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What is the most powerful rimfire cartridge

2. The .22 Long Rifle: The .22 long Rifle (usually referred to as '.22LR') was developed by the J. Stevens Arms & Tool Company in 1887 by combining the case of the .22 Long with the 40 grain bullet of the .22 Extra Long. Widely used as a training and hunting round, the .22LR is one of the commonest cartridges and is used all over the world. Most weapon types are available chambered for .22LR; pistols, revolvers, rifles and semi-automatic rifles. The cartridges are available in four velocity bands for different uses:Subsonic (usually target or practise rounds): below 1,100 feet per second.Standard-velocity (target and hunting rounds): 1,120-1,135 feet per second.High-velocity (hunting rounds): 1200-1310 feet per second.Hyper-velocity (hunting rounds): over 1,400 feet per second.In the UK, most people tend to use subsonic ammunition. As supersonic bullets drop below the speed of sound, they often become unstable and thus less accurate. Subs don't suffer this problem and are usually more accurate. The lack of supersonic crack also means that with a silencer, .22LR rounds are almost silent which is ideal in a hunting situation. As with Shorts, loads vary considerably but .22LR cartridges typically produce 100-140 foot pounds energy. Page 2 1. M02 - Armour-Piercing-Explosive-Incendiary: This cartridge is used against hardened targets such as bunkers, for suppressive fire against lightly armoured vehicles and ground and aerial threat suppression. It is generally fired either from aircraft-mounted guns or ground based anti-aircraft guns. 2. M1 Ball, High Pressure, Test: Used in all .50 BMG calibre weapons and identified by the silver-coloured timed case, this ammunition is loaded to a higher pressure than standard rounds and is used as a proof round when a weapon has been manufactured or repaired. 3. M1 Incendiary: Used by M2 and M85 machine guns, the M1 Incendiary is an incendiary round generally used against aircraft. 4. M1 Tracer: Used by M2 and M85 machine guns, use of M1 Tracer is limited to the Continental United States and is used in training where the path of the bullet must be observed. 5. M2 Ball: Used by M2 and M85 machine guns, M2 Ball rounds are designed for use against personnel and unarmoured targets. Unlike most other ball ammunition, .50BMG ball generally has a soft, mild steel main core with a small lead infill inside the tip of the bullet. This softer lead core smears on contact with a target which helps stabilise the round allowing the steel core to penetrate. It is a boat tail bullet design with the base of the round sealed with lead. Milsurp M2 ball is often used by civilian target shooters. 6. M2 Armour-Piercing: Used by M2 and M85 machine guns, M2 Armour-Piercing rounds are generally used on aircraft, vehicles, concrete shelters and lightly armoured or non-armoured targets.Armour penetration:500 meters: 0.75 in (19 mm)1,200 meters: 0.39 in (10 mm) 7. M8 Armour-Piercing-Incendiary: Used by M2 and M85 machine guns and the M107 Long Range Sniper Rifle, this round is used against lightly armoured targets and targets that may be flammable. 8. M10 Tracer: Used by M2 and M85 machine guns, this round is used where the bullet's trajectory must be visible, it ignites at approximately 100 yards (91 metres) and traces out to 1,600 yards (1,463 metres).9. M17 Tracer: Used by M2 and M85 machine guns, the M107 Long Range Sniper Rifle and the Barrett M82 Special Application Scoped Rifle, this round is used where the bullet's trajectory must be visible, it traces out to 2,679 yards (2,450 metres). This ammunition is often used for long range zeroing purposes by civilian target shooters. 10. M20 Armour-Piercing-Incendiary-Tracer: Used by M2 and M85 machine guns, the M107 Long Range Sniper Rifle and the Barrett M82 Special Application Scoped Rifle, this round is used against lightly armoured or non-armoured targets that may prove flammable. In addition, the tracer element allows the trajectory of the bullet to be observed. The tracer ignites at around 328 yards (300 metres) and burns with increasing brightness out to 1,914 yards (1,750 metres).Armour penetration:500 meters: 0.83 in (21 mm)1,200 meters: 0.43 in (11 mm) 11. M23 Incendiary: Used by M2 and M85 machine guns, M23 incendiary rounds are designed for use against flammable targets and are capable of igniting material at 175 yards (160 metres). 