



# HOW TO USE & CARE FOR YOUR BODY ARMOUR

The use and care of your body armour vest is essential to maintaining its life throughout the warranted period of the vest. This information sheet will give you some important instructions on how to properly clean, assemble, maintain and store your vest.

To begin, it is important to understand that your vest is made up of several components:

- The front and back carrier
- The front and back armour panels

## ASSEMBLING YOUR VEST

To assemble your vest, it is **CRITICAL** that the wearer ensures the armour panels are inserted into the carrier with the **STRIKE FACE** (the side without the label) facing away from your body. The side with the label, must be facing towards your body. This is important because our panels are manufactured using a hybrid design with each layer performing a very specific task in a specific order. Improper insertion of a armour panels can result in serious injury or death.

Once you have determined the proper orientation for inserting your panels, simply insert the panels into your chosen cover.

When in place, tug gently on the bottom of the panels to ensure the cover and armour panels are fitted securely. Finally, slip the armour panel in place and close the zipper on the front and back carrier.



FRONT PANEL



BACK PANEL

## ADJUSTING YOUR VEST

Now you are ready to put your vest on. It is always best to have someone assist you the first time you adjust your vest, however, if you are adjusting your vest for the first time by yourself, start by laying the front and back of your vest on a flat surface and loosely adhere the shoulder straps.

Your vest may come with adjustable shoulder straps, adjust the length of shoulder straps that would provide you with the most comfort. Begin by, raising the vest over your head. The front panel should rest on your chest and the back panel on your back. Now, select the length of waist straps that would provide you with the most comfort. Loosely adhere the waist straps and connect the back panel to the front panel.



For a covert carrier with an interior bottom-loading plate pocket, unzip the exterior hidden zipper located at the bottom of the carrier, then reach into the inside of the carrier and locate the pocket. Insert the plate.

Next, it is important to adjust your vest in a seated position. Once seated, re-adjust the shoulder and waist straps for comfort. Remember, the vest will only protect what it covers. Therefore, it is important that you adjust the vest so that

it is not too low or too high. A basic guideline is to wear the vest one inch below the clavicle notch. In addition, a vest that is too long may be subject to heavy impact on the duty belt which can cause set wrinkles or curling when in a seated position.

Finally, ensure you have an even amount of front panel over rear panel overlap on each side of your vest. Your overlap provides you side protection. If your overlap protection is uneven, re-adjust the vest and straps to provide an even amount of protection. Remember not to wear your vest too tight as it may limit your mobility and cause unnecessary wear and tear on the ballistic panels.

Now that your vest is adjusted to your comfort level, feel free to take some time to get used to wearing the armour, if you have never worn body armour, it can feel strange to begin with. Persevere and the more you wear your armour, the more comfortable you will become in it.



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## STORING AND INSPECTING YOUR VEST

Proper storage and frequent inspection of your vest can help you maintain the life of your armor. The best way to store your vest is either on a strong hanger, or lying flat, not on an edge and NEVER bunched. Make sure it is stored clean, dry and out of direct sunlight. Do not place anything else on top of it and never store your vest in the backseat or boot of your car.

Regular inspection of your vest is also important for proper performance. Refer to your use and care guide for more details. Each component should be separated prior to cleaning. Be sure that the armour panels have been removed from your front and back carrier. To do this, simply unzip / Velcro® the access panels on the vest.



### Top Tip: What should I wear under my armour?

Your armour cover is made from specialist fabrics and is designed to maximise breathability and officer comfort. It's essential you don't wear it over heavy winter coats, and minimise the number of layers under your armour. A good quality cotton T-shirt or specialist base layer will increase your comfort or your standard Niton Tactical comfort shirt will be ample. In the cooler months, make sure any extra layers are breathable and not made from synthetic fabrics. This will ensure sweat management and maximise your comfort.

Ladies, wearing a good quality, high impact sports bra will maximise your comfort. It is essential that you NEVER wear a bra with under-wire when wearing your body armour.

## USE AND CARE



### ARMOUR PANELS

To clean the armour panels, begin by laying them on a flat surface. Take a damp cloth or sponge and gently wipe the ballistic panels to remove dirt or stains. If necessary, you may choose to use a mild detergent. DO NOT bleach, iron, tape, machine wash or tumble dry your armour panels.

### ARMOUR CARRIER / COVER

To clean your carrier, remove all armour panels, trauma inserts and plates. The preferred method of washing the front and back carrier is to hand wash, however, your carriers may also be machine washed on the gentle cycle using cold water with a mild detergent.

- DO NOT use bleach, fabric softener or scent boosters to wash your carriers.
- DO NOT dry clean your carrier.
- DO NOT use deodorizing sprays such as Febreze or Lysol – these sprays can damage or compromise the carrier material.

If carriers are machine washed with regular frequency there should not be a need for the use of these sprays. When complete, lay flat to air dry or tumble dry using the lowest temperature setting.

**Top Tip:** Use a Biological washing power when washing your armour cover. Never use fabric conditioner or in wash scent boosters, simply add a splash of white vinegar to the fabric conditioner draw for the final rinse. There are many uses for vinegar in laundry, including stain removal, odour elimination, and mould and mildew eradication. Vinegar can also be used as an alternative to commercial fabric softeners. Stain Removal: As a stain remover, vinegar effectively treats low-pH stains like coffee, tea, fruit juice, and other day to day stains.

## CONCLUSION

Remember, your vest is resistant, and not stab / spike / bullet proof. It is designed to defeat certain weapons and rounds, but it will not protect you against all threats or any area that it does not cover.

Wearing your shell carrier WITHOUT the armour panels does not provide any protection. Do not mix and match armour panels with carriers from different brands or manufacturers doing so may void the manufacturer's warranty.



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