

ANSI and IEC laser classification	Class 1		Class 2		Class 3		Class 4	Notes
	Class 1	Class 1M	Class 2	Class 2M	Class 3R	Class 3B	Class 4	
Sub-class								
U.S. FDA laser classification	Class I	No special FDA class	Class II	No special FDA class	Class IIIa (definition is different but results are similar)	Class IIIb	Class IV	Newer ANSI/IEC number classes are now preferred over older FDA Roman numeral classes
Human-accessible laser power (for visible light)	For visible light, emits beam less than 0.39 milliwatts, or beam of any power is inside device and is not accessible during operation.		Emits visible beam of less than 1 milliwatt.		For visible light, emits beam between 1 and 4.99 milliwatts.	For visible light, emits beam between Class 3R limit (e.g. 5 milliwatts) and 499.9 milliwatts	For visible light, emits beam of 500 milliwatts (1/2 Watt) or more	Non-visible lasers emitting infrared or ultraviolet are not included in this chart. Only visible lasers are discussed.
Caution/warning indication	No special caution/warning indication		No special caution/warning indication		CAUTION	WARNING	DANGER	
Label descriptive text		DO NOT VIEW DIRECTLY WITH OPTICAL INSTRUMENTS	DO NOT STARE INTO BEAM	DO NOT STARE INTO BEAM OR EXPOSE USERS OF TELESCOPIC OPTICS	AVOID DIRECT EYE EXPOSURE	AVOID EXPOSURE TO BEAM	AVOID EYE OR SKIN EXPOSURE TO DIRECT OR SCATTERED RADIATION	For visible-light lasers, the word "light" can be used instead of "radiation". The latter is more accurate for lasers emitting infrared and ultraviolet radiation.
EYE AND SKIN HAZARDS								
Eye hazard for intraocular exposure (having a direct or reflected beam enter the eye)	Safe, even for long-term intentional viewing. For visible light, usually applies when the laser is enclosed inside a device (ex: CD or DVD player) with no human access to laser light.	Safe for unaided eye exposure. May be hazardous if viewed with optical instruments such as binoculars or eye loupe.	Safe for unintentional exposure less than 1/4 second. Do not stare into beam.	Safe for unintentional (< 1/4 sec) unaided eye exposure. May be hazardous if viewed with optical instruments such as binoculars or eye loupe.	Unintentional or accidental exposure to direct or reflected beam has a low risk. Avoid intentional exposure to direct or reflected beam.	Eye hazard; avoid exposure to direct or reflected beam.	Severe eye hazard; avoid exposure to direct or reflected beam.	
Maximum or typical Nominal Ocular Hazard Distance (for 1 milliradian beam, exposure time less than 1/4 second)	Not an eye hazard -- does not apply	Consult an LSO as described in the Technical Note below	NOHD of 0.99 mW beam: 23 ft (7 m)	Consult an LSO as described in the Technical Note below	NOHD of 4.99 mW beam: 52 ft (16 m)	NOHD of 499.9 mW beam: 520 ft (160 m)	NOHD of 1000 mW (1 Watt) beam: 733 ft (224 m). NOHD of 10 W beam: 2320 ft (710 m)	Avoid eye exposure to a direct or reflected laser beam, within the NOHD. The closer you are to the laser, the greater the chance of hazard and the more serious the injury potential.
Eye hazard for diffuse reflection exposure (looking at the laser "dot" scattered off a surface)	None	Consult an LSO	None	Consult an LSO	None	Generally safe. Avoid staring at the laser "dot" on a surface for many seconds at close range.	To avoid injury, do not stare at laser "dot" on a surface. The light is too bright if you see a sustained afterimage, lasting more than about 10 seconds.	
Skin burn hazard	None	Consult an LSO	None	Consult an LSO	None	Can heat skin if beam is held long enough on skin at close range	Can instantly burn skin. Avoid direct exposure to the beam.	
Materials burn hazard	None	Consult an LSO	None	Consult an LSO	None	Can burn materials if beam is held long enough on substance at close range	Can instantly burn materials. Avoid direct exposure to the beam, for materials susceptible to burning.	Dark materials which absorb heat, and lightweight materials such as paper and fabric, are most easily burned by visible laser light.
VISUAL INTERFERENCE DISTANCES								
Maximum or typical flashblindness distance (FAA 100 μW/cm ² , for 1 milliradian beam, 555 nm green light)	Not applicable; beam is usually contained inside a device such as a CD or DVD player	Consult an LSO	For a 0.99 mW beam: 117 ft 36 m	Consult an LSO	For a 4.99 mW beam: 261 ft 80 m	For a 499 mW beam: 2,614 ft (1/2 mile) 797 m (0.8 km)	For a 1 Watt beam: 3,696 ft (0.7 mile) 1,127 m (1.1 km) For a 10 W beam: 11,689 ft (2.2 miles) 3,563 m (3.5 km)	Value given is for 555 nm, the green wavelength that appears brightest to the light-adapted human eye. This gives the longest hazard distance. To approximate for red laser light, divide the distance by about 5; for blue, divide by 20.
Maximum or typical glare distance (FAA 5 μW/cm ² , for 1 milliradian beam, 555 nm green light)	See above	Consult an LSO	523 ft 159 m	Consult an LSO	1,169 ft 356 m	11,689 ft (2.2 miles) 3,563 m (3.5 km)	For a 1 Watt beam: 16,531 ft (3.1 miles) 5,039 m (5 km) For a 10 W beam: 52,275 ft (9.9 miles) 15,933 m (16 km)	See above
Maximum or typical distraction distance (FAA 0.05 μW/cm ² or 50 nanowatts/cm ² , for 1 milliradian beam, 555 nm green light)	See above	Consult an LSO	5,227 ft (1 mile) 1,593 m (1.6 km)	Consult an LSO	11,689 ft (2.2 miles) 3,563 m (3.5 km)	116,890 ft (22 miles) 35,628 m (35.6 km)	For a 1 Watt beam: 165,307 ft (31 miles) 50,386 m (50 km) For a 10 W beam: 522,746 ft (99 miles) 159,333 m (160 km)	See above
Technical Notes	For a 1/4 second exposure to accessible visible-light beams, Class 1 limits are the same as Class 2, and such lasers are usually labeled as Class 2.	We are unaware of any Class 1M laser devices intended for consumer use. If you do have such a laser, consult a qualified Laser Safety Officer for more detailed analysis.	Class 2 (and 2M) only applies to visible lasers. Infrared and ultraviolet lasers cannot be Class 2 (or 2M).	We are unaware of any Class 2M laser devices intended for consumer use. If you do have such a laser, consult a qualified Laser Safety Officer for more detailed analysis.	Class 3R is either: (1) From 1 to 4.99 mW into a 7mm aperture (e.g., pupil of the eye) or (2) five times the Class 2 limit of 2.5 mW/cm ² , which works out to be 12.5 mW/cm ² . The second method is used by LaserSafetyFacts to determine NOHD.			
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