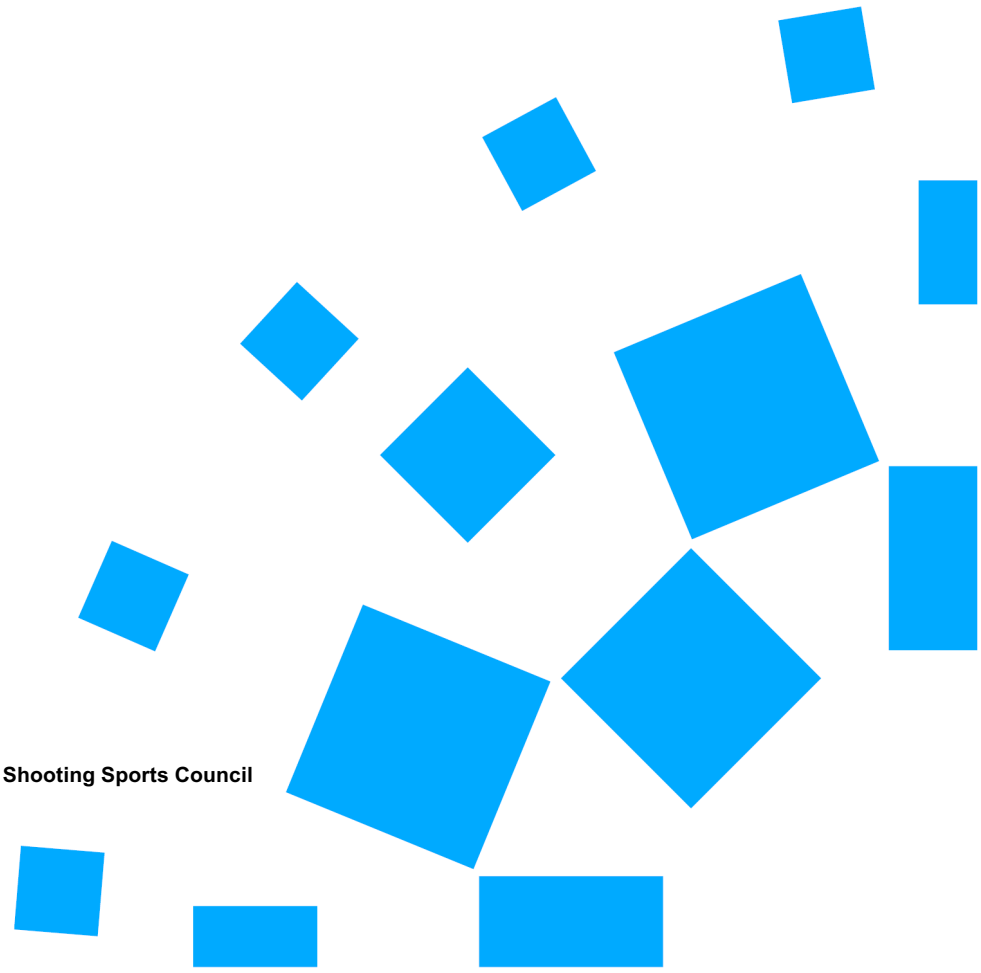
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FIREARMS LICENSING -

An Introductory Guide to Cartridges & Calibres

Version 6.0 (Sept 2026)



Compiled in partnership with the British Shooting Sports Council



Foreword

This guide has been developed by the College of Policing, with the support and assistance of the British Shooting Sports Council (BSSC), as a practical reference document for firearms licensing staff when considering firearms, cartridges and calibres encountered during the licensing process.

The College of Policing is grateful to the BSSC and its member organisations for the expertise and experience they have contributed to the development of this guide. Particular acknowledgement is given to the Chair of the Historical Breechloading Smallarms Association (HBSA) and the Technical Director of the Gun Trade Association (GTA), whose specialist knowledge and valuable contributions have assisted in ensuring the guide is accurate, practical and relevant to its intended purpose.

This collaborative approach reflects a shared commitment to public safety, lawful firearms ownership and use, and the promotion of greater consistency in firearms licensing decision-making across England and Wales.

The guide provides general information on commonly encountered cartridges and calibres, their characteristics and typical applications. It is intended to support understanding and informed decision-making and should be used as an aid to professional judgement rather than a substitute for operational experience, established licensing procedures, or consideration of individual circumstances. It also seeks to promote a common understanding between firearms licensing teams and the shooting community by providing an accessible point of reference on the use of firearms and ammunition.

This guide does not replace or supersede the Home Office Firearms Licensing Statutory Guidance, the Home Office Guide on Firearms Licensing Law, the College of Policing Authorised Professional Practice (APP), force policy, or any other relevant legislation, guidance or legal advice. Where any inconsistency arises, the statutory framework and official guidance should take precedence.

It is important to recognise that cartridge or calibre alone is rarely a reliable indicator of suitability, risk, or intended use. Whilst some cartridges may generate greater energy, velocity, or range than others, higher power does not automatically equate to greater risk in a licensing context. All firearms, regardless of calibre, have the potential to cause serious injury or death and should be treated accordingly.

Licensing decisions should not be based solely on the calibre or cartridge requested. The primary consideration should remain the individual applicant, the evidence supporting their good reason, the intended use, and the specific circumstances of the application.

No cartridge should be regarded as inherently appropriate or inappropriate without consideration of the wider context. Firearms licensing staff should assess each case on its individual merits, applying professional judgement and taking a proportionate, evidence-based approach in accordance with the Home Office Statutory Guidance.

This guide supports that process by providing background information and context to assist informed, consistent, and proportionate licensing decisions, while promoting fairness, public safety, and confidence in the firearms licensing system.

The College of Policing also welcomes the continued support offered by the BSSC and its member organisations in providing technical information and assistance to firearms licensing units on matters covered by this guide. Any such support is intended to enhance understanding and inform decision-making and does not replace the responsibility of police forces to determine applications in accordance with legislation, statutory guidance, and established licensing principles.

For further information, firearms licensing units may contact the BSSC Secretary at secretary@bssc.org.uk or +44 (0)20 3603 0103.

College of Policing Firearms Licensing Training Programme - *2026*

Review Process: The College of Policing, in consultation with the British Shooting Sports Council (BSSC) and relevant subject matter experts, will undertake an initial review of this guide within six months of publication. Subsequent reviews will be conducted as necessary following significant changes to legislation or other developments that may affect the accuracy, relevance, or application of the guidance. Users of this guide are encouraged to ensure they are referring to the most current version available.

CALIBRE QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Remember: distinguish between calibre, cartridge and chambering. Calibre principally describes bore or projectile diameter; a cartridge is the complete ammunition designation (for example .243 Winchester); and a rifle is chambered for a particular cartridge. Licensing decisions should focus on lawful purpose, good reason and any evidenced public-safety concern, rather than treating cartridge power or novelty as a separate test of necessity.

