

Maverick's edge isn't worth the effort

Maverick bongs are sort of like the lovechild of Sheldon Black straight-shoots and the multi-percolated Illadelph ash catchers. And like any offspring of big names, the Maverick brand takes the best traits of its parents, but also adds that extra little something to set itself apart to give it an edge. For Maverick bongs, the edge is in its downstem, but unfortunately, it could do without it.

Instead of just a regular tube with three or four horizontal slits at the bottom, their 14mm glass-on-glass downstem has a shower head diffuser. There's no hole at the end of the tube, but ten vertical slots around its perimeter—which is great when you think about it, because more slots mean more filtration which means a cleaner and more potent hit, right?

If you're christening the bong, that's exactly what happens. The chamber instantly fills up with smoke so thick, you'd think the glass was made white instead of see-through. The smoke zips from the mouthpiece to your lungs after pulling the bowl, and the bubbling sounds are almost mischievous in the way they intensify as you take that final inhale, adding some playful anticipation as the hit settles inside your body.

But three bowls in, and the bubbles stop. The grass is burning dry—its smoke is inverted, escaping out the top of the bowl piece instead of traveling through the downstem and filling the chamber with smoke, no matter how hard you inhale. Turns out, the slots are too thin for the resin to swim through, and inhaling starts to feel like drinking a milkshake with a straw that's not wide enough. The struggle between the milkshake and your inhales makes your breathing weary, and frankly, it's just not worth it. Might as well toss the straw completely and drink it straight through the glass.

There's no hope for the downstem, either. The slots are too skinny for bobby pins or the end of incense sticks to clean, and sticking a pipe cleaner from the top doesn't remove the resin, but pushes it all down and clogs the slots even more because there's no hole in the bottom for the resin to escape.

For the lazy stoner who wants to skip the resin-cleaning bumps-in-the-road, you might as well toss the Maverick bong completely and load up on all the three-for-99-cent blunt wraps you can.