



'Designed to survive life' is how Ballistic describe their the rough, tough HC Series case, and I'm thankful that my life doesn't include any activities that would stand a chance at defeating the protection this case offers, as from the look and feel of it, you would have to be pretty reckless to put the Ballistic in a situation it couldn't handle.

It comes in four parts, the top and bottom sections of the main case, a silicone outer layer and a holster, complete with a belt clip. When you take a closer look, the inside of the base has a rubber surround and a foam support for the camera lens while on the outside, there are solid rubber bumpers around the edge and a hard rubber grip panel on the back. The iPhone 4 fits inside and then you [clip](#) the top in place. The screen protector still allows normal operation.

Looking around the case you'll see the cut outs for the 30-pin connector and the speakers, covered volume buttons, an exposed vibrate switch and headphone socket and a covered sleep key. On the front is an opening for the forward facing camera lens and the speaker, while the Home key is covered. For many people, this would provide more than enough protection for their phone, but the Ballistic still has plenty more to offer.

The silicone outer layer is wrapped around the case, and in addition to providing a lot more shock protection, it covers the 30-pin connector, vibrate switch and headphone port too. It feels really, really solid like this, but despite all these layers, the lens is still exposed at the back and the phone can be operated as normal. Of course, this all comes at a cost, which is the increased bulk and a new weight of 226 grams. But you know what, it doesn't really intrude. I've been carrying the phone about for a week like this and have got used to it, with the added bonus I don't worry about it being knocked about in my bag.

Finally, you can attach the case to the holster. This has a plastic shell, keeps the screen facing inwards and the belt clip can be rotated too. The build quality is great, everything fits together perfectly and it feels like only a bodyguard would do more to protect [your iPhone 4](#).

And even beneath all this, the iPhone is still the same to use, with the screen protector not interfering with games or typing. The only thing we did notice was that due to the high sides, pressing buttons close to the edge – the new [email](#) button for example – required a little more precision.

Ballistic say the HC – which stands for Hard Core by the way – will withstand fingerprints, scratches and dust, to which we would add knocks, bangs, short falls and other abuse not usually associated with such an expensive device. If your iPhone 4 is in daily jeopardy, then the \$50 Ballistic HC Series case should offer you all the protection you'll need.

You can order the Ballistic case by [visiting their website](#). Enjoy our video review, plus a couple of extreme test carried out by Ballistic themselves.