RIMFIRE RIFLES — Small Game & Pest Control

Calibre	What it is	Typical Use	Common Quarry	Key Points
.22 LR	Small rimfire - most common	Pest control, training	Rabbits, rats, squirrels, target	Low power/noise. NOT for deer. Fox: marginal, very short range only.
.17 HMR	Fast, flat-shooting rimfire	Rabbits/vermin at distance	Rabbits, rats, corvids	More accurate than .22 LR at range. Still below deer minimums.
.22 WMR/.22 Mag	More powerful rimfire	Vermin, light pest control	Rabbits, fox (short range)	More energy than .22 LR - still below deer minimums. Lawful but rarely seen.

CENTREFIRE RIFLES — Deer Stalking & Foxing (Section 1 Firearms)

Calibre	What it is	Typical Use	Common Quarry	Key Points
.222/.223 Rem	Light, fast centrefire	Foxing, vermin, long-range avian pest control	Fox, muntjac, CWD only	Cannot be used for roe (ex Scotland), fallow, red or sika.
.243 Win	Classic all-rounder	Deer stalking & foxing	All UK deer, fox	Meets minimum for all UK deer. Low recoil.
.270 Win	Medium/long-range	Open ground deer stalking	Roe, fallow, red, sika	More energy at distance. Suited to open hill/moorland.
.308 Win / 7.62x51	Heavy, reliable	Deer stalking, target	All UK deer, large pest	UK favourite. Also target/competition use.
.30-06 Springfield	Heavier, deep penetration	Larger deer, hill stalking	Fallow, red, sika	More powerful than .308. Common among experienced stalkers.
6.5x55 Swedish	Smooth, low recoil	All-round deer stalking	Roe, fallow, red	Meets all deer minimums. Gentle on the shooter - increasingly popular.
6.5 Creedmoor	Modern flat-shooting	Target & stalking	Deer, competition	Growing popularity for stalking and long-range target use.

LARGER CALIBRES — Overseas & Specialist Use

Calibre	What it is	Typical Use	Common Quarry	Key Points
.300 Win Mag	High-powered magnum centrefire	Overseas/estate hunting, highland stalking	Red deer, elk, moose, African plains, bear; all UK deer	Significant recoil. Well above UK deer minimums. Legitimate uses include UK deer where lawful, overseas hunting and target/competition shooting on suitable ranges.
LEGITIMATE USES MAY INCLUDE: UK deer where statutory requirements are met; overseas hunting; and target/competition shooting on suitable ranges. Assessment should turn on the individual circumstances, not a presumption attached to the cartridge.			**FURTHER ENQUIRY: establish the applicant's stated lawful purpose and any relevant circumstances. Do not introduce a separate requirement to justify the cartridge by comparison with .243/.308 or another lower-powered cartridge.**	

LEGAL MINIMUMS - DEER (ENGLAND & WALES ONLY) / Deer Act 1991

Species	Min. Cal.	Bullet / Energy	Common Legal Calibres
Muntjac	.220 CF	50gr · 1,000 ft/lb	.222, .223, .243
Chinese Water Deer	.220 CF	50gr · 1,000 ft/lb	.222, .223, .243
Roe	.240 CF	100gr · 1,700 ft/lb	.243, 6.5×55, .270
Fallow	.240 CF	100gr · 1,700 ft/lb	.243, .270, .308
Red	.240 CF	100gr · 1,700 ft/lb	.270, .308, .30-06
Sika	.240 CF	100gr · 1,700 ft/lb	.243, .270, .308

.22 LR and .17 HMR do not meet the legal minimum for any deer species in England & Wales and must not be used for routine deer shooting or stalking. The only exception is the narrow humane dispatch provision under section 6 of the Deer Act 1991, where "any reasonable means" may be used to kill a deer that is already so seriously injured that killing it is an act of mercy.

Using a sub-minimum calibre for deer is a criminal offence under the Deer Act 1991.

MUZZLE ENERGY QUICK REFERENCE — CALIBRE, DEER LEGALITY & INDICATIVE DISTANCES

This table was produced to support quick, practical conversations about muzzle energy alongside calibre. It is intended as a general reference aid only and is not definitive. Values should be verified against manufacturer ballistic data where precision is required. Projectile behaviour, including penetration and ricochet potential, is influenced by multiple variables and may differ significantly in practice. Ricochet distances are particularly variable and cannot reliably be reduced to a single figure, any figures shown are broad comparative estimates only and should not be interpreted as safety distances or operational limits. The information provided should therefore be regarded as indicative rather than predictive and should not be used in isolation when assessing suitability, risk or intended use.

Cartridge	Typical Use	Bullet Wt (gr)	Muzzle Energy (ft/lbs)	Energy @300yds (ft/lbs)	Max Distance @35° (miles)	Approx Ricochet Distance (miles)	Roe Legal (Scotland)	All Deer (E&W)	All Deer (Scotland)
22 Air Rifle	Target/Vermin	16	**12**	0	0.35	0.1	NO	NO	NO
22 FAC Air Rifle (40 ft/lb, slug)	Target/Vermin	40	**40**	1	0.6	0.2	NO	NO	NO
.22 Long Rifle (Rimfire)	Target/Vermin	40	**130**	75	0.9	0.25	NO	NO	NO
.17 Hornady Magnum Rimfire	Vermin	17	**245**	130	1.1	0.3	NO	NO	NO
.22 Winchester Magnum Rimfire	Vermin	40	**320**	200	1.2	0.35	NO	NO	NO
.22 Hornet	Fox/Vermin	45	**700**	400	1.7	0.6	NO	NO	NO
.204 Ruger	Fox/Vermin	32	**1250**	650	2	0.8	NO	NO	NO
.222 Remington	Fox	50	**1250**	700	2.1	0.9	YES	NO	NO
.223 Remington	Fox/Target	55	**1250**	650	2.3	1	YES	NO	NO
.22-250 Remington	Fox	50	**1650**	850	2.5	1.1	YES	NO	NO
.243 Winchester	Deer	100	**1950**	1200	2.5	1.2	YES	YES	YES
6mm Creedmoor	Deer/Target	108	**2000**	1400	2.7	1.3	YES	YES	YES
6.5×55 Swedish	Deer	140	**2200**	1700	2.7	1.4	YES	YES	YES
6.5 Creedmoor	Deer/Target	140	**2300**	1800	2.8	1.4	YES	YES	YES
.257 Roberts	Deer	117	**2400**	1600	2.6	1.3	YES	YES	YES
7mm-08 Remington	Deer	140	**2400**	1700	2.8	1.4	YES	YES	YES
.303 British	Deer/Target	174	**2400**	1700	2.5	1.3	YES	YES	YES
.308 Winchester	Deer/Target	150	**2650**	1900	2.7	1.4	YES	YES	YES
.270 Winchester	Deer	130	**2700**	1900	2.9	1.5	YES	YES	YES
.280 Remington	Deer	150	**2800**	2000	2.9	1.5	YES	YES	YES
.25-06 Remington	Deer	115	**2900**	1900	2.8	1.4	YES	YES	YES
.30-06 Springfield	Deer	165	**2900**	2100	2.9	1.5	YES	YES	YES
6.5 Precision Rifle Cartridge (PRC)	Deer	143	**2950**	2200	3.1	1.5	YES	YES	YES
.240 Weatherby Magnum	Deer	100	**3000**	2000	3	1.5	YES	YES	YES
7mm Remington Magnum	Deer	160	**3000**	2200	3	1.6	YES	YES	YES
.270 Winchester Short Magnum	Deer	130	**3200**	2300	3.1	1.6	YES	YES	YES
7mm Precision Rifle Cartridge (PRC)	Deer	175	**3200**	2400	3.2	1.7	YES	YES	YES
.300 Winchester Short Magnum	Deer	180	**3300**	2400	3.1	1.6	YES	YES	YES
.257 Weatherby Magnum	Deer	115	**3500**	2400	3.2	1.6	YES	YES	YES
.300 Winchester Magnum	Deer	180	**3500**	2500	3.1	1.7	YES	YES	YES
.35 Whelen	Large deer	225	**3500**	2200	2.8	1.5	YES	YES	YES
.338 Winchester Magnum	Large deer	225	**3900**	2700	3.1	1.7	YES	YES	YES
9.3×62 Mauser	Large deer	286	**4200**	2800	2.5	1.4	YES	YES	YES
.375 Holland & Holland Magnum	Dangerous	300	**4300**	3000	2.6	1.4	YES	YES	YES
.338 Lapua Magnum	ELR/Target	250	**4700**	3200	3.3	1.8	YES	YES	YES
.458 Winchester Magnum	Dangerous	500	**5000**	3500	2.6	1.4	YES	YES	YES
.416 Rigby	Dangerous	400	**5100**	3600	2.7	1.5	YES	YES	YES
.470 Nitro Express	Dangerous	500	**5100**	4000	2.1	1.2	YES	YES	YES
.500 Nitro Express	Dangerous	570	**6500**	4800	2.1	1.2	YES	YES	YES

