfected to a degree that production ceased. The measure of the success of this weapon is found in the longevity of service, the fact that despite all of the advances of technology and experiments to improve the M-2, nothing has been good enough to replace the "Ma-Deuce". Many nations other than the US use it and rightly so. The book has many B&W (some color) photos of the M-2 in service - with the Air Force, Navy, Army from WW2 to the present. Ground mounts are discussed along with the different types of shells, casings, bullets. The much hated M-85 is reviewed (used on the M-60 series of tanks). Three of the pages are given to full color drawings of the M-2 in use on a B-17 and on a Navy Swift Boat during the Vietnam War. The author covers the loading, firing and clearing processes. I would have liked have some text covering how to field strip the .50 cal and see a photo or two of the basic part groups. There is a 3-D cut away of the water cooled version; I would think that space would be better served with a cut away of the more common air cooled version. That's about the only minor complaint I had on this book. This is a very well written, concise book for those of us who have used the M-2HB but do not want tons of highly technical weapon information. The author admits his bias for the M-2, which I share. The M-2 does exactly what it was designed to do - provide heavier firepower than a rifle caliber machine gun at a greater range. That means it's too heavy to drag around for the grunts, but it's the perfect weapon on tanks (why waste a main gun round on an armored car when you can take it out with the M-2), trucks, Humvees, choppers. Highly recommended reading.

One of the new titles in Osprey's recently started Weapons series tells the history of the famous "Big Fifty", the .50 caliber machinegun designed by John Browning. Mr. Rottman gives the background of the requirements for the .50 caliber gun. Often said to be a response to a German 13mm antitank rifle, this book corrects the story. The heavy machinegun grew out of requirement issued by GEN Pershing's staff in WW1. The German cartridge did influence Browning's design, but the basic gun is all American. An interesting chapter in the development concerns the revised design of the gun, leading to the M2 .50 caliber gun that is still in service all over the world today. As stated in the book, some of these guns will still be in combat as the design reaches its 100th birthday. A rare feat for any weapon since the bow-and-arrow. After the history of the gun the author uses his firsthand knowledge to give detailed descriptions of how the gun is operated, fired and cared for. The book also looks at other large caliber machine guns that were contemporaries of the Browning. An excellent book, filled with good material and easy to read. A "must have" for military historians or firearms enthusiasts.

Another excellent weapon study by Gordon L. Rottman. "Ma Deuce" is an iconic American firearm design and receives a great treatment by Rottman. It is also the only publication of many I have read on the Cal. .50 Browning that has a clear photograph showing the proper use of the Headspace gauge. The history is well covered and goes all the way up to current use. This publication is very much worth the purchase price.

This is a great little book on a very large gun. There is a great deal of research that has gone into this book about the iconic "Ma Duce". The book gives a very good account of the beginnings of the .50 caliber machine gun, the reason for its creation, its variants, its cartridge and the development and deployment. Anyone that has ever used or admired the M2 should really appreciate this work and this book will increase your admiration of the M2 even more. The translation to the Kindle is excellent and the pics even turn out very well. There is an extensive bibliography that lets the reader go even further into the life and times of "machine gun, caliber .50, M2". I would highly recommend this book.

After reading the book and using the weapon, it was the truth if I had to defend anything it would be with the Browning .50 cal

Great Book, good coverage. But I wish they had a larger, more detail operational schematic. They

one they have is small and tough to manipulate on a kindle. Other than that, I really enjoyed this book. I highly recommend it!

excellent

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