

.44 SPECIAL

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. Win 200 gr Silver Tip	89	67	75
2. Fed 200 gr lead HP	62	45	73
3. Win 246 gr lead solid	88	58	66
4. Rem 240 gr SWC	23	15	65

A very pleasant load to shoot, the .44 Special has seen some attention from the ammunition manufacturers in an attempt to offer increased performance.

.44 MAGNUM

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. Win 210 gr JHP	64	58	91
2. Fed 180 gr JHP	44	39	89
3. Rem 240 gr JHP	41	36	88
4. Win 240 gr JHP	49	38	86
5. Win 240 gr SWC	50	41	82
6. Fed 240 gr JHP	63	51	81
7. Rem 240 gr mv*	55	42	76

*medium velocity

Once touted as the world's most powerful handgun caliber, this caliber is a rather poor choice to use against human attackers. The bullets are designed for deep penetration and much of the energy available to this load is wasted on two-legged targets.

.357 MAGNUM

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. Federal 125 gr JHP	604	578	96
2. Remington 125 gr JHP	316	300	95
3. CCI 125 gr JHP	169	154	91
4. Fed 110 gr JHP	239	214	90
5. Remington 110 gr JHP	67	59	88
6. Winchester 125 gr JHP	111	97	87
7. Win 145 gr Silver Tip	94	81	86
8. Rem 125 gr JHP-mv*	29	24	83
9. Remington 158 gr JHP	45	37	82
10. Fed 158 gr Nyclad HP	49	40	82
11. Win 158 gr SWC	117	85	73

*medium velocity

This caliber was originally used by law enforcement as a replacement for the .38 Special. Along with the revolvers that fire it, it has been largely replaced by calibers shot by semi-automatic pistols such as 9 mm Luger (9x19), .40 S&W, or .45 ACP. While the .357 Magnum produces excellent stopping power it does so with heavy muzzle flash and recoil.

.38 SPECIAL, 2" BARREL

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. Winchester lead 158 gr HP+P	119	80	67
2. Federal lead HP+P 158 gr	144	97	67
3. Remington 125 gr JHP +P	104	70	67
4. Rem 158 gr lead HP+P	92	62	67
5. Federal 125 gr JHP +P	111	72	65
6. CCI 125 gr JHP +P	62	40	65
7. Win 125 gr JHP +P	70	43	61
8. Fed Nyclad 125 gr HP+P	36	22	61
9. Fed 158 gr lead SWC	204	101	50
10. Fed 158 gr lead solid	381	185	49

This is a popular choice of civilians who carry a concealed gun, and by police for "second gun" and off-duty purposes. This load also approaches acceptable levels of stopping power in its better offerings.

.38 SPECIAL, 4" BARREL

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. Cor Bon 115 gr JHP +P*	29	24	83
2. Winchester 110 gr JHP+ P+	36	30	83
3. Win 158 gr lead HP+P	422	334	79
4. Fed 158 gr lead HP +P	249	189	76
5. Remington 125 gr JHP +P	144	104	72
6. Federal 125 gr JHP +P	239	171	72
7. Rem 158 gr lead HP +P	156	109	70
8. CCI 125 gr JHP +P	79	56	70
9. Fed 158 gr lead SWC	312	163	52
10. Fed 158 gr round nose	504	259	51

*no longer made

For decades this firearm was "the" police duty gun. Since replaced by the semiautomatic pistol in most departments, it is still a reliable, "no frills" choice.

.45 ACP

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. Fed 230 gr Hydra Shok	139	133	96
2. Rem 185 gr Golden Sabre	66	63	95
3. Rem 185 gr JHP +P	68	63	93
4. Cor Bon 185 gr JHP	12	11	92
5. CCI 230 gr Gold Dot	32	29	91
6. Fed 185 gr JHP	114	100	88
7. CCI 200 gr JHP	139	123	88
8. Win 185 gr Silver Tip	101	84	83
9. Win 230 gr Black Talon	67	54	81
10. Rem 230 gr FMJ	145	90	62
11. Win 230 gr FMJ	201	124	62
12. Fed 230 gr FMJ	198	123	62

There is no other handgun caliber that generates as much emotion as this one. People either love it or hate it and facts rarely sway such cherished beliefs.

.22 LONG RIFLE

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. CCI Stinger 32 gr	429	159	37
2. Federal HP 38 gr	689	199	29
3. Winchester HP 37 gr	601	185	30
4. Remington HP 36 gr	915	262	29
5. Winchester solid 40 gr	1,539	335	22

The results of shootings with this caliber are rather dismal. They are presented here so that those who are tempted to rely exclusively on this caliber for self defense will not.