Special deer-legal rules not shown in the columns above: in Scotland, roe deer may be taken using a projectile of 50 grains or more, achieving a muzzle velocity of at least 2,450 fps and a muzzle energy of at least 1,000 ft/lbs. In England & Wales, muntjac and Chinese water deer may be shot using a .22 centrefire achieving at least 1,000 ft/lbs muzzle energy - other deer species require the cartridge and energy shown in the table.

Max Distance and Ricochet Distance columns: these figures are based on a projectile discharged at approximately 35 degrees under atmospheric conditions and represent a worst-case theoretical trajectory. They are for comparative reference only and do not reflect real-world shooting conditions, terrain or ballistic drag. Ricochets are inherently unpredictable in direction and behaviour and will vary significantly with ground composition, angle of strike and bullet construction. Both within a particular cartridge and between different cartridges, bullet design and weight may vary according to the purpose of use, including deer, dangerous game and target shooting. Expanding ammunition used for quarry and non-expanding ammunition commonly used for target shooting have different characteristics, including on ricochet. Expanding quarry ammunition will also routinely be used on a range when zeroing a rifle. A heavier bullet will generally produce more muzzle energy than a lighter one in the same cartridge. This information is provided for context and should not, of itself, determine a licensing decision.

Deer Act 1991, section 6: the use of a cartridge below the statutory minimum for a deer species is generally unlawful, subject to the Act's narrow mercy-killing exception where the statutory conditions are met. The statutory wording and subsequent amendments should be checked and cited directly. Where external organisations are referenced, the approach should be balanced; in the deer context the British Deer Society (BDS), including its established DSC1 qualification, should be recognised alongside BASC without implying that any private qualification is itself a licensing requirement.

A cartridge generating more than roughly 3,500 ft/lbs of muzzle energy is not, by that fact alone, inappropriate for deer. Where the cartridge meets the statutory requirements, the relevant licensing questions are good reason, the individual circumstances and any evidenced public-safety concern. A lawful cartridge choice should not be treated as a proxy for applicant risk or subjected to a separate "least powerful adequate cartridge" test.

TWO RIFLES CHAMBERED FOR THE SAME CARTRIDGE - WHY?

- **Different Optics** - Day scope on one; night vision/thermal fixed & zeroed on another. Scopes often non-removable or calibrated to specific rifle.
- **Weight / Terrain** - Lightweight for hilly/woodland carry; heavier steadier rifle for high-seat shots at distance.
- **Sound Moderator - One rifle may be set up with a sound moderator and another without, reflecting different legitimate configurations and uses. Terminology and legal references should reflect the current position following the 2026 changes concerning sound moderators.**
- **Backup / Spare** - Rifle in repair or service. Professional stalkers need continuity - spare keeps same ammunition type.
- **Key Point:** No rule limits one rifle per calibre. Applicant must give clear, credible reason - record the reason given.

APPLICATION SCENARIOS

ROUTINE – Common application; establish good reason and relevant circumstances. **QUERY** – Further information may be helpful; ask, explore and record the reason. **FLAG** – Apparent legal or other substantive issue requiring clarification or referral.

Category	Scenario	Suggested approach
ROUTINE	.22 LR for rabbits on farmland	Very common. Establish good reason and the proposed circumstances of use. No cartridge-specific concern arises merely from the application.
ROUTINE	.243 Winchester for roe deer stalking	Common deer-stalking cartridge which meets the statutory requirements for roe deer. Establish good reason and the proposed circumstances of use. Any concern about competence or public safety should be evidenced and considered in relation to the individual.
ROUTINE	12 bore + .243 Winchester combination	Very common combination. The shotgun and rifle serve different legitimate purposes. Establish the good reason for each in the normal way.
ROUTINE / QUERY	Target shooting — unfamiliar cartridge	Target shooting is a legitimate purpose in its own right. If the cartridge is unfamiliar, establish the discipline, firearm and proposed range use; unfamiliarity is not, of itself, an adverse licensing factor. Seek technical advice where necessary rather than drawing an inference from unfamiliarity.
QUERY	Second .308 Winchester – already holds one	More than one rifle chambered for the same cartridge may be entirely legitimate. Reasons include different optics or configurations, different disciplines or uses, or a professional backup. Ask the applicant and record the reason given.
QUERY	.308 Winchester for foxing	Fox control may constitute good reason for a lawful centrefire cartridge. Establish the stated purpose and actual circumstances. Do not require the applicant to demonstrate that a lower-powered cartridge would be sufficient or infer that another purpose must be intended.
QUERY	.300 Winchester Magnum for UK deer stalking	A lawful deer cartridge. Establish the applicant's stated purpose and relevant circumstances. Do not require the applicant to justify its power by comparison with .243 Winchester, .308 Winchester or another lower-powered cartridge.
FLAG	.223 Remington for roe deer in England and Wales	Does not meet the statutory requirements for roe deer in England and Wales. Clarify the proposed use and advise accordingly. Different statutory criteria apply in Scotland.

