

Smart Door Locks: ANSI Grades Explained

Grade 1, 2, or 3? The mechanical rating matters more than the "smart" features. Which goes on which door.

3

ANSI/BHMA GRADES

10×

STRIKE RESISTANCE TIERS

800K

CYCLES GRADE 1 ENDURES

Matter

2026 FUTURE-PROOF

• ANSI/BHMA grades — what they mean

FRONT DOOR

Grade 1 — Commercial

~10 strikes × 75 lbs. 800K+ cycles.
Highest torque resistance. Worth the premium for your main entry.

Grade 2 — Residential Heavy

~5 strikes × 75 lbs. 400K cycles.
Acceptable for most exteriors. Standard on landlord-spec.

Secondary Exterior

Grade 3 — Residential Basic

~6 strikes × 75 lbs (light tier). 800K cycles light. Interior doors only.

Interior Only

• Which door gets which grade

FRONT

Grade 1 preferred

Grade 2 OK if you have cameras + good lighting

Side / rear entry

Grade 2 minimum. Often the actual break-in entry point.

Garage-to-house

Grade 2. Treat as exterior — the garage is rarely secure.

Interior doors

Grade 3 fine. Office, gun-safe room, kids' rooms.

QUICK RULE

Grade 1 front · Grade 2 secondary exterior · Grade 3 interior. "Smart" features don't change the mechanical strength — a Grade 3 smart lock is still a Grade 3 lock.

DOOR FRAME MATTERS MORE THAN THE LOCK

Reinforced strike plate with 3-inch screws into framing stud. Most forced entries split the frame, not the cylinder.

CONNECTIVITY TIERS (2026)

1 Bluetooth only

Best battery (1-2 yr). No remote unless bridge.

2 Wi-Fi direct

Remote. Worst battery. Worst attack surface.

3 Z-Wave (S2)

Security ecosystem. Needs hub.

4 Matter over Thread

☆ Future-proof. Every platform.

FAILURE MODES TO PLAN FOR

1 Dead battery

Keep physical key + 9V jump terminal

2 Lost phone

Keypad backup with memorable PIN

3 Router outage

Wi-Fi locks become inert

4 Forgotten guest PINs

Periodic audit + removal

Full guide: djenterprises.ai/blog/smart-door-locks

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