

Distinguishing between Sturmgeschütz III and Sturmgeschütz IV

Following the Allied air raid on Alkett in November 1943, Krupp-Gruson in Magdeburg was ordered to immediately convert the ongoing series of PzKpfw IV to Assault Guns. That created a link between the chassis of PzKpfw IV with the main armament and superstructure of the Sturmgeschütz III. Differences between StuG III and StuG IV are limited to their chassis, the extended driver's compartment on the StuG IV and the driver's visors. Only Sturmgeschütz IV is relevant in terms of distinguishing it from the StuG III:



StuG IV Ausf G (7.5 cm L/48)
Daimler-Benz, 12.1943 (HF)



StuG III Ausf G (7.5 cm L/48)
Miag, 02.1943 – 04.1943 (FA)

Complex Identification

Only in theory were all the vehicles being produced simultaneously by both manufacturers identical. The reality was different:

- The majority of changes were implemented between production batches or after the ordered number of vehicles had been assembled. This led to substantial time lags between the respective makers.
- It is also not true that the original manufacturer, Alkett, invariably implemented changes earlier than Miag. Alkett was a licensee in exactly the same way as Miag, and built vehicles to the drawings of the designers when instructed to do so by the WaA. On the contrary: because Miag was delivering smaller batches, some modifications were introduced earlier there than at Alkett.
- Essential changes to be made in the course of a production batch were introduced as soon as they were ordered and the necessary preparations were completed by the sub-contractors and the assembly plant. Those schedules also sometimes differed substantially between assembly plants.

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How to use this chapter and the tabulated overview

In this chapter we have listed virtually every externally visible feature and cross-referenced each one to the corresponding variants and months of acceptance. Details are only then omitted when they are irrelevant in terms of determining the variant and month of build.¹

All described features are supported by photos, even though resolution quality is not always the best. Other indications can also be derived from the drawings on page 146 et seq.

All characteristics are dated to the time the photograph was taken. Up to January 1943, Assault Guns were delivered by Daimler-Benz (Ausf A) or Alkett (Ausf A [2nd production batch] up to G). As there was no known overlap between manufacturers, it is clear which company supplied the StuG. From February 1943 on, we note whether the StuG III Ausf G with its corresponding features was delivered by Alkett or Miag. The date „End“ is to be understood as the termination of production and acceptance, i.e. March 1945 for Miag, or April 1945 for Alkett.

Where appropriate and feasible, the valid chassis serial number (Fgst-Nr) and the corresponding month of acceptance are noted. The chassis serial numbers match those of the original vehicles and their corresponding characteristics. Also noted in parentheses is when Assault Guns were assembled on tank chassis or hulls, or when they were the result of conversions from tanks. We further differentiate by type those vehicles based on hulls or chassis (e.g. 7/ZW), or by the variant used in the case of tank conversions (e.g. PzKpfw III Ausf L).

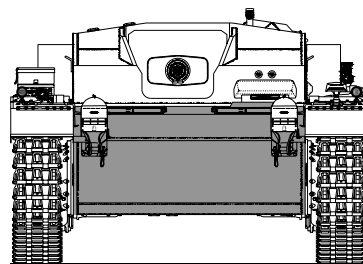
When describing physical positions we use the terms commonly employed in the automotive industry: front, rear, left and right, always seen in the direction of running.

To facilitate dating and identification of variants, their described characteristics are presented in the tabulated overview (book supplement). The structure in the book and the overview is identical. In the overview we use the term „mixed months“ when a characteristic was added or became obsolete, and was applicable to more than 10 % of total acceptances. Less than 10 % of monthly acceptances are considered negligible. For more details on differences between manufacture, acceptance and arrival at the Army Equipment Depots, see Volume I.

Where not otherwise noted, all photo details are taken from our own archives or those of Esa Muikku.

¹ Owing to space restrictions and unsatisfactory sources, we have not included illustrations of prototypes.

Hull nose characteristics



1. Bow armoring

50 mm basic armor

Ausf A–F

01.40 – 06.42

Ausf B, 90 111, July 40

Ausf F, 91 148, May 42



30 mm basic armor + 20 mm on frontal bow armor plate only, retained by 8 screws

Ausf A (2nd production batch)

06.40 – 09.40

90 403, June 40



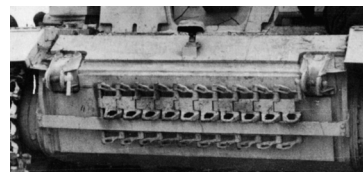
50 mm basic armor + 30 mm welded on²

Ausf F

06.42 – 09.42

91 284, August 42

91 306, August 42



50 mm basic armor + 30 mm welded on

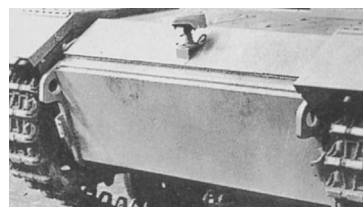
Ausf F/8

Alkett, 09.42 – 10.42

Ausf G (chassis 10/ZW, MAN)

Miag, 02.43 – 12.43

77 365, June 43



50 mm Basic armor + 30 mm bolted on with 12 tapered studs on the frontal bow armor and with 11 tapered studs on the upper plate

Ausf F/8–G

Alkett, 10.42 – 06.43

Ausf G, 92 075, March 43

Ausf G, 92 509, June 43

Ausf G (StuG hull)

Miag, 02.43 – 07.43

95 219, April 43

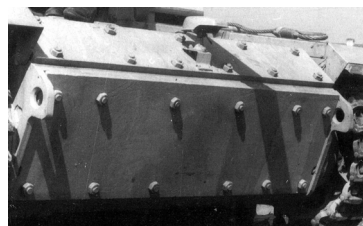
95 490, July 43

Ausf G (hull 9, 10/ZW)

Miag, 04.43 – 11.43

Ausf G (conv. PzKpfw III J–M)

Miag, 05.44 – 06.44

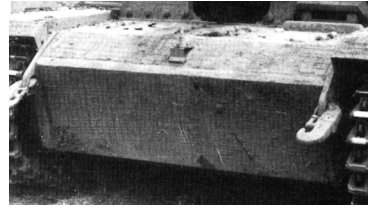


² RMinfBuM [assumed], Geheime Reichssache : Ausstoss-Übersicht : 5.6.1942

Hull nose characteristics

80 mm basic armor

Ausf G	Alkett, 04.43 – End
92 271, April 43	
105 570, July 44	
Ausf G	Miag, 07.43 – End
95 508, July 43	
96 719, May 44	

**2. Recovery equipment on front**

2 towing holds, bolted

Ausf A – F	01.40 – 09.42
Ausf A (2. Production Batch) 90 403, June 40	
Ausf F, 91 306, August 42	



2 towing holds as part of the hull sides

Ausf F/8 – G	Alkett, 09.42 – 01.45
Ausf G, 192 112, March 43	
Ausf G, 105 235, June 44	
Ausf G	Miag, 02.43 – 11.44
195 443, June 43	
196 266, January 44	



2 towing holds as part of the hull side plates, redesigned shape

Ausf G	Alkett, 01.45 – End
108 138, February 45	
Ausf G	Miag, 11.44 – End

**3. Inspection hatches and hinges in horizontal bow armor plate**

2-part, opening to the sides, large external hinges

Ausf A – D	01.40 – 10.41
Ausf B, 90 111, July 40	
Ausf D, 90 683, July 41	

