

KEY SPECS



MAKER: Weihrauch, Germany
(www.weihrauch-sport.de)

UK DISTRIBUTOR: Hull Cartridge
(www.hullcartridge.co.uk)

MODEL: HW 95K

PRICE: £340

TYPE: Spring-piston break-barrel

CALIBRE: .177 and .22, with .20 and .25 available as a special order

LOADING: Single-shot

OVERALL LENGTH: 114cm
with moderator, 100cm without

BARREL LENGTH: 31cm

WEIGHT: 3.4kg

STOCK: Ambidextrous sporter

LENGTH OF PULL: 36cm

TRIGGER: Two-stage, adjustable

TRIGGER WEIGHT: 2lb 66oz

SAFETY: Automatic, resettable

POWER: 11.37ft-lb

GEAR
SPECIAL

GUN TEST

SMOOTH
OPERATOR

Mike Morton scopes out the **Weihrauch HW 95K**, which ditches the open sights of the original 95 version, and adds a moderator instead

It's no secret that piston-powered rifles are more demanding than their PCP counterparts, and the hunt is always on to find a sublime springer that lets you eke out the maximum performance it has to offer. A springer that's as mild-mannered as possible during the firing cycle will minimise recoil and maximise your chance of making a precise shot – and that's just as necessary for experienced shooters as it is for newcomers to the sport.

This all sounds simple enough, but rifles are a bit like people: some you'll never get on with, some will be no more than friendly acquaintances, while some others you'll take to straight away and will become friends for life.





The medium-brown rubber butt pad is non-adjustable, but features a gently curved design and a ribbed pattern on the contact area to hold it firmly in place in the shoulder

The cheekpiece is raised, which assists head and eye alignment when using a telescopic sight, and is present on both the left- and right-hand sides of the butt

The 11mm dovetail rail measures 16cm overall. It's machined all the way back to the rear of the action, which adds some versatility to mounting a scope

The chequering on the forend offers good grip – just remember to relax that grip slightly when taking a shot, so the gun can recoil consistently

Although it's not a target stock, the bottom of the forend is commendably flat, encouraging you to rest the rifle in the palm of your hand

Measuring 31cm to the crown, the HW 95K has a relatively short barrel, but it's easy to cock – with or without the supplied moderator

The moderator, which is included as standard in the K version of this rifle, pulls double duty: it acts as a handy cocking aid as well as damping down the sound

The chequering on the grip is precisely cut and is sharp enough to assist grip, while remaining comfortable

The red safety indicator sits within a recess in the action when the safety is engaged, but sticks out prominently when the catch has been set to 'fire'

The Weihrauch moderator is almost as well-known as the legendary Rekord trigger, and does a fine job of deadening the sound, especially when shot on an indoor range

The barrel is threaded for 2cm – longer than usual – which makes the union of moderator and barrel extremely secure



While many target shooters prefer fixed-barrel springers, the HW 95K would be a good choice for HFT as well as hunting

The latter is how it was for me with the Weihrauch HW 95K. While I've been shooting Weihrauch break-barrels since my childhood, I'd not shot a 95K until last year. I was impressed by its build quality and the ease with which I could just pick it up and shoot it. But that was another shooter's gun that I'd borrowed. Were they all as good as this? It was time for a closer look. Enter the review rifle.

SPECIAL K

Not all HW 95s are created equal. The HW 95 has been around since 1995 - hence the name - with shooters being offered the choice of open sights and at least two different stock combinations; but the model that's available in the UK is the 95K (Karbine) variant, which loses the irons, making it a scope-only affair. This a great trade-off, however, because the barrel



It's easy to print sub-five pence piece-sized groups at 25 yards – in this case the barrel seemed to really like JSB Exact Express

is not only threaded, but comes ready fitted with a regular Weihrauch moderator as part of the £340 package.