SHOTGUNS — Game Shooting & Pest Control (Section 2 Firearms)				
Calibre	**What it is**	**Typical Use**	**Common Quarry**	**Key Points**
12 bore	Most common shotgun	Game, rough, clay, pest	Pheasant, duck, pigeon, rabbits, clay	Versatile - different loads for different jobs.
20 bore	Lighter, lower recoil	Upland/woodland game	Pheasant, partridge, rabbits	Popular with younger/smaller shooters.
.410 bore	Smallest common shotgun	Close-range pest	Rabbits, small pest birds	Very limited range. Sometimes used for training.

STATUTORY DEER REQUIREMENTS — ENGLAND & WALES

ROUTINE DEER SHOOTING — ENGLAND & WALES

.22 LR Does not meet the statutory minimum for routine deer shooting or stalking in England and Wales. The narrow mercy-killing exception in section 6 of the Deer Act 1991 may apply where its statutory conditions are met.	.17 HMR Does not meet the statutory minimum for routine deer shooting or stalking in England and Wales. The narrow mercy-killing exception in section 6 of the Deer Act 1991 may apply where its statutory conditions are met.
.22 WMR / .22 Mag Does not meet the statutory minimum for routine deer shooting or stalking in England and Wales.	.223 Remington May meet the statutory requirements for muntjac and Chinese water deer in England and Wales, but not for roe, fallow, red or sika. Different statutory criteria apply in Scotland.

QUICK CARTRIDGE REFERENCE — ENGLAND & WALES

COMMON EXAMPLES	REMEMBER
Rabbits / rats: .22 LR, .17 HMR Fox: a range of lawful rimfire and centrefire cartridges may be encountered Muntjac / CWD: cartridges meeting the statutory .22 centrefire / energy criteria Roe / fallow / sika / red: cartridges meeting the statutory calibre, bullet-weight and energy criteria Overseas / specialist / target use: cartridge choice varies with lawful purpose, discipline, quarry and destination	These are examples, not an approved-cartridge list. Deer requirements vary by jurisdiction; the examples on this card relate to England and Wales. Bore: smaller number = larger bore Section 1: Firearm Certificate Section 2: Shotgun Certificate

Cartridges are tools. The relevant questions are whether the proposed use is lawful, whether the applicant has good reason and whether there is an evidenced public-safety concern in the actual circumstances. Do not substitute a police preference for a certificate holder's legitimate choice of firearm or cartridge.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK

FEO DECISION CHECKLIST

- **Does the proposed cartridge meet the statutory requirements for the stated quarry? For deer, apply the rules for the relevant jurisdiction. Below the statutory minimum = flag.**
- **Is the stated purpose lawful and credible? Consider the actual circumstances, terrain, backstop, direction of fire and intended use. Avoid blanket classifications of land or cartridges as inherently "safe" or "unsafe".**
- **If a second rifle is chambered for the same cartridge: Ask why more than one is required. Common reasons include different optics, terrain, moderator configuration or professional backup. Record the reason.**
- **If a larger or less familiar cartridge is requested: establish the applicant's lawful purpose and good reason. Do not require the applicant to justify "extra power" by showing that a lower-powered cartridge would not suffice.**
- **Foxes: No statutory minimum cartridge. Consider lawful purpose, actual circumstances and any evidenced public-safety concern; do not impose a separate cartridge-power test.**
- **Record the reason given, even if satisfied, to provide a clear audit trail.**

The British Shooting Sports Council (BSSC) is able to provide Firearms Licensing Units with technical advice or assistance on matters covered by this guide.

Contact the BSSC Secretary at secretary@bssc.org.uk or +44 (0)20 3603 0103.

This guide is intended as a general overview and does not cover every calibre, quarry type or circumstance. There will be legitimate reasons and uses that fall outside what is described here - each application should always be considered on its own merits.

What is a Calibre?

Calibre, cartridge and chambering are related but distinct terms. Calibre principally describes a bore or projectile diameter. A cartridge is the complete ammunition type identified by its cartridge designation, for example .243 Winchester or .308 Winchester. A rifle is chambered for a particular cartridge: the chamber is the part of the firearm designed to accept that cartridge. CIP cartridge and chamber designations provide the appropriate technical reference. These distinctions matter because apparently similar calibre descriptions may refer to materially different cartridges.

- .22, .243, .308 - measurements in inches (or fractions of an inch)
- 6.5mm, 7mm - measurements in millimetres
- 12 bore or 20 bore - used for shotguns, not rifles

There is no single, universal naming logic behind these names; some are based on bullet diameter, others on historical convention, marketing or cartridge design. Two cartridges with similar-looking names can perform very differently, so it is the exact cartridge designation on the certificate, not the general "calibre" label, that defines what may lawfully be acquired and used.

A firearm should use ammunition appropriate to the cartridge for which it is chambered. Similar calibre descriptions do not establish interchangeability; the exact cartridge designation and chambering are fundamental. Cartridge choice should not be reduced to a “bigger is better” or “smaller is safer” comparison.

Understanding Calibre Through Muzzle Energy

Muzzle energy can be a useful technical characteristic, particularly where legislation specifies minimum ballistic requirements. It should not, however, become a general proxy for licensing suitability or create an additional test of necessity. Where an applicant proposes a less familiar cartridge, the relevant enquiry remains the lawful purpose, good reason and any evidenced public-safety concern; unfamiliarity alone should not shift an additional evidential burden onto the applicant.

It helps to think in four broad energy bands, and to notice the size of the jump between each one: sub-12 ft/lb air rifle, FAC air rifle, rimfire, and centrefire. The jump in power from one band to the next is substantial, and that jump matters more to public safety than any comparison between individual centrefire cartridges. No single centrefire rifle is materially more dangerous than another of a similar type.

It is also worth being direct with colleagues who have no shooting background about why even the smallest of these categories is still a lethal weapon. A .22 rimfire, or a full power FAC air rifle, is sometimes dismissed by people unfamiliar with firearms as "not exactly powerful". A comparison used on past training courses is to liken the concentrated force of a small, fast projectile to a forceful stab with a screwdriver: a narrow, high speed application of force at a single point is entirely capable of killing, regardless of how unimpressive the firearm looks next to a large centrefire rifle. This matters when explaining risk to public safety and the peace. It is not really about how big a rifle looks, but about the certificate holder, their judgement, and how the firearm is used and stored.

A muzzle energy quick reference table is included in the reference material at the front of the guide and can be used alongside the calibre tables later in this guide.

