

The Bullet is a single projectile fired from a firearm. They are crafted in varying weights (measured in grains). Typically the larger the game, the heavier the bullet.

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The Crimp is the portion of a cartridge case that is bent inward to hold the bullet in place.

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The Primer is the collective term for the chemical primer compound, cup and anvil which, when struck, ignites the powder charge.

The Shoulder is the section of the case that tapers down to the smaller diameter of the bullet.

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The Neck is the section of the case where the bullet is seated.

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The Extractor Groove -- is a small groove cut in the case to enable the extractor to grab the shell and eject it. Not all Centerfire cases have extractor grooves, some use the Rim to extract.

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The Rim -- is the flanged portion at the end of the cartridge. On certain cartridges the Rim is larger in diameter than the case.

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Smokeless Powder is the general term for any propellant used in firearms, which burns upon ignition. The two major types are black powder, which is a physical mixture of charcoal, sulfur and saltpeter, and smokeless powder, which is a nitrated chemical compound in granular form.

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The Head -- is the end of the cartridge at which primer is inserted.

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Jacket -- The envelope of brass or copper enclosing the lead core of a compound bullet.

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Cartridge Designation & Calibers

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The cartridge designation is the term used to designate the specific cartridge for which a firearm is chambered. The cartridge designation is marked on the head of the cartridge (also referred to as the Head Stamp) cartridge designations are generally named after the company that first manufactured the cartridge. A 7mm-08 Remington cartridge is so named because Remington developed the cartridge, though you will find many other companies also make this cartridge.

The caliber of rifle is the inside diameter of the barrel before the rifling has been cut. It is the distance between the lands. Many different cartridges are the same caliber. For example, a 308 Win, 30-06 Springfield, and a 300 Remington Ultra Mag are all .308 calibers or .308 bore diameter. Each of these .308 caliber cartridges will have different case dimensions, and will only fit in a firearm chambered for the specific cartridge designations. That is why you should always match the cartridge designation to the marking on the firearms barrel.

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Caliber is usually expressed in hundredths of an inch or in millimeters. For example, a 30 caliber (What can we use for a centerfire rifle here?) barrel measures 30/100 of an inch in diameter. Centerfire rifles come in a large variety of calibers (cartridge sizes) generally from .17 to .458 caliber, but have been made up to .700 caliber.

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