

M72 LAW (& close derivatives)

■ **TYPE:** ROCKET LAUNCHER ■ **ALSO REFERRED TO AS:** LAW OR '66'



Model illustrated: M72A2, United States

Technical Information

Calibre
66 mm

Length (carry length/firing length)
M72A2: 660/890 mm
M72A3: 665/899 mm
M72A4–A7 & E8–E10: 775/980 mm

Weight (unloaded)
M72A2: 2.7 kg
M72A3–A7: 3.6 kg
M72E8: 4.3 kg
M72E9–E10: 4 kg

Sighting system
Rifle-type

Muzzle velocity
150–200 m/s

The United States developed the M72 Light Anti-armour Weapon (LAW) in the 1960s as a single-shot, disposable rocket launcher. The weapon consists of two telescoped tubes that, when extended, automatically prepare the weapon for firing (safety release, cocking of the firing mechanism, and deployment of pop-up sights). Although the weapon bears superficial resemblance to many tubular rocket launchers, its compact size, squared firing mechanism, and sight housings make it relatively easy to identify. M72 variants are also marked with model designations to enable easy identification.

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/manufacturer)

- M72A2–A7, United States
- M72E8–E10, United States
- M72A4–A7, Norway
- HAR-66, Turkey

M72 variants differ from one another primarily in their rocket propulsion systems and warhead designs. These enhancements are internal and there are few external visual differences among M72 types. The Russian RPG-18 is a reverse engineered copy of the M72 and has some visual similarities. However, the RPG-18's visual differences include three prominent metal bands around the tube and a large, black instruction guide in Cyrillic.

DEPLOYED CONFIGURATION

Tube extended, spring-loaded sights released



- ▶ M72 all variants
- ▶ HAR-66 (shown)

SPECIFIC M72 VARIANTS

Markings applied to tube

ROCKET HE 66 MM ANTTANK M72A2
LOT W/COUPLER
OPERATING AND STORAGE TEMP.
- 40°F TO + 140°F
LIMITED LIGHT SIGHT

- ▶ M72 all variants
- ▶ M72A2 (shown)

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

DESIGN FEATURES

Smooth tube



- ▶ M72 all variants

Bands around tube



- ▶ RPG-18

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.