Rimfire Rifles - Small Game and Pest Control

RIMFIRE CALIBRES — DETAIL				
Calibre	**What it is**	**Typical Use**	**Common Quarry**	**Key Points**
.22 LR (Long Rifle)	Small rimfire - the most common of all	Close range pest control and training	Rabbits, rats, grey squirrels, pest birds, target shooting	Low power, low noise, cheap to use. NOT suitable for deer. Marginal for fox - only at very short range and only where permitted.
.17 HMR	Faster, flatter-shooting rimfire	Rabbits and vermin at longer distances	Rabbits, rats, corvids	More accurate at distance than .22 LR. Still too light for deer.
.22 WMR / .22 Mag	More powerful rimfire	Vermin and light pest control	Rabbits, foxes at short range	More energy than .22 LR but still below legal deer minimums. Rarely seen but lawful.

Centrefire Rifles - Deer Stalking and Foxing

These are Section 1 firearms (require a Firearm Certificate). Deer stalking is the most common reason for these calibres. The Deer Act 1991 sets minimum legal requirements for deer.

CENTREFIRE CALIBRES — DETAIL				
Calibre	**What it is**	**Typical Use**	**Common Quarry**	**Key Points**
.222 / .223 Remington	Light, fast centrefire	Foxing, vermin, smaller deer species (where legal) target shooting	Foxes, rabbits, muntjac and CWD - meets minimum for these two species only	Very flat shooting, good for open farmland. Cannot legally be used for roe, fallow, red or sika deer. Also used for target and competition shooting.
.243 Winchester	Classic all rounder - very popular in UK	Deer stalking and foxing	All UK deer species, foxes	Meets the legal minimum for all UK deer. Lower recoil makes it popular with newer or lighter-framed stalkers. One of the most commonly certificated calibres in the UK.
.270 Winchester	Medium to long-range calibre	Deer stalking, especially open ground	Roe, fallow, red, sika deer	More energy at distance - well suited to open hill or moorland stalking. Slightly more recoil than .243.
.308 Winchester / 7.62x51mm	Heavy, reliable - very widely used	Deer stalking, target shooting	All UK deer, large pest species	A favourite in UK stalking. Also used for target and competition shooting. Versatile and widely supported.
.30-06 Springfield	Heavier bullet, deep penetration	Larger deer, hill stalking	Fallow, red, sika	More powerful than .308 - suited to larger or more heavily built animals. Common among experienced stalkers.
6.5x55 Swedish	Smooth, low recoil medium calibre	All-round deer stalking	Roe, fallow, red deer	Increasingly popular - meets all deer minimums, gentle on the shooter.
6.5 Creedmoor	Modern flat-shooting design	Target, stalking	Deer species, competition	Growing in popularity for both stalking and long-range target use.

Larger Calibres

Larger cartridges may be held for a range of legitimate purposes, including overseas hunting, lawful UK deer or wild boar use and target or competition shooting on suitable ranges. Examples encountered may include 9.3x62, 9.3x74R, .375 H&H Magnum, .416 Rigby and .458 Winchester Magnum. Assessment should be based on the applicant's good reason and the individual circumstances rather than a presumption that a larger cartridge requires exceptional justification.

Target and range use - Rifles used for stalking, pest control, overseas hunting and other lawful purposes may also legitimately be used on suitable ranges for target shooting, zeroing, ammunition testing and, where applicable, hand-load development.

LARGER CALIBRES - DETAIL				
Calibre	**What it is**	**Typical Use**	**Common Quarry**	**Key Points**
.300 Winchester Magnum (.300 Win Mag)	High-powered magnum centrefire derived from the .375 H&H case, introduced by Winchester in 1963	Overseas and estate hunting of large or dangerous game; long-range deer stalking on open highland ground; professional culling where extended range or heavy animals are involved Long range target shooting	Red deer, elk, moose, African plains game, bear; all UK deer species (well above legal minimum) wild boar	Significant recoil and muzzle blast. Ballistically capable to 500m+. Common factory loads: 150-220gr at 2,900-3,300 ft/s; muzzle energy typically 3,500-4,200 ft/lbs. Well above legal minimum for all UK deer.

.300 Winchester Magnum - Key Considerations for FEOs

The .300 Win Mag is a legitimate and lawful calibre that will be encountered primarily in two contexts:

- Overseas safari or big-game hunting where the quarry or conditions demand a magnum-class cartridge.
- Open highland red deer stalking in Scotland or similar terrain where longer shots and larger animals are involved.
- It is well above the legal minimum for all UK deer species.
- Where .300 Winchester Magnum is requested, establish the applicant's stated lawful purpose and relevant circumstances. Do not require the applicant to demonstrate that .243 Winchester, .308 Winchester or another lower-powered cartridge would be inadequate.
- Recoil and muzzle blast are relevant factual characteristics, but should not be treated as automatic licensing objections. Any reference to sound moderators should reflect the current legal position and use consistent UK terminology.
- Factory ammunition is widely available in the UK from licensed dealers.

Cartridges for Target, Vintage and Classic Rifles

Cartridges used for target, vintage and classic firearms may be possessed for a range of legitimate purposes, including target shooting, competition, training and general shooting activities. Such firearms, when used on appropriate ranges, outnumber stalking rifles in the UK. Many cartridge types have multiple applications and, although primarily associated with target shooting, may also be used for stalking, hunting, pest control, indoor shooting and handloading development. Assessment should be based on the applicant's stated good reason for possession and the specific circumstances of the individual case. The existence of alternative or secondary uses for a cartridge should not, in itself, detract from an otherwise valid justification.

For clarity and to avoid ambiguity, cartridge designations should always be recorded in their specific form. Generic calibre descriptions such as .22 RF, 6.5 mm or 7.62 mm can lead to uncertainty because multiple cartridges share the same bullet diameter. By way of example, 6.5 mm could refer to cartridges including 6.5 PRC, 6.5 Creedmoor, 6.5×55 Swedish, 6.5×47 Lapua, and 6.5 Grendel. Specifying the exact cartridge on the FAC removes any doubt regarding the authority granted.

