



We all want to know what the various ratings and specifications of our safety equipment mean. Here are a couple brief paragraphs as to what those acronyms and numbers translate to in real life.

SNELL FOUNDATION

Formed in 1957 as a memorial to William “Pete” Snell, who was killed in a racing accident, Snell strives to maintain and upgrade helmet standards as they test thousands of helmets each year. Helmets that meet their approval are labeled with the familiar Snell logo that includes the certification standard.

SA2005 is the current Helmet Standard for use in Competitive Automotive Sports. This standard includes tests for impact, penetration by projectiles, chemical resistance, fire resistance and ease of removal. M2005 is the current Helmet Standard for use in Motorcycling.

What does “SFI stand for?”

SFI was originally a foundation run by SEMA, the automotive aftermarket trade organization. The letters “SFI” stood for “SEMA Foundation, Inc.” Although SFI is now completely independent from SEMA, the Foundation has retained the name SFI Foundation, Inc. but the “S” no longer means SEMA.

SFI RATING AND RECERTIFICATION

In addition to driving suits, SFI maintains a quality assurance program for a wide variety of automotive aftermarket and performance products. Their expansive catalogue of SFI specifications is used by many sanctioning bodies world wide. In the following listing, the number on the left is the SFI specification number followed by the product that is covered by the spec. The recertification period is the amount of time from the manufacturer date to when a product must be returned to the original manufacturer for inspection, recertification or replacement, based upon the findings of the inspection.

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SFI Specifications / Snell Equivalent Chart
SFI Spec 31.1A = Snell SA (open-face) helmet
SFI Spec 31.2A = Snell SA (full-face) helmet
SFI Spec 41.1A = Snell M (open face) helmet
SFI Spec 41.2A = Snell M (full face) helmet

WHAT IS FIA?

The Federation International De L'Automobile (FIA) was created in 1904. One of its first tasks was to formulate restrictions to improve the safety of racing drivers and spectators. Prior to 1904, it was virtually impossible to organize international races, since there were no common regulations. The most influential automobile clubs of the time therefore decided to create an international organization which would draw up common regulations, applicable to all international races.

It is difficult to compare FIA and SFI standards. For example, a major difference in driver suit ratings is that FIA has one minimum criterion, while the SFI Spec. has several different ratings of performance. However, the FIA standard for driver suits will basically correlate to an SFI rating of 3.2A/5.