12. M903 Saboted Light Armour Penetrator (SLAP): Used only by the M2 machine gun, the M903 SLAP round consists of a .30 calibre tungsten penetrator weighing about half a standard ball bullet enclosed within a yellow plastic .50 calibre sabot. Launched at a speed of nearly 4,000 feet per second, the plastic sabot is quickly shed and the tungsten penetrator has a very flat trajectory and 2 to 3 times the armour-penetrating power of any other. .50 cal round. It is able to pierce .75 inch of High Hard Armour at 1,640 yards (1,500 metres). 13. M962 Saboted Light Armour Penetrator - Tracer: A development of the M903 SLAP round, the M962 has tracing abilities allowing the bullets trajectory to be observed. 14. M1022 Long Range Sniper: Ideal for use in all bolt-action and semi-automatic weapons, the M1022 is of standard ball construction with an olive green bullet coating. It is highly accurate at long range and is used for sniper training and for targets that require no armour-piercing or incendiary effect. Like M2 Ball, this ammunition is often available to civilian shooters for target shooting. 15. Mk211 Mod 0 Raufoss: Very popular in the Barrett M82 Special Application Scoped Rifle, the Raufoss round consists of a tungsten penetrator surrounded by zirconium powder to give incendiary effect and tipped with RDX or PETN high explosive and additional incendiary compound. It is a good general purpose round effective against armour, vehicles and reinforced targets and is the most commonly used ammunition by US Marine Corps snipers. 16. MK257 Armour Piercing Incendiary Dim Tracer: Used in the M2, M3 and M85 machine guns, the MK257 has a hardened steel core and a special low intensity tracer that is only visible with night vision equipment to reduce the chance of the firer being spotted at night. The BeginningIt was a warm October afternoon, and my Dad was sitting maybe 10 or 12 yards away, on a smooth oak stump, looking up. The subtle, furtive motion of his index finger directed me to look up into the big oak we were watching, and I could see the flicking tail of the gray squirrel. Within seconds, a fuzzy head appeared, replete with yellowing chompers, and twitching whiskers. The younger me slowly raised the rifle, aligning the iron sights just as Ol' Grumpy Pants had so often instructed, and squeezed, and squeezed, and jerked, the trigger. The resulting report and the sound of something landing in the freshly fallen leaves were music to my ears, for something monumental had just happened: I became a hunter.I still have that .22 LR; it is a 1985-vintage Ruger Model 77/22, and I use it often, as both a training tool and a hunting rifle. There's no denying the validity of the .22 Long Rifle cartridge, but it isn't the only rimfire cartridge out there. As matter of fact, there are many rimfire cartridges, and it may warrant owning several. Let's take a look at some of the best—and not so obvious—rimfires ever made.The .22-caliber RimfiresThe .22 Long Rifle is, invariably, the most popular of the rimfire cartridges, for good reasons we'll get into momentarily. However, it wasn't the first, and it isn't alone. It has many siblings, like the BB cap and CB cap, but among the most popular are a couple of older brothers, and a younger brother.The .22 ShortBeing the smallest of the bunch, the .22 Short has been with us for 160 years. Originally a black powder cartridge, the .22 Short has survived the transition to smokeless powder and is still a fun cartridge to shoot. Using a 29-grain bullet at just over 710 fps, the Short is an effective tool for small game like squirrels and rabbits at close ranges, say within 50 yards or so. Many "parlor" guns were chambered for the .22 Short, and while it's become a bit of a novelty, if you want to hunt at close ranges, the .22 Short will present a fun challenge.The .22 LongA bit longer and just a bit younger, the .22 Long was an improvement over the .22 Short, using 20 percent more powder and a 45-grain bullet. CCI still offers ammo on, using a 29-grain bullet at a muzzle velocity of 1,215 fps. Like the .22 Short, it has become a rarity, but it's still a fun cartridge to shoot. You'll see many older rimfire rifles marked as being capable of handling .22 Short, .22 Long and .22 Long Rifle. If you have one and want to give the .22 Long a whirl, it'll work, but I think you'll find the search for ammo more trouble than it's worth, considering the performance of the .22 Long Rifle.The .22 Long RifleFew cartridges can claim the success that the .22 Long Rifle has achieved. I don't know any hunter that doesn't have at least one .22 LR in their cabinet; it is that popular. It dates back to 1887—like