

Instructions for the use of: Wedge Sockets

The information in this leaflet must be passed to the user of the equipment, who must be suitably trained in the use of this equipment

This document is issued in accordance with the requirements of Section 6 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, amended March 1988 and the Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008 (Machinery Directive). It provides instruction to the user with regards to the care and safe use of WEDGE SOCKETS to EN13411-7.

This information is of a general nature only covering the main points for the safe use of wedge sockets. It may be necessary to supplement this information for specific applications.

ALWAYS:

- Store and handle wedge sockets correctly with all components kept together.
- Inspect wedge sockets before use and before placing into storage.
- Use the correct wedge and housing for the wire rope diameter
- Ensure the dead end of the wire rope is long enough to secure correctly
- Ensure that the wedge is correctly located before putting the assembly into service

NEVER:

- Use wedge sockets with bent pins or deformed bodies.
- Force, hammer or wedge sockets into position.
- Allow flattened and/or damaged rope to be used within a wedge socket
- Fit pins in contact with moving parts which may loosen or unscrew them.
- Shock load wedge sockets.

Selecting the Correct Wedge socket

Ensure that all components of the wedge socket are matching in both measurements and strength – these must be from the same supplier

Ensure that the wedge socket is the correct size for the wire rope

Storing and Handling Wedge sockets

Never return damaged wedge sockets to storage. They should be dry, clean and protected from corrosion.

Do not alter, modify or repair wedge sockets and never replace missing pins or wedges with unidentified parts, but refer such matters to a Competent Person.

Never galvanise or subject a wedge socket to other plating processes without the approval of the supplier.

Using Wedge sockets Safely

Do not use defective wedge sockets or unidentified pins.

When fitting the rope to the socket, as much slack as possible should be removed from the system and then the load applied to the assembly with the wedge observed to be seated correctly in the socket body

A single Rope Grip must be fitted across the two parts of the wire rope near the socket body, this ensures that the wedge cannot become displaced in a slack rope condition

The distance that the rope grip must be located from the wedge socket should be no more than 40% of the wedge length.

Wedge Sockets should only be used “in line” ensuring that the rope leaves the socket smoothly with no kinks or other deformation

If a wire rope length requires changing, ensure that no flattened and/or damaged rope is used within the wedge socket or rope grip.

In-service Inspection and Maintenance

Maintenance requirements are minimal. Keep wedge sockets clean and protect from corrosion.

Regularly inspect wedge sockets and, in the event of the following defects, refer the wedge socket to a Competent Person for thorough examination: illegible markings; distorted, worn, stretched or bent body; bent pin; damaged or incomplete wedge; nicks, gouges, cracks or corrosion; incorrect pin; any other defect.

In the case of re-selling and/or hire of equipment, this information must be passed onto the end user

Further information can be obtained from:

- BS EN 13411-7

GENERAL PURPOSE SLINGING PRACTICE

This information should be read in conjunction with the instructions for use, given overleaf, of which it forms an integral part and with any specific instructions issued by the supplier.

This information is of a general nature only covering the main points for the safe use of various types of slings for general lifting purposes.

ALWAYS:

- Plan the lift, having established the weight of the load and prepare the landing area ensuring that it will take the weight and is large enough to take the load.
- Check slings and equipment are free of damage, use slings/slinging methods suitable for the load and protect slings from sharp edges and corners.
- Attach the sling securely to the load and appliance and position hooks to face outwards.
- Ensure the load is balanced and will not tilt or fall.
- Keep fingers, toes etc clear when tensioning slings and when landing loads.
- Ensure that the load is free to be lifted.
- Make a trial lift and trial lower.

NEVER:

- Use damaged slings or accessories.
- Twist, knot or tie slings.
- Hammer slings into position.
- Overload slings due to the weight of the load or the mode of use.
- Trap slings when landing the load.
- Drag slings over floors etc or attempt to pull trapped slings from under loads.
- Allow personnel to ride on loads.

Sling Configurations and Rating

Slings are available in single, two, three and four leg or endless form. In practice it will be found that chain, wire rope and fibre rope slings are available in any of these configurations but that flat woven webbing is limited to single leg and endless whilst roundslings are only supplied in endless form. The maximum load that a sling may lift in use will be governed by the slinging arrangement (mode of use) and may vary from the marked SWL. In the case of textile slings the SWL for the various modes of use is usually given on the information label. In other cases it is necessary to multiply the marked SWL by a mode factor.

The following three simple rules will ensure that the sling is not overloaded. In some cases this will mean that the sling will be under utilised although this is unlikely to hinder the user unduly. Where the maximum utilisation is required reference should be made to a Competent Person who understands the factors involved and who can perform the necessary calculations.

- (1) For straight lift never exceed the marked SWL and in the case of multi-leg slings the specified angle or range of angles.
- (2) When using slings in choke hitch multiply the marked SWL by 0.8 to obtain the reduced maximum load the sling may lift ie reduce the safe working load by 20%.
- (3) With multi-leg slings, when using less than the full number of legs, reduce the maximum load in proportion to the number of legs in use. Simply multiply the marked SWL by the number of legs in use expressed as a fraction of the total thus: one leg of a two leg sling = $\frac{1}{2}$ marked SWL, three legs of a four leg sling = $\frac{3}{4}$ marked SWL and so on.

Operative Training

Slings should only be used by trained operatives who understand the methods of rating and application of mode factors

Safe use of Slings

- o Good slinging practice must ensure that the load is as safe and secure in the air as it was on the ground and that no harm is done to the load, lifting equipment, other property or persons.
- o Establish the weight of the load, ensure the lifting method is suitable and inspect the sling and attachments for obvious defects. Prepare the landing area making sure the floor is strong enough to take the load. Follow any specific instructions from the supplier.
- o Ensure the lifting point is over the centre of gravity. Any loose parts of the load should be removed or secured. Secure the sling firmly to the load by hooks onto lifting points or shackles etc. The sling must not be twisted, knotted or kinked in any way.
- o Use packing to prevent damage to the sling from corners or edges and to protect the load.
- o Do not exceed the SWL or rated angle. Any choke angle must not exceed 120° and any basket 90°.
- o Do not hammer, force or wedge slings or accessories into position; they must fit freely.
- o When attaching more than one sling to the hook of the appliance use a shackle to join the slings and avoid overcrowding the hook.
- o Use an established code of signals to instruct the crane driver.
- o Ensure the load is free to be lifted and not, for example, bolted down.
- o Check that there are no overhead obstacles such as power lines.
- o Keep fingers, toes etc clear ensuring they do not become trapped when lifting, lowering or controlling loads.
- o Make a trial lift by raising the load a little to ensure it is balanced, stable and secure and if not lower it and adjust the slinging arrangement.
- o Where appropriate use tag lines to control the load.
- o Except where special provision is made, do not allow anyone to pass under or ride upon the load. The area should be kept clear.
- o Make a trial set down, ensure the sling will not become trapped and the load will not tip when the slings are released. Use supports which are strong enough to sustain the load without crushing.
- o Never drag slings over floors etc or attempt to drag a trapped sling from under a load.
- o Never use a sling to drag a load.
- o Place the hooks of free legs back onto the master link and take care to ensure that empty hooks do not become accidentally engaged.
- o Never use slings in contact with chemicals or heat without the manufacturers approval.
- o Never use damaged or contaminated slings.
- o On completion of the lift return all equipment to proper storage.

Further information can be obtained from:

- LEEA Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Lifting Equipment.
- EN13414
- HSE Guidance Note GS39 - Training of Crane Drivers and Slings.
- Various British Standards covering individual products.

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