

How the 500 Auto Max was Created

How do you attract a younger demographic to your business? That was the question Greg Buchel, president of Big Horn Armory, was contemplating when he created the 500 Auto Max cartridge in 2018. Up to that point, a large portion of the BHA customer base was like Greg – 50 to 60-year-old males. BHA’s big-bore lever-action rifles appealed greatly to this market, but BHA wanted to offer something to the younger market as well.

So how do you get those younger eyeballs onto your firearms? Stick a big-bore caliber into an AR platform!

Not content with the big bore cartridge offerings available in the AR platform, the BHA team set out to make their own. The logical choice was to create something that would match the power and versatility of the [Model 89 Lever Action in 500 Smith & Wesson Magnum](#). The result was the development of the 500 Auto Max.

In reality, it is not that much different than the 500 S&W Magnum. The rimmed 500 S&W wouldn’t work in a box magazine. The rim would lock into the extractor groove. What BHA did to create the 500 Auto Max was to turn the rim down to slightly under case diameter. They also replaced the revolver roll crimp with a taper crimp to have the cartridge headspace on the case mouth, creating essentially a rimless 500 S&W Magnum. These are the two core differences that set the 500 Auto Max apart from the 500 S&W Magnum calibers. While the cartridge design is different for the 500 Auto Max, tooling for loading and load data are the same between both the 500 Auto Max and 500 S&W Magnum.



With a new caliber in hand, BHA was able to introduce the [AR500 rifle](#), which is based on a modified AR10 platform. BHA revised the bolt face to the 500 Auto Max rim diameter to allow for reliable extraction and adjusted the magazine well to accommodate AR15 magazines, which are perfectly sized for the 500 Auto Max. BHA’s bold AR design and big bore 500 Auto Max cartridge put an unparalleled amount of power into a pleasant shooting, rapid firing, versatile rifle. This combination of size, familiar manual-of-arms, available accessories, and energy on target make the AR500 Rifle ready to handle almost any situation. The AR500 is also available in a [braced-pistol configuration](#).



The 500 Auto Max is a rimless 500 S&W Magnum that is easy to obtain or reload. A very versatile cartridge, it can be had in loaded ammunition with bullets ranging from 350gr to an amazing 600gr. The hand loader can utilize bullets ranging from 200gr to 700gr in almost any bullet type imaginable; frangible, hard cast, jacketed hollow points, monolithic solids, etc. this unprecedented range of bullets weight and design make the AR500 suitable for anything from prairie dogs to pachyderms to Peterbilts. Factory ammo is available from [Buffalo Bore](#) and [Steinel Ammunition](#), with brass available from [Starline Brass](#).



Buffalo Bore 500 Auto Max



Steinel Ammunition 500 Auto Max



Starline 500 Auto Max



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