The stock is fairly typical of the rifle as a whole, being slim and elegant, yet purposeful and professional. This is a hunting rifle that can be used as a high-end plinker; as such, the stock

“THE CONTOURED BUTT PAD IS GOING NOWHERE ONCE IT'S IN YOUR SHOULDER”

is not adjustable, but what features are present should fit most people, most of the time. The contoured butt pad is made of a super-grippy rubber, which means it's going nowhere once it's in your shoulder. The stock is ambidextrous, with a raised cheekpiece that stands proud

on both sides. My only real quibble with the rifle was the height of the cheekpiece. I fitted a relatively small scope, but it did have a 50mm objective lens, and I consequently found my head position to be a little too low to achieve a perfect eyeline. If the review rifle was my own, I'd want to get hold of

a smaller scope and try that. However, a fellow shooter who used this rifle found the stock fitted

him perfectly, even though he's shorter than me, meaning his head position and eyeline should have been lower than mine. This just goes to show how no particular stock, mount and scope combination is going to be the same for every shooter, as our height, physical proportions and the way we

hold a rifle all vary so much. One element I really liked about the stock was the rake of the grip and the fact that although no dedicated thumb shelf is present, it's easy to adopt a thumb-up hold, as the area immediately behind the action is flat. If you've never shot thumb-up, it's well worth giving it a go. With my choice of scope on board, the overall centre of balance was perfect, just in front of the trigger guard.

Another feature I liked is the quality of the metalwork, with the fit, finish and bluing all of an incredibly high standard. One very unscientific test that's often applied to springers is to shake the rifle vigorously and check for any rattles. The HW 95K is reassuringly solid, with no hint of any slack joints or sloppy fitting components. The dovetail rail is a generous 15.5cm long, and three

locator holes are provided to position a stop-pin in your mounts. It used to be the case that a one-piece set of mounts would be the natural choice for a springer, but there's really no need on a rifle as mild-mannered as this: two-piece mounts are fine. But more on the rifle's firing characteristics later.

Although the 95K has a carbine-length barrel, cocking is easy. The lock-up is solid, so it's best to give the back of the moderator a sharp tap to crack open the barrel, after which I found the actual cocking effort to be minimal. The moderator itself offers extra leverage, so I tried cocking the gun without the moderator fitted and found it just as easy to cock – and this is a full-power rifle, delivering nearly 11.4 foot-pounds with my chosen pellets. Cocking the rifle also sets the safety,



The dovetail rail extends fully to the rear of the action and features three locator holes for scope mount stop-pins

which just needs to be pushed from left to right to disengage when it's time to take a shot.

I usually zero my springers at 25 yards, but was confident the HW 95K would perform well, so zeroed at 30. I wasn't to be disappointed. Springers can sometimes need several hundred shots to bed in and for their firing cycle to become smooth, but the 95 was smooth from the off. Another simple test that can be used to test a springer's worth is to place a pellet skirt-down on the elevation cap of the scope, take a shot and see whether the pellet stays in place or falls off due to the recoil. I'm happy to say the pellet stayed put every time I carried out this test.

The two-stage Rekord trigger had fairly long first-stage travel before coming to a definite stop, after which the second stage was crisp

ALSO CONSIDER...



BSA LIGHTNING SE
£290
 www.bsaguns.co.uk
 The firing cycle of this slick springer is nice and fast. What little recoil there is comes straight back in the shoulder.



WALTHER LGV MASTER PRO
£500
 www.armex.co.uk
 The LGV Master Pro's good looks and flawless finish are backed up by a smooth cocking effort, positive lock-up and a silky firing cycle.



WEBLEY STINGRAY QUANTUM
£326
 www.highlandoutdoors.co.uk
 The Webley Stingray blends classic styling in a full-sized package that's accurate and reliable. Noise is kept to a minimum, too, thanks to the Quantum Oversleeved Silencer.



A sharp tap is needed to crack the barrel for loading, and when closed the breech lock-up is incredibly secure, with absolutely zero play

and free of any creep. I did find its out-of-the-box weight to be a tad heavy at 2lb 6oz, so lightened it to just under 2lb, testing it for safety afterwards by slapping the butt while pointing the rifle in a safe direction. This was only a modest adjustment and remains perfectly safe for hunting, but it made a big difference to my trigger control.

