

“**Bodily injury**” and “**dangerous weapon**” are defined in the Commentary to §1B1.1 (Application Instructions).

“**Pattern of activity involving stalking, threatening, harassing, or assaulting the same victim**” means any combination of two or more separate instances of stalking, threatening, harassing, or assaulting the same victim, whether or not such conduct resulted in a conviction. For example, a single instance of stalking accompanied by a separate instance of threatening, harassing, or assaulting the same victim constitutes a pattern of activity for purposes of this guideline.

“**Stalking**” means conduct described in 18 U.S.C. § 2261A.

“**Strangling**” and “**suffocating**” have the meaning given those terms in 18 U.S.C. § 113.

2. Subsection (b)(1) provides for a two-level or four-level enhancement based on the degree to which the offense involved aggravating factors listed in that subsection. If the offense involved aggravating factors more serious than the factors listed in subsection (b)(1), the cross reference in subsection (c) most likely will apply, if the resulting offense level is greater, because the more serious conduct will be covered by another offense guideline from Chapter Two, Part A. For example, §2A2.2 (Aggravated Assault) most likely would apply pursuant to subsection (c) if the offense involved assaultive conduct in which injury more serious than bodily injury occurred or if a dangerous weapon was used rather than merely possessed.
3. In determining whether subsection (b)(1)(E) applies, the court shall consider, under the totality of the circumstances, any conduct that occurred prior to or during the offense; however, conduct that occurred prior to the offense must be substantially and directly connected to the offense. For example, if a defendant engaged in several acts of stalking the same victim over a period of years (including acts that occurred prior to the offense), then for purposes of determining whether subsection (b)(1)(E) applies, the court shall look to the totality of the circumstances, considering only those prior acts of stalking the victim that have a substantial and direct connection to the offense.

Prior convictions taken into account under subsection (b)(1)(E) are also counted for purposes of determining criminal history points pursuant to Chapter Four, Part A (Criminal History).

4. For purposes of Chapter Three, Part D (Multiple Counts), multiple counts involving stalking, threatening, or harassing the same victim are grouped together (and with counts of other offenses involving the same victim that are covered by this guideline) under §3D1.2 (Groups of Closely Related Counts). For example, if the defendant is convicted of two counts of stalking the defendant’s ex-spouse under 18 U.S.C. § 2261A and one count of interstate domestic violence involving an assault of the ex-spouse under 18 U.S.C. § 2261, the stalking counts would be grouped together with the interstate domestic violence count. This grouping procedure avoids unwarranted “double counting” with the enhancement in subsection (b)(1)(E) (for multiple acts of stalking, threatening, harassing, or assaulting the same victim) and recognizes that the stalking and interstate domestic violence counts are sufficiently related to warrant grouping.

Multiple counts that are cross referenced to another offense guideline pursuant to subsection (c) are to be grouped together if §3D1.2 (Groups of Closely Related Counts) would require grouping of those counts under that offense guideline. Similarly, multiple counts cross referenced pursuant to subsection (c) are not to be grouped together if §3D1.2 would preclude grouping of the counts under that offense guideline. For example, if the defendant is convicted of multiple counts of threatening an ex-spouse in violation of a court protection order under 18 U.S.C. § 2262 and the counts are cross referenced to §2A6.1 (Threatening or Harassing Communications), the counts would group together because Application Note 3 of §2A6.1 specifically requires grouping. In