

# Magnum Research SwitchBolt .22 LR: Initial Experience and Review

By Wesley Littlefield



It's difficult to be impressed by a 22 LR firearm because, as the most popular round on the planet, everything has already been done with it.

As a proud owner of a Ruger 10/22 with an Archangel Tactical Stock, I've always enjoyed shooting 22 LR firearms. So, when I stepped into the gun store, I expected another enjoyable but unremarkable 22 LR experience. Little did I know that the Magnum Research SwitchBolt .22 Long Rifle was about to captivate me with its unique features and performance.

Initially, I was blown away that it came in a hard plastic gun case; I've only bought a couple of high-end firearms, so I don't expect to get a decent gun case with my guns. The surprises didn't stop as I opened up to see a gorgeous red and gray laminate stock shining back at me. I think my heart may have skipped a beat. I've seen some pretty 22's, but this one hit differently.

As I picked it up and shouldered the SwitchBolt, I had to ensure I was, in fact, holding a rifle because it was ridiculously lightweight, even for a 22 LR. It resembled my Ruger 10/22 (uses the same mags and similar size), but it was so much lighter than what I was used to shooting. That's partly thanks to the 17" carbon barrel and the ambidextrous Evolution laminate stock.

I was so eager to take this beauty home and see what it could do that I forgot to grab ammo. So, I ordered some 22 LR ammo one rainy day, which quickly arrived a few days later, but the rain hadn't stopped.

Luckily, this delay gave me plenty of time to mount the spare scope I had lying around. In my rush to leave the gun store, I forgot to purchase more scope rings, but I discovered there was no need because the SwitchBolt came with scope rings, something scope manufacturers should consider doing!

When the rain finally ceased, I headed to the shooting range I built in high school on the backside of my property.

I was impressed with how quickly I hit the paper target without using a bore sight. Since the scope had been sighted on a different rifle, it needed a lot of adjusting, but that's no fault of the rifle.

After consistently hitting the bullseye from close range, it was time to step back and see how accurate I could be. In all fairness, the wind blows most days in Oklahoma, and the lightweight bullets of the 22 LR quickly get pushed off course, so I didn't push the limits of the cartridge that day simply because the wind was too much of a factor.

However, I quickly got on target at 100 yards despite the wind and minimal effort zeroing, giving me the confidence to know that when I head back to the range, it'll be on target.

To say the SwitchBolt 22 LR has elevated the 22 LR rifle game would be an understatement. I was thoroughly blown away by the craftsmanship and features this rifle offers shooters. It's now the first 22 I grab when heading to the range for a day of plinking, and I have no doubt it would make any competitive shooter a happy customer.



## Magnum Research SwitchBolt 22 LR Benefits and Drawbacks

While shooting the Magnum Research SwitchBolt 22 LR for the first time, I kept my eyes peeled for anything that caught my eye, good or bad.

### Pros

- Made in the USA
- Ridiculously lightweight
- Looks incredible
- It comes with scope rings
- Easy to mount a scope
- Accurate
- Fun to shoot
- Ambidextrous

I love supporting companies that make their products in the US. So, I'm happy to support Magnum Research and its desire to continue manufacturing firearms in America. In my experience, American companies are proud of their work and tend to make better products, not always, but more often than not.

As I mentioned, this rifle is shockingly lightweight, even for a .22. When I handed it to my dad to check out, that was the first thing he noticed. So, for the shooters looking for a lightweight rimfire rifle, this is it.

No matter which color you go with, they're all stunning. I didn't know how much I'd like the red initially, but it's quickly grown on me and is easily one of the prettiest guns in my safe.

Most guns need to be tapped or have a rail installed to mount a scope; that's not the case with the SwitchBolt. It comes with scope rings that perfectly fit the integral Picatinny rail on the receiver, making mounting a scope a breeze. I've never had a rifle come with scope rings, so even though it might seem like a little thing, it lets me know Magnum Research pays attention to the details and considers what the customer will need.

Once the scope is mounted and sighted in, this rifle is a tack driver, so much so that it's competition-ready with the correct 22 LR ammo.

I quickly burned through several 10-round mags the first time I took it to the range because pulling the trigger was just so dang fun. Maybe it was the nostalgia and bringing back memories of shooting as a kid, or perhaps it's just because this rifle is incredible; either way, I love shooting it.

Lastly, my family consists of half right-handed shooters and half left-handed shooters. The lefties are always complaining about guns not being tailored to them, and when we righties shoot a left-handed rifle, it's a terrible experience. The SwitchBolt is ambidextrous, so it has solved most of the debate. The only thing left-handed shooters won't like is the fact that the empty casings are ejected out the right side of the receiver.

As impressed as I was with the Magnum Research SwitchBolt, I found some things that would keep some shooters from purchasing this rifle.

## Cons

- **Expensive for a 22 LR\***
- **Lack of iron sights**

Most factory .22 caliber rifles are relatively inexpensive, but since the SwitchBolt is practically a custom rifle, it comes with a custom price, which many shooters will find costly. However, after feeling and seeing the features for myself, I can see why it costs as much as it does.

I struggled to find something else negative to say about this rifle. But after looking it over for a while, I realized it doesn't have iron sights, which is a bummer for those of us who enjoy pushing the limits of our unaided shooting capabilities. But it also wasn't designed for iron sight shooting, so I can't be too bummed out about it.

## Parting Shots

The Magnum Research SwitchBolt 22 LR isn't your typical 22 Long Rifle shooting experience. Its unique features will impress new and seasoned shooters because it's accurate, reliable, light-weight, and a joy to shoot.

If you want the best plinking gun on the market, you've found it. While it might be a little tricky convincing your spouse you need it, once they shoot it, they'll be almost as happy as you that you bought it!

I'm headed out the door with mine, so I'll let you know how it goes. Stay safe!