ON TARGET
 Firing the rifle with the forend resting lightly in the palm of my leading hand, which in turn was resting on a shooting bag, the 95K would happily group under a 10-pence piece – and if I were a better shot with springers, I'm sure this could be tightened even further. Reducing the range to 25 yards saw the groups shrink to one-hole groups

less than the size of a five-pence piece – a result with which I'm extremely happy.
 But while shooting paper targets when evaluating a new rifle is necessary to see how well both the rifle and shooter are performing together, shooting reactive targets is far more enjoyable. To this end, I proceeded to shoot some coloured chalk discs with a 24mm diameter back at the 30-yard mark – with a 100% success rate in zero wind. I haven't yet taken the 95K hunting, but have no doubt that it would despatch rabbits – my favourite airgun quarry – with ease.
 As for the moderator, it's true that springers don't benefit as much as PCPs when it comes to hushing down the sound, but the moddy



The breech block displays the calibre – .177 in this case. .22 is also available as standard, with .20 and .25 special orders for £85 extra



The cocking linkage is hidden deep inside the forend. If you give the rifle a vigorous shake, nothing rattles – a reassuring sign of its quality

GUN TEST WEIHRAUCH HW 95K



The sporter stock on the HW 95K lets you adopt a conventional hold...



...And while there no dedicated thumb shelf, there is a nice flat area that gives you the option of adopting the thumb-up hold

fitted to the 95K is far more than just an elaborate cocking aid. Shooting the rifle outdoors, especially in an open field rather than the confines of woodland, the moderator seems to make little difference to the noise – which is fairly minimal in any case. But it's when you shoot the rifle indoors that you appreciate just what

repeated firing. I did check the moderator every now and then to see if it had started to come loose, as that's a problem I have had with other springer/moddy combinations in the past; but the HW mod stayed firmly in place throughout.
 I left chrono testing until I was on my second tin of pellets – JSB Exact



The trigger weight adjustment screw is located behind the blade. It can be adjusted with a screwdriver via an access hole in the metal trigger guard

Express in this case – to give the internal components time to settle down. Using

weighed pellets of 8.4 grains, the 95 produced a variation of just 7.6 feet per second over 10 shots, with an average muzzle velocity of 781 feet per second to give a muzzle energy of 11.37 foot-pounds. It would be interesting to see if this spread reduced any further after more

THIS RIFLE IS ONE OF THE EASIEST SPRINGERS TO SHOOT THAT I'VE EVER HANDLED

a good job that moderator is doing, with the rifle being markedly louder with it removed.
 The barrel has 2cm of threading, which is longer than usual, and this means the moderator is not only more solidly attached for cocking, but is less likely to work loose with

shooting. I'd love to carry out this test again after a couple of thousand more shots. I've known people who've fettled their 95s, either using a drop-in kit themselves, or sending them off to be tuned, but I have to wonder whether there's much to be gained when the rifle is such a smooth operator to begin with.

LOVE AT FIRST SHOT

Some rifles just feel right from the start, and the Weihrauch HW 95K is one of them. If it's not love at first sight, it'll definitely be a case of love at first shot. There is no hint of any harshness in the firing cycle, and this rifle is one of the easiest springers to shoot that I've ever had the pleasure to handle. It may be a cliché, but every airgun shooter should have a springer in his or her collection – so put the HW 95K on your shortlist. ●



THE AIRGUN SHOOTER VERDICT										OVERALL SCORE
LOOK & FEEL	STOCK	BUILD QUALITY	SIGHTS	COCKING	LOADING	TRIGGER	HANDLING	ACCURACY	VALUE	90
9	7	10	9	10	10	9	8	9	9	

"The Weihrauch HW 95K is impeccably well behaved, with relatively little effort from the shooter required to deliver high levels of performance, so if you think you're a PCP-only shooter, this rifle could well be the one to tempt you towards piston-power"