

My Detonics Journey



I originally heard about Detonics pistols while reading the men's adventure series *Survivlaist* by Jerry Ahern when I was in my teens. It was an outstanding read when I was younger and I always thought about the fantastic Detonics Combatmaster he described in the series. The sensationalism aside, they sounded like great weapons but I never really thought of them as something I'd purchase.

Fast forward 30+ years. I've always been a 9mm guy. I love the Beretta 92FS (my first and still favorite weapon). I've never really played with a 1911, .45, or the family, so forgive me for some of the stupid stuff I did in this guide. I've come to understand a new appreciation however.

I decided to buy a 1911 since it is a classic and something I don't have in my collection. I started looking at Dan Wessons and other smaller 1911s. Unfortunately, I was unhappy with the size of them and started looking at officer sized 1911s. It was then that Detonics came back into my optic. Not only did it serve my purpose (a small 1911) but it also registered a sense of nostalgia to my old books.

I looked at gunbroker.com and saw a few available. The price point was at 1300ish. Some were ridiculously high (4000+) but most seemed relatively comparable to a new 1911. Understanding that I wasn't getting state of the art, but a remembrance, I took to the plunge and bought a cosmetically beautiful Detonics Combatmaster. Little did I know I was on a journey to really understand how a 1911 works and the intricacies of a 1911.

The very first thing I noticed was that there was an issue with the slide lock. I didn't realize this at first but when the FFL dealer ejected the mag, the slide ran forward. Weird... (see later), but I loved to look, feel, cosmetics, and of course the memories of a Detonics from my youth. So, who cares and let's move forward. (Even looking back, I would have done the same thing. Loved the weapon and wanted to get it working).

So I started looking online for information. HUGE shout out to [jv715](#) for his excellent guide and what I used to start getting my Detonics fixed. Sadly, I made several mistakes (not [jv715's](#) fault, but mine) in the process which cost me some money. If I had understood 1911's functionality better, it would have saved me money. But, then again, you don't start fixing a 1980's gun to 2025 standards without knowing there may be a cost.

So I took the CM to the range and had a variety of problems. First was the failure to feed. This became the biggest issue, although I didn't know why at the time. It also did not lock back on final round. Another huge struggle.

Based on jv715 guide, I started spending money. I bought new springs, ejector, extractor, magazines, and finally followers. I likely did not need all this, but sure enough, I learned a lot so, call it an educational expense.

First thing I wanted to fix was that the slide did not fully cycle (or so I thought) and ended up in a weird position on the last round:



I originally thought that this was because the springs were too loose and I need new ones. So I bought the Wolff: [DETONICS CMBTMSTR .45 STD RECOIL SPRING 23 LBS](#), at which point I also bought the 3 magazine springs listed.

Since I did not know what I was doing, I put the recoil spring over the smaller stock spring.. Thus having two springs on the recoil rod, which created too much tension. I finally figured this out, but not until much later.

So clearly the weapon still did not work. It seemed to cycle most of the time, but it didn't slide lock on last round or feed consistently. So off to the store I went again and purchased a new extractor, new ejector, and new recoil spring (don't ask, I was stupid):

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| EGW | https://egwguns.com/officer-s-flat-wire-recoil-spring-ismi-22-lb |
| | https://www.brownells.com/gun-parts/handgun-parts/handgun-action-parts/1911-45-acp-extended-stainless-steel-ejector/ |
| Brownells | |
| | https://wilsoncombat.com/extractor-80-series-1911-45-acp-bullet-proof-stainless.html |
| Wilson combat | |

As it turns out, I likely needed none of these parts. But I installed them and things seemed to start working.. with some magazines.

I ended up replacing the stock spring in the original Detonics mag with the wolff spring. This seemed fine, but did not correct the failure to lock back.

The ejector worked fine, although it sticks out a small distance from the back of the weapon. I really don't care that much and it seems to be working fine, so no reason to mess with it.

The extractor was a different issue. I installed it and it was quite tight. Very hard to get fully inserted. The result was that I had numerous nose-up issues. This is when the nose of the bullet goes too high and it fails to feed. I used the extractor guide from [youtube](#) to adjust the tension. I finally found the sweet spot. It took several tweaks, but the ejectors did not nose up and also reliably ejected each round. Sadly, this seems a trial and error. I may have been able to use the original ejector/extractor and not spent any money, but, again, a learning experience.

