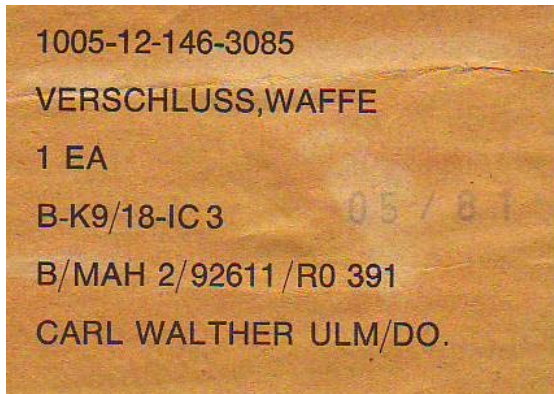


Explanation of the NATO stock number placed on early post-war military P38s

A 13-digit number will occasionally be found on the slide and or magazine of early post-war P38 pistols. The number is the NATO stock number (NSN), and is 1005-12-120-6168 (for the pistol), and 1005-12-120-0892 (for the magazine). These numbers were stamped directly on the pistol from the beginning of the post-war era, and were later dropped.



NSNs were assigned to related items as well, such as the cleaning kit (1005-12-140-6481). The recent lot of surplus P1s still in the factory wrap are marked 1005-12-140-0440. Replacements parts have an NSN as well - 1005-12-146-3085 is for a stripped slide. One thing they all have in common is that they all start with the numbers 1005-12. What do those numbers mean?

The NSN is divided into three sections, as described below.

First four digits – Supply Classification Code

Consists of a general NATO Supply Group (NSG) (first and second digits), and a more specific NATO Supply Class¹ (NSC) (first, second, third, and fourth digits).

In this case 10 (the NSG) = "Weapons," and 1005 (the NSC) = "guns, through 30mm."

Data from AC/135² indicates that NSC 1005 "includes machine guns; brushes, machine gun and pistol" but "excludes turrets, aircraft." Further amplification is given as a note which reads "...this group includes combat weapons as well as weapon-like noncombat items, such as line throwing devices and pyrotechnic pistols. Also included in this group are weapon neutralizing equipment, such as degaussers, and deception equipment, such as camouflage nets. Excluded from this group are fire control and night devices classifiable in groups 12 or 58."

Other NSGs include 11 (Nuclear Ordnance), 12 (Fire Control Equipment), 13 (Ammunition and Explosives), 14 (Guided Missiles), 15 (Aircraft and Airframe Structural Components), etc. *

Other NSCs include 1010 (Guns, over 30mm up to 75mm), 1015 (Guns, 75mm through 125mm), 1040 (Chemical Weapons and Equipment), 1095 (Miscellaneous Weapons), etc. *

Fifth and sixth digits – Code for National Codification Bureau (Nation Code)

12 = Germany. Other codes include 00 and 01 (United States), 13 (Belgium), 14 (France), 15 (Italy), 16 (Czech Republic), 17 (Netherlands), 20 (Canada), etc. *

Last seven digits – Non-Significant Number

Used to specifically identify a unique piece of hardware (Item of Supply (IoS) in NATO supply-speak). This number is assigned by the National Codification Bureau of the originating country.

As we can see, all small arms of German manufacture will start with the digits 1005-12.

The table below summarizes the NATO stock number.

1005	12	120-6168
NATO Supply Classification Code (NSC)	NATO Code for National Codification Bureau (NCB)	Non-Significant Number
	12-120-6168	
	NATO Item Identification Number (NIIN)	
1005-12-120-6168		
NATO Stock Number (NSN)		

[1] or NATO Supply Classification

[2] The Group of National Directors on Codification

* See AC/135 publications for complete list.