TARGET, VINTAGE AND CLASSIC CARTRIDGES – DETAIL			
Calibre	**Cartridge**	**Typical Use**	**General information**
.22 LR (Long Rifle)	Multi-purpose, small rimfire, immensely popular and therefore the most common of all cartridges found in the world	Indoor, outdoor ranges, local club to international competition. Typical ranges 10m – 500m	Available in subsonic, standard-velocity, high-velocity and hyper-velocity loadings. Subsonic ammunition is commonly used for hunting and other low-noise applications; standard-velocity ammunition is widely used for target shooting, while higher-velocity loadings may be used for other lawful purposes. In many cases, certificate holders require larger quantities (1,000 rounds or more) because of the higher consumption associated with target and competition shooting, including the use of semi-automatic rifles and long-barrelled pistols.
.17 HMR (Hornady Magnum Rimfire)	Faster, flatter-shooting rimfire that has in many cases superseded the .22LR due to it flatter trajectory	Predominantly a rabbit and vermin cartridge, but also used for target shooting on indoor and outdoor ranges.	Multi purpose and very popular cartridge, used predominantly for hunting small game, but can be equally at home on indoor and outdoor ranges as long as it meets range regulations. Not suitable for semi-auto rimfire firearms in the UK.
.22 WMR (Winchester magnum rimfire)	Most powerful cartridge of the .22rf family	Predominantly a rabbit and vermin cartridge, but also used for target shooting	Multi-purpose cartridge which has seen some decline in popularity following the growth of .17 HMR. Used predominantly for hunting small game, but also encountered on indoor and outdoor ranges where permitted by range regulations. It may also be encountered in semi-automatic rimfire rifles.

		on indoor and outdoor ranges.	
.222 Remington	Light, fast centrefire	Hunting & target shooting	Extremely accurate and whilst predominantly a hunting round it is also used for target and competition shooting at distance typically 100 - 300m.
.223 Remington or 5.56mm	Light, fast centrefire	Hunting, target & competition shooting	One of the most popular multi-purpose small-calibre centrefire cartridges used for target and competition shooting. Typical distances range from 100–600 m, with suitable hand-loaded ammunition also used at longer distances. Commonly encountered in AR-pattern rifles and Civilian Service Rifle (CSR) competition using legally compliant civilian firearms.
.243 Winchester	Classic all rounder - very popular in UK	Deer stalking and foxing; also encountered in target shooting where its accuracy and relatively low recoil are advantageous	One of the most commonly certificated calibres in the UK and has been available since 1955 and therefore can still be found in both new and classic rifles. Extremely accurate and whilst predominantly a hunting round it is also used for target and competition shooting.
.303 British	Very popular, vintage & classic cartridge found in the UK & commonwealth countries	Vintage & classic target round, occasionally used for hunting.	UK service cartridge from 1888 – 1950. Very popular with all Lee Enfield series of rifles and therefore found in vintage/classic target disciplines.
.308 Winchester / 7.62x51mm	Possibly still the most popular multi-purpose full-bore cartridge available.	Deer stalking, target shooting	A major favourite for target and competition shooting. Versatile and widely supported by manufacturers. Suitable for F-Class and Precision Rifle Series (PRS) disciplines, including shooting at targets at varying distances. In some disciplines it is increasingly supplemented by cartridges such as 6.5 Creedmoor.
.30-06 Springfield	Classic multi-purpose cartridge regularly found in US firearms	Deer stalking and classic rifle target shooting	More powerful than .308 Winchester, it is associated with classic US service rifles and is therefore encountered in classic target competitions. It is less common than British and European equivalents.
6.5x55 Swedish	Classic multi-purpose cartridge regularly found in Scandinavian firearms	Deer stalking and classic rifle target shooting	Swedish, Danish & Norwegian service cartridge from 1884. Very popular with Swedish Mauser rifles and therefore found in all vintage/classic target disciplines.
7.62x54R	Classic cartridge found in Russian and Eastern European firearms	Classic target rifle shooting	One of the oldest military service cartridges still in use. It is encountered in Russian and Eastern European classic service rifles.
7.62x39mm	Russian service cartridge	Target shooting only, not really suitable for hunting	The 7.62×39 is typically too powerful for rabbits and somewhat limited for deer, making it best suited to foxes. It is therefore often used for target shooting and is commonly found in AK, AR, and CZ rifles.
7.5x55mm Swiss	Classic cartridge found in Swiss service and target firearms	Classic target rifle shooting	Swiss service cartridge from 1899. Associated with Schmidt-Rubin rifles and encountered in vintage and classic target disciplines.

7.92mm / 8x57mm Mauser	Classic cartridge found in German service and target firearms	Deer stalking and classic rifle target shooting	German service cartridge from 1888. Very popular with many classic German & European service rifles and therefore found in all vintage/classic target disciplines. Also popular in modern Mauser stalking rifles.
6.5mm Creedmoor	Latest very popular multi-purpose cartridge in the UK	Stalking, target & competition shooting	Immense popularity for stalking, target and competition use. In some disciplines its popularity and excellent accuracy have made it an increasingly common alternative to .308 Winchester. Capable of long-range target shooting to 1,200 m.
.45-70	Classic historical cartridge found in US firearms	Hunting, target & competition shooting	The .45-70 was originally developed as a black powder cartridge in 1873. It remains popular among long-range black powder competition shooters and enthusiasts of modern replica Sharps-style rifles. In the UK, it is also commonly encountered in modern lever-action carbines, where it is used for target shooting and the dispatch of wild boar.
9x19mm	Very popular pistol cartridge	Target & competition shooting	Following the restrictions on most handguns in Great Britain, its use has reduced, but it may still be encountered in long-barrelled pistols and some carbines.
.38spl / .357mag	Very popular pistol cartridge	Target & competition shooting	Widely used for lever-action rifle competitions, western re-enactment shooting and long-barrelled revolvers.
.44spl / .44mag	Large calibre pistol cartridge	Target & competition shooting	The .44 Magnum, commonly chambered in lever-action rifles and long-barrelled revolvers, is a notably powerful cartridge. Its substantial recoil and muzzle energy in revolvers can be intimidating for some shooters, particularly those with limited experience.
.30 carbine	Carbine cartridge	Classic target rifle shooting	Designed for the US M1 carbine. It can still be encountered in UK spec M1 carbines and some AR rifles.
.45ACP	Pistol & carbine cartridge	Classic target rifle shooting	Following the restrictions on most handguns in Great Britain, its use is limited. It may still be encountered in carbines, including De Lisle-type carbines.

Shotguns - Game Shooting and Pest Control

What is a Section 1 Shotgun?

Most shotguns are Section 2 firearms, certificated under a Shotgun Certificate (SGC). However, certain shotguns fall under **Section 1 of the Firearms Act 1968** and require a **Firearm Certificate (FAC)** instead.

A shotgun is classified as Section 1 if it has any of the following characteristics:

- A non-detachable magazine capable of holding more than two cartridges.
- A pump-action or semi-automatic mechanism with a magazine capable of holding more than two cartridges.
- Any other smooth-bore gun that does not fall within the statutory Section 2 shotgun definition, subject to any other applicable provision of the Firearms Acts.

In practice, the vast majority of shotguns encountered in licensing work (12 bore, 20 bore, over-and-under, side-by-side, semi-automatic with a non-detachable magazine incapable of holding more than two cartridges) are Section 2 and require a Shotgun Certificate. Where a shotgun does not meet the Section 2 criteria, it must be held on a Firearm Certificate and conditions applied accordingly.

Shotguns within the statutory Section 2 definition require a Shotgun Certificate. They generally fire multiple pellets ('shot') rather than a single bullet. Bore refers to barrel diameter; confusingly, a smaller number means a bigger bore (12 bore is larger than 20 bore).