.25 ACP

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. Win expanding pt 45 gr	146	38	26
2. Winchester FMJ 50 gr	2,599	575	22
3. Federal FMJ 50 gr	1,922	455	23
4. Remington FMJ 50 gr	2,003	440	22

I'm even less a fan of this caliber than I am of the .22 long rifle. People who rely exclusively on handguns in this caliber for self-defense are basically unarmed.

CCI=CCI, HP=hollow-point, JHP=jacketed hollow-point, FMJ=full metal jacket, HP=hollow-point, JHP=jacketed hollow-point, SWC=semi-wadcutter.

9X19 MM

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. Federal 115 gr JHP+P+	167	153	92
2. Cor Bon 115 gr JHP +P	35	32	91
3. Winchester 115 gr JHP +P+	139	126	91
4. Remington 115 gr JHP +P+	74	67	91
5. Fed 124 gr HS +P+	85	75	88
6. Fed 124 gr Nyclud HP	265	222	84
7. Win 115 gr Silver Tip	365	299	82
8. Fed 115 gr JHP	263	216	82
9. Fed 124 gr Hydra Shok	129	106	81
10. Remington 115 gr JHP	221	180	81
11. CCI 115 gr JHP	149	121	81
12. Cor Bon 147 gr JHP	10	8	80
13. Fed 147 gr Hydra Shok	461	371	80
14. Fed 147 gr JHP	34	27	79
15. Win 147 gr JHP	291	216	74
16. Winchester 116gr FMJ	312	201	64

This was the first semi-automatic caliber to make serious inroads into law enforcement use in the U.S. While some experts have derided the performance of the 115 grain +P+ loads, the table shows this load has worked very well on the street.

.45 COLT

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. Fed 225 gr lead HP	73	57	78
2. Win 225 gr Silver Tip	62	45	73
3. Win 225 gr lead solid	72	50	69
4. Rem 255 gr lead solid	24	15	63

Originally a black powder cartridge, this load could, but hasn't, been changed to increase its performance levels.

.32 ACP

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. Winchester Silver Tip 60 gr	113	75	66
2. Winchester FMJ 71 gr	182	90	49

Frankly, the results produced by the Winchester Silver Tip hollow point came as a total surprise to me. I had expected it to produce slight if any improvement over the full metal jacketed loads in this caliber.

.380 ACP

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. Federal Hydra Shok 90 gr	83	59	71
2. Cor Bon JHP 90 gr	23	16	70
3. Federal JHP 90 gr	62	43	69
4. Winchester Silver Tip 85 gr	85	52	61
5. Remington JHP 88 gr	58	33	57
6. CCI JHP 88 gr	63	36	57
7. Federal FMJ 95 gr	163	83	51

This caliber has proved to be a very popular choice for self defense purposes. It is offered in several small pistols of excellent quality and the better loads approach acceptable performance levels.

.40 S&W

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. Fed 155 gr Hydra Shok	72	69	96
2. Rem 165 gr Golden Sabre	68	64	94
3. CCI 155 gr Gold Dot	39	37	94
4. Federal 155 gr JHP	34	32	94
5. Cor Bon 150 gr JHP	38	34	93
6. Cor Bon 135 gr JHP	25	23	92
7. Win 155 gr Silver Tip	29	26	90
8. Rem 155 gr JHP	25	22	88
9. Fed 180 gr Hydra Shok	58	51	88
10. PMC 155 gr Star Fire	33	29	88
11. CCI 180 gr Gold Dot	45	39	87
12. Cor Bon 180 gr JHP	22	19	86
13. Rem 180 gr Golden Sabre	48	41	85
14. PMC 180 gr Star Fire	29	24	83
15. Black Hills 180 gr JHP	34	28	82
16. Fed 180 gr JHP	88	72	82
17. Winchester 180 gr JHP	107	88	82
18. Win 180 gr Black Talon	69	56	81
19. Win 180 gr FMJ	42	30	71

Currently the hot caliber in pistols carried for self-defense and law enforcement, I see it essentially as a bridge caliber. A gun chambered for .40 S&W generally carries more cartridges than one chambered for .45 ACP, and the .40 S&W bullet itself is larger than that of the 9 mm Luger (9x19).

.41 MAGNUM

LOAD	TOTAL	STOPS	%
1. Win 170 gr Silver Tip	58	52	90
2. Win 210 gr JHP	37	30	81
3. Rem 210 gr JSP	31	25	81
4. Rem 210 gr SWC	57	43	75
5. Win 210 gr SWC	43	32	74

Shortly after graduating from the police academy, I replaced my department issue .38 Special revolver with a Smith & Wesson model 58 .41 Magnum revolver. Loaded with the 210 grain lead semi wadcutter police load, I thought I had the ultimate police cartridge. I was wrong.