the others, it started off fueled by black powder—and has been offered in a multitude of action styles, including single-shots, pumps, bolt guns and autoloaders. The standard loading is a 40-grain bullet at a muzzle velocity of 1,240 fps or so, depending on the manufacturer. There are many hyper-velocity loads, some using lighter bullets, some a hotter charge, which will extend the range of your .22 Long Rifle.The CCI Stinger, using a light bullet and a slightly elongated case, was among the first, and remains a solid choice. The Remington Yellow Jacket and Viper, and Browning BPR ammo will also give higher-than-normal velocities. On the other end of the spectrum, there are many good subsonic loads for those who like to keep things as quiet as possible. Norma Sub-Sonic .22 and CCI's Quiet-22 are good choices for quieter loads for hunting or for training a new shooter. Please be aware that many of the autoloading rifles and pistols require a certain muzzle velocity, or more specifically, an energy level, to cycle the action.There are all kinds of projectiles available for the "twenty-two," as it's known here, or the "two-two," as it's known across the pond, from waxed lead bullets to plated hollowpoints to shotshells to fragmenting bullets. If you think about it, the .22 Long Rifle might just be the most versatile cartridge ever invented.The .22 Winchester Magnum RimfireDeveloped in 1959, the ".22 Mag," is definitely a different sort of rimfire cartridge, delivering a 40-grain bullet at 1,900 fps or more. This combination makes for a 150-yard gun, without problem, and it is fully capable of taking coyotes and foxes. Like the .22 LR, there are many projectile types available, from the full metal-jacketed slugs, to frangible hollowpoints to polymer tipped bullets—as used in the CCI .22 Mag. V-Max load, built around the 30-grain Hornady bullet. If you want a .22 rimfire with a bit more reach than the LR, look no further than the .22 WMR. It can be a bit harsh on squirrels and rabbits, but it's a better choice for larger furbearers and distant varmints.The .17-caliber RimfiresThe .17 HMRShortly after the turn of the 21st century, Hornady announced the first new rimfire cartridge since the .22 WMR: the .17 Hornady Magnum Rimfire (HMR). Using the .22 WMR case necked down to hold .172-inch bullets, the new cartridge would push a 17-grain bullet at 2,550 fps, resulting in a flat-shooting small game rimfire cartridge. While it is susceptible to wind drift, under good conditions this cartridge can make solid hits out to 200 yards, and sometimes more. The light-for-caliber frangible bullet does less damage to furbearers, yet will create the "red mist" when used on prairie dogs and woodchucks. Recoil is virtually non-existent, and the .17 HMR can be very accurate. It has caught on, and it makes a good choice for those who prefer rimfire cartridges to the bigger cases of the .17 centerfires.The .17 Mach 2Two years later, Hornady struck again, using the CCI Stinger case (just slightly longer than the standard .22 LR case) necked down to hold the same bullets as the .17 HMR. There are two bullet weights offered: a 15.5-grain bullet and the same 17-grain bullet the HMR uses. While it is a fun gun to shoot, the Mach 2 is declining in popularity. Velocities for the 15.5-grain bullet run at 2,050 fps, while the 17-grain pill is moving at 2,100 fps.The .17 Winchester Super MagnumThis may be the sleeper of the bunch, and I like this cartridge quite a lot. Winchester used a .27-caliber nail gun blank as the parent case for this little gem, and it will drive a 20-grain bullet to an even 3,000 fps. I've used this cartridge in the windy plains of South Dakota to effectively kill prairie dogs out to 300 yards, and sometimes more. Were I looking for a true, long-range rimfire rifle, I'd look no further than the .17 WSM; it's not on the heels of the .17 Hornet, and one helluva lot of fun to shoot.The OthersThere are other rimfire cartridges that have either fallen to the hands of time or a lack of following. The 5mm Remington had a brief moment in the sun, but never caught on. There are some classics, like the .44 Henry Rimfire—think Kevin Costner in "Dances With Wolves"—and a whole slew of larger caliber rimfires that were designed for both rifle and pistol. They were early developments, and while the rimfire was popular for a while, the ammunition is very difficult to come by. In our age, the rimfire cartridges are relegated to .22 or .17 caliber, but what we have is very useful. 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