

# Comments and Thoughts about the Web Sling

By: Bruce C. Woodford

I saw a question posted recently about using the web sling which brought to mind the number of questions I have received on the subject over the years. Many people have championed the leather sling, but few step forth to discuss the use of the web sling. With this in mind, I'll try to address the subject which would ordinarily call for a demonstration type of presentation. Hopefully the [graphics](#) will help to clear the picture, so to speak.

It should be said up front, for those casting aspersion upon the web sling, I was within the first 150 or so to earn the High Master rating. I have never fired a high power match using a leather sling. At one time there were about a half dozen High Masters on the All Army Reserve rifle team using web. I am not opposed to leather at all and in fact use a leather sling and cuff when I shoot smallbore. As a coach working with new shooters I found making web sling adjustments on the line at training sessions less time consuming than dealing with leather. But then I recall a friend of mine from Michigan's Upper Peninsula being asked why he uses a web sling. He responded by saying he wasn't smart enough to use leather. Maybe some of the rest of us resemble that remark.

On to the web sling. I'll be talking about the OD green cotton web sling often found adorning the M1 Garand. I wouldn't waste my time on the nylon type web sling as they are too slippery and flip-floppy to contend with. Let it be understood that different shooters set up the sling in different ways. To each his own. I'll talk about and illustrate the way I use it.

A web sling out of the package is not configured, as you will see it in my illustrations. The first thing I do with a new sling is set it up so it meets the needs of the way I use it. After having it set up properly, I attach it to the rifle and draw it tight in the "parade" position. The loop at the hook end is about 6 to 8 inches long and just a few inches of the free end extends past the clasp under the forend of the stock. When walking from the parking lot at a tournament site to the firing line I usually had the rifle across my shooting stool which was slung over my shoulder via another web sling attached to the stool. For the standing position the sling remains in the parade position.

When shooting one of the positions requiring the sling, I start out on my knees with the rifle standing in front of me. With the rifle leaning against my left shoulder I pull on the free end of the sling to loosen the clasp and then pull a little slack in the sling. Then I unhook the lower end and push the hook loop through the metal slider to the opposite side, see illustration. This forms a slip loop on the opposite side of the metal slider. Form the loop large enough to be placed on your arm over whatever clothing you are wearing. As a right hander I then transfer the rifle to my right shoulder, turn the loop a three quarter turn counter clockwise, and put the loop in place high on my left arm. With the hook to the outside of my arm I snug the slip loop in place. Next, I hold the rifle with my left hand near the attachment point of the sling and push the rifle away from me. With my right hand I loosen the clasp and pull on the free end of the sling drawing the rifle closer to me. From experience I know pretty close what this adjustment should be. Then I position the clasp toward the free end of the sling. This prevents the clasp from gouging the back of my hand or wrist when I am in position. After securing the sling with the clasp I continue to get into position.

While adjusting my position and getting a natural point of aim I consider the relative length of the sling. If it seems to be too short or too long I pull the clasp loose with the free end of the sling and let out a little or take up a little. This is done with my right hand and my left hand never comes off the stock. Now let's see one of you leather guys do that.... Just joking!

Before I close I'm going to comment on the often seen set of holes on a leather sling being marked for proper adjustment per position. As the sling stretches and the firing line terrain changes, using that predetermined set of holes is most likely not correct. When using the web sling it should be properly adjusted every time you get into position in respect to the conditions that day and without regard to what you may have used at some other time.

Let the sling hold the rifle in place.

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