SHOTGUNS — DETAIL

Bore / Gauge	What it is	Typical Use	Common Quarry	Key Points
12 bore	The most common shotgun in the UK	Game shooting, rough shooting, clay shooting, pest control	Pheasant, partridge, duck, woodpigeon, rabbits, clay targets	Versatile, different cartridge loads suit different jobs. Most shoots and game farms assume 12 bore.
20 bore	Lighter, lower recoil than 12 bore	Upland and woodland game shooting	Pheasant, partridge, rabbits, clay targets	Popular with younger, smaller or lighter framed shooters. Less range and shot pattern than 12 bore.
.410 bore	Smallest common shotgun	Close-range pest control	Rabbits, small pest birds	Very limited range and pattern. Not suitable for driven game shooting. Sometimes used for training.

Why Might Someone Have More Than One Rifle Chambered For The Same Cartridge?

This is a very common question for new FEOs. The answer is that firearms are tools, and like any tool, different setups suit different jobs - even when the cartridge is the same. Genuine reasons include:

Different Sighting Systems - One rifle may have a standard telescopic sight for daytime use. Another may be fitted with night vision or thermal optics for lamping/foxing at night - these are often non-removable or zeroed specifically for that telescope.

Different Weights and Handling - A lighter, compact rifle is easier to carry over rough or hilly ground (hill stalking, woodland). A heavier rifle may be steadier for shots at longer distances from a high seat.

Sound Moderator - One rifle may be configured with a sound moderator to reduce noise disturbance. Another may be kept in standard configuration for when the moderator is not appropriate.

Backup or Spare - If one rifle is sent for repair or service, having a spare chambered for the same cartridge means the person can continue their lawful activity (e.g. a professional stalker maintaining pest control commitments).

Different Land or Quarry - A person may shoot on several different pieces of land with different distances, terrain and backstop arrangements, and prefer dedicated setups for each.

> Each case must be considered on its merits. There is no rule that says a person can only hold one rifle per calibre — but the applicant should be able to give a clear and credible reason. Record the reason given.

Common Scenarios

COMMON SCENARIOS		
Situation	**What You Might See**	**What to Consider**
Person applies for .22 LR for rabbits on farmland	Very common, straightforward	Low power, short range. Good reason, no concerns in most cases.
Person applies for .243 for roe deer stalking	Standard deer stalking cartridge meets legal minimum	Establish the proposed use and actual circumstances. Any concern about competence or public safety should be evidenced and considered in relation to the individual, rather than inferred automatically from the land, rifle or cartridge.
Person wants a second .308 already has one	Common and legitimate	Ask why they need two. Likely: night vision, lighter rifle, backup for professional use. Record the reason given.
Person wants .223 to shoot roe deer	This would be unlawful for roe in England and Wales	.223 does not meet the legal minimum for roe, fallow, red or sika. Can only be used for muntjac and CWD. Flag this clearly.
Person wants 12 bore and also a .243	Very common combination	Shotgun for game days; rifle for deer or fox work. Entirely normal: two different tools for two different jobs.

Person applies for .308 for foxing	Less common but not unreasonable	Foxing can constitute good reason for a lawful centrefire cartridge. Establish the stated purpose and any evidenced public-safety concern; do not apply a separate test of whether a lower-powered cartridge would be sufficient.
Night vision or thermal sight mentioned	Common for fox or rabbit control at night	A second rifle in same calibre may be justified if sights are fixed to that rifle. Ask about shooting arrangements.
Person applies for .300 Win Mag for UK deer stalking	Less common, but lawful where good reason is established	Establish the stated lawful purpose and relevant circumstances. Do not require comparison with a lower-powered cartridge or treat routine lawful deer use as presumptively inappropriate. Record the reason given.
Person applies for .300 Win Mag for overseas hunting	Common and well-supported reason	Overseas use may involve larger quarry or different conditions. Establish the applicant's good reason and relevant circumstances. Existing ownership of .308/.30-06 or another cartridge should not create a separate necessity test for the requested firearm.

Matters Which May Require Further Enquiry

Matter for Enquiry	What the Concern Is	Relevant Consideration
Lawful cartridge – circumstances require enquiry	Identify the specific evidenced concern rather than presuming risk from cartridge choice	No single factor listed here is an automatic ground for refusal; apply the statutory test and Home Office guidance to the individual facts.
Actual shooting circumstances	Consider terrain, backstop, direction of fire and proposed use; avoid blanket land/cartridge classifications	Public safety is the overriding consideration
Insufficient backstops	Risk of over-travel	Holistic assessment of land and risk required
Proximity of public / dwellings	Third-party risk	Holistic assessment of land and risk required. Any doubt resolved in favour of public safety
Competence or judgement concern	If competence is genuinely in issue, identify the evidence and assess the individual circumstances	Fitness includes judgement and experience
Handling concern supported by evidence	Accuracy and humane dispatch	Temperament and control are relevant
Alternative equipment or cartridge suggested	A lawful applicant is not required to choose the police-preferred or least powerful adequate cartridge	Decision must be reasonable and proportionate
Intended quarry unclear	No good reason	No automatic entitlement to firearms or cartridges
Location or third-party risk requiring enquiry	Assess the actual circumstances and evidenced risk; location alone is not determinative	Public safety outweighs private convenience
Night-shooting arrangements requiring enquiry	Identification and safety	Consider the actual arrangements, identification, backstop and individual competence
Different shooting locations or permissions	Assess each proposed use on its facts; avoid treating land as intrinsically safe or unsafe for a cartridge	Land, cartridge and use must be considered together

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a calibre? - In simple terms, calibre is the commonly used description for a cartridge or firearm. Whilst often associated with barrel diameter, the term can mean different things in different contexts. From a firearms licensing perspective, the important consideration is the cartridge designation for which the firearm is chambered and authorised on the certificate.

Why are some cartridges described differently even though they appear similar? - There is no universal naming system for cartridges. Some cartridge names are based on bullet diameter, others on historical conventions, marketing decisions or cartridge design characteristics. As a result, cartridges with similar names may perform very differently in practice.

Is a larger calibre always more powerful? - No. Calibre alone does not determine the capability of a firearm. Factors such as cartridge design, projectile weight and design, and muzzle velocity all influence performance. Two firearms of a similar calibre can produce significantly different levels of muzzle energy.

Why does this guide refer to muzzle energy? - Muzzle energy provides a useful indication of the power delivered by a firearm and can assist in understanding capability, suitability and risk. For many applications, understanding muzzle energy can be more informative than simply knowing the cartridge ~~calibre~~ designation.

Does a small calibre mean a firearm presents less risk? - Not necessarily. All firearms are capable of causing serious harm. Whilst smaller calibres may produce lower muzzle energy than larger calibres, they still require the same standards of safe handling, secure storage and responsible use.