I had purchased several 1911 magazines to use with the Detonics, a few, overly priced, 6 round magazines (turns out they were chinese knock offs, no surprise) @ 75 for 2, and a few others:

Springfield Armory 1911 Compact .45 ACP 6-Round Magazine	https://gunmagwarehouse.com/springfield-armory-1911-compact-45-acp-6-round-magazine.html?queryID=46e656fd691eba5746a0ebf524c085d4&objectID=3868&indexName=m2_prod_default_products
Metalform 1911 Officer .45 ACP Stainless Steel 6-Round Magazine w/ Welded Base Plate / Flat Follower	https://gunmagwarehouse.com/metalform-1911-officer-45-acp-stainless-steel-6-round-magazine-w-welded-base-plate-flat-follower.html?queryID=728d687c84a11fcf1390da6686994846&objectID=2557&indexName=m2_prod_default_products
CMC Products Power Mag+ 1911 .45 ACP 10-Round	https://gunmagwarehouse.com/cm2-products-power-mag-1911-45-acp-10-round-stainless-steel-magazine.html?queryID=f6faac30983e3cca128f908903b6f45d&objectID=2861&indexName=m2_prod_default_products



Original mag on the bottom, other above

All these magazines fit perfect, but the one that worked the best was the CMC 10 round mag. More on that later when discussing followers.

I also looked on ebay and found a Triple-K “original” Detonics mag. This one also seems to work great.

At this point, I realized the single springs replaced the dual stock springs and used the EGW spring mentioned above. This immediately helped recoil and cycling. I STILL had a last round failure to keep slide open though. This became huge frustration as I started my research.

Without going into how many times I went to the range and still had issues, it finally became apparent that the followers on the original detonics magazines, the after market chinese, and the others were not working correctly. I started adjusting the followers. Yes, you can use a pair of pliers to adjust the slide lock engagement and make them work. I ended up ruining a chinese follower and magazine (no real lose) and ordered followers from:

Tripp <https://dawsonprecision.com/flex-follower-for-1911-45-acp-7-rd-magazines-by-tripp-research-inc/>

Once I installed these followers, many things seemed to fall into place. The slide would lock back on last round and the feed/cycling went perfect.

I’m pretty sure that if I had just replaced the followers I could have avoided much of this.

Sights:

The Combatmaster uses standard 1911 GI sights. I really did not like the stock sights so I bought a new kensight: <https://www.opticsplanet.com/kensight-1911-a1-mil-spec-gi-series-government-model-fixed-rear-night-sight.html>

It fit in just fine but came loose a few sessions later. I ended up using LOCKTITE to lock it in place. Still pending the results.

Holster:

Last but not least, I bought a holster from CraftHolsters.com. I bought it from here because it was specifically designed for the Detonics CM. It fits and looks great. I also bought a dual mag holder.

END HERE

Problems I had

Not getting to slide lock (follower, spring)

Not loading last round (follower)

Round getting nose up (extractor)

So after getting a new extractor, the round was going nose up. This is a symptom of a too strong extractor. In other words it was pressing too hard on the round and not letting it get fully into the chamber. So you need to loosen the tension. This means pushing it away from the barrel. See Youtube for better explanation.

Slide lock not getting set – using screw driver – open to suggestions here

Guides

Purchases

Recoil Springs (not needed)

My ignorance came though here. Didn't really need it, but bought 2

Extractor

Based on everyone's opinion I bought an extractor from xxxx unfortunately, once installed it created a nose up situation.. so I needed to adjust it. Fortunately, the extractor was of a high quality and it bended to make the correct adjustment. See youtube tutorial.

Ejector

I probably did not need this. The weapon extracted fine but not being experienced, I bought a new extractor. It works perfectly fine, but does extend beyond the slide. I really don't care, but cosmetically it is incorrect.

Sights

I hated the sight the detonics came with. But to be fair I hated all blacked out sights. So I replaced them with G1 sight. XXXXX . They started out just fine, but became loose. So I used LockTite to put them in place. Will let you know.

Too loose

Gi – locktite

Holster

Craft had a detonics cm specific

Magazines

Springs

New ones

Followers

Adjustments

Ammo? 230 or 185 grain







