

NIJ BODY ARMOR PROTECTION LEVELS

The Roman numerals and what replaced them. Every figure read from the standards themselves, not from a summary.

LEGACY - NIJ Standard 0101.06 (2008)

Section 2. Velocities are the "new and unworn" set; the standard specifies a second, lower set for conditioned armor.

Level	Test threat	Grain	Reference velocity	Mapping
IIA	9mm FMJ RN	124 gr	373 m/s (1225 ft/s)	no successor
IIA	.40 S&W FMJ	180 gr	352 m/s (1155 ft/s)	
II	9mm FMJ RN	124 gr	398 m/s (1305 ft/s)	becomes HG1
II	.357 Mag JSP	158 gr	436 m/s (1430 ft/s)	
IIIA	.357 SIG FMJ FN	125 gr	448 m/s (1470 ft/s)	becomes HG2
IIIA	.44 Mag SJHP	240 gr	436 m/s (1430 ft/s)	
III	7.62mm M80 FMJ	147 gr	847 m/s (2780 ft/s)	becomes RF1
IV	.30 cal M2 AP	166 gr	878 m/s (2880 ft/s)	becomes RF3

CURRENT - NIJ Standard 0123.00 (2023)

Tables 1 and 2. 0123.00 defines the levels and threats; 0101.07 defines how armor is tested against them.

Level	Test threat	Grain	Reference velocity	Mapping
HG1	9mm Luger FMJ RN	124 gr	398 m/s (1305 ft/s)	was Level II
HG1	.357 Mag JSP	158 gr	436 m/s (1430 ft/s)	
HG2	9mm Luger FMJ RN	124 gr	448 m/s (1470 ft/s)	was Level IIIA
HG2	.44 Mag JHP	240 gr	436 m/s (1430 ft/s)	
RF1	7.62x51mm M80 Ball	147 +0/-3 gr	847 m/s (2780 ft/s)	was Level III
RF1	7.62x39mm MSC Type 56	123 gr	732 m/s (2400 ft/s)	new threat
RF1	5.56mm M193	56 +0/-2 gr	990 m/s (3250 ft/s)	new threat
RF2	all three RF1 threats	-	as above	new level
RF2	5.56mm M855	61.8 +/-1.5 gr	950 m/s (3115 ft/s)	new threat
RF3	.30-06 M2 AP	165.7 +0/-7 gr	878 m/s (2880 ft/s)	was Level IV

KEY

handgun level

rifle level

Level IIA has no successor. 0123.00 says Level II and Level IIIA have been replaced by HG1 and HG2 respectively; IIA is not in that mapping, and this sheet does not invent one for it. Note also that 0101.06 Type IIIA is tested with .357 SIG, not 9mm - only the velocity carries over to HG2, where the round is 9mm. Shots: 0101.07 specifies placements for 3 or 6 per test item across RF1, RF2 and RF3, and 1 or 2 for RF3; the count is a property of the test, not of the level. Backface deformation: each BFD measurement <= 44.0 mm, or between 44.0 and 50.0 mm if the sample mean condition holds; above 50.0 mm is always a failure (0101.07 section 6.1.3.1). BFD is measured in clay behind the armor and is not a wound model. RF2 covers all three RF1 threats plus M855.