Why are air rifles and rimfire rifles included if they are considered lower powered? - Many certificate holders begin their shooting activities using air rifles or rimfire rifles, and these firearms are commonly encountered during licensing enquiries. Understanding their capabilities helps provide context when assessing suitability, risk and intended use.

Can rimfire rifles be used for deer? - As a general rule, deer legislation specifies minimum calibre and muzzle energy requirements for the lawful taking of deer. However, there are limited and exceptional circumstances where a seriously injured deer may require humane dispatch using the most appropriate means available at the time. Such situations should not be confused with routine deer management or sporting shooting.

What should an FEO focus on when discussing a firearm or cartridge with an applicant? - Establish the applicant's lawful purpose and good reason and identify any evidenced public-safety concern. Consider the actual circumstances, including terrain, backstop, direction of fire and intended use. Competence and responsible judgement are person-based matters; avoid treating a particular firearm, cartridge or piece of land as intrinsically safe or unsafe.

Does this guide tell me which calibre or cartridge should be granted? - No. The guide is intended as an educational reference and discussion aid. It does not prescribe licensing outcomes and should not be used as a substitute for legislation, Home Office guidance, APP guidance or professional judgement plus reference to suitable shooting bodies.

Should uncommon or unusual cartridges automatically cause concern? - No. Many certificate holders legitimately own cartridges that are less frequently encountered. The key considerations are lawful purpose, good reason and any evidenced public-safety concern. Unfamiliarity or greater muzzle energy should not, by themselves, create a presumption against grant or an additional requirement to prove that a lower-powered cartridge would not suffice.

Can a rifle held principally for stalking, pest control or overseas hunting also be used for target shooting? - Yes. Lawful uses are not necessarily mutually exclusive. A rifle principally used for stalking, pest control, overseas hunting or another lawful purpose may also legitimately be used for target shooting on an appropriate range and for routine zeroing, ammunition testing and, where applicable, hand-load development. The fact that a rifle or cartridge has another principal purpose should not create an adverse presumption about legitimate range use.

Glossary of Terms

The glossary focuses on terms that an FEO, decision maker, or licensing administrator may encounter when using this guide. The aim is not to create ballistic experts, but to provide sufficient understanding to support licensing conversations and professional judgement.

Term	Suggested Definition
Air Rifle	A firearm that uses compressed air or gas to propel a projectile rather than a cartridge containing propellant
Backstop	A natural or constructed feature capable of safely stopping a projectile.
Bullet Weight	The weight of a projectile, usually measured in grains (gr). Bullet weight can influence performance and muzzle energy.
Calibre	Principally a dimensional description of bore or projectile diameter. It should not be used as a synonym for a complete cartridge designation.

Term	Suggested Definition
Cartridge	A complete round of ammunition, comprising the cartridge case, primer, propellant and projectile (or projectiles). In licensing records, the exact cartridge designation should be used where relevant.
Cartridge Designation	The formal description assigned to a cartridge (for example, .243 Winchester or 6.5 Creedmoor). A rifle is chambered for a particular cartridge; chambering identifies the ammunition for which the firearm is designed.
Centrefire	A cartridge that contains a separate primer located in the centre of the cartridge base. Most larger sporting and deer-stalking cartridges are centrefire.
Chamber / Chambering	The chamber is the part of a firearm designed to accept a particular cartridge. A rifle should be described as chambered for that cartridge. Chambering is fundamental to distinguishing cartridges with similar calibre descriptions.
CIP	The Permanent International Commission for the Proof of Small Arms. An international organisation responsible for standards relating to cartridges, chambers and proof testing.
Deer Legal	A term commonly used to indicate that a cartridge/loading meets the minimum statutory requirements for taking deer in the relevant jurisdiction.
Deer Stalking	The lawful shooting of deer for management, conservation or sporting purposes.
Effective Range	The distance at which a firearm and ammunition combination can be expected to achieve its intended purpose reliably and safely.
FAC Air Rifle	An air rifle producing energy above the statutory limit requiring certification. Such rifles can be significantly more powerful than standard air rifles.
Foot-Pound (ft/lb) and Joules	Units of measurement used to express muzzle energy. The higher the number, the greater the energy produced by the projectile.
Good Reason	The lawful purpose demonstrated by an applicant for possessing a firearm or ammunition, such as pest control, deer management, target shooting or collecting.
Humane Dispatch	The act of humanely killing a seriously injured animal to prevent unnecessary suffering.
Land Suitability	Consideration of the actual shooting circumstances, including terrain, backstop, direction of fire, proximity to people and intended use. Land should not be treated as intrinsically “safe” or “unsafe” for a particular cartridge; safe use depends materially on the individual’s competence and judgement.
Maximum Range	The furthest theoretical distance a projectile may travel if discharged under optimum conditions.
Muzzle Energy	The amount of energy produced by a projectile as it leaves the barrel, usually measured in foot-pounds (ft/lbs). Muzzle energy provides an indication of a firearm's power and capability.
Muzzle Velocity	The speed at which a projectile leaves the barrel, usually measured in feet per second (fps) or metres per second (m/s).
Professional Judgement	The ability to assess all available information, identify and evaluate risk, and make a reasoned and proportionate decision based on the individual circumstances of a case.
Projectile	The item fired from a firearm, commonly referred to as a bullet.
Proof House	A facility authorised to test and certify firearms and ammunition in accordance with recognised CIP standards.
Public Safety and the Peace	The overarching consideration that firearms should not be possessed in circumstances that present an unacceptable risk to public safety or public confidence.
Quarry Species	The animal species being lawfully hunted or controlled.
Ricochet	A projectile that changes direction after striking a surface and continues travelling.
Rimfire	A cartridge in which the primer compound is contained within the rim of the cartridge case. Common examples include .22 Long Rifle and .17 HMR.
Risk Assessment	The process of identifying, analysing and evaluating potential risks associated with the possession or use of firearms.
Sub-12 ft/lb Air Rifle	An air rifle that falls below the statutory threshold requiring certification in England and Wales.
Target Shooting	The use of a firearm for recreational or competitive shooting at approved targets.
Vermin Control	The lawful management of species regarded as pests or causing damage.

About the College

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Working together with everyone in policing, we share the skills and knowledge officers and staff need to prevent crime and keep people safe.

We set the standards in policing to build and preserve public trust and we help those in policing develop the expertise needed to meet the demands of today and prepare for the challenges of the future.

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About the British Shooting Sports Council

The British Shooting Sports Council (BSSC) is the umbrella body representing the principal shooting organisations in the United Kingdom, and has 16 members, together representing more than 250,000 licence holders.

It provides a collective voice for the shooting sports and brings together expertise from across target shooting, game shooting, deer management, pest control, firearms collecting and the firearms trade.

It works with government, the police and other public bodies to support proportionate, evidence-based firearms policy and effective firearms licensing, with public safety at its heart.

bssc.org.uk