

Materials Handling

Materials Handling - Slings on Overhead Crane Hooks

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How should be done when slinging a load onto a crane hook?

- Make sure you have the required training, qualifications, or certification as determined by your jurisdiction to operate the crane or to act as a slinger or signaller.
- Visually inspect the crane before use.
- Determine the weight of the load to be lifted.
- Develop and follow an approved lift plan, which should outline how the load will be rigged, identifying the appropriate slings and rigging hardware for the type and weight of the load, considering the [hitching method](#), the working load limit, and other factors that could impact the lift.
- Select the right [sling](#) for each job using the manufacturer's tables. A slinger must be familiar with these tables showing the safe capacities of slings. (A slinger or rigger is the person who hooks loads onto cranes using various types of slings.)
- [Inspect](#) each item of lifting equipment before and after lifts.
- Tag defective slings and dispose of damaged ones.
- Certain lifts may require the use of a signaller, especially when the operator's view is obstructed, during high risk lifts, or if there are other safety concerns.
- Make clear signals according to standard signals. Refer to [Materials Handling - Crane and Hoist Hand Signals](#) for examples. Make sure the signaller and operator know what each signal means.
- Signal the crane operator from only one designated signaler who is in charge of lift. The only exception is a stop signal.

- Protect slings from damage by sharp edges with corner saddles, padding, or wooden blocks.
 - Warn all people to get out of the load area before starting the lift, and block off areas to keep individuals a safe distance away while the lift is being performed.
 - Protect your hands and fingers: when slack is being taken out of a sling, keep them from between the sling and load so they will not be trapped and crushed. Step away before the lift is made.
 - Make sure a load is high enough to clear all objects before signalling for the crane to move.
 - The signaller walks ahead of the moving load and warns people to keep clear. Use guide ropes to prevent rotation or other uncontrolled motion.
 - Hook unused sling legs to the sling ring.
 - Set down loads on blocking – never directly on a sling.
 - When not in use, hang slings on racks or store according to the manufacturer's directions.
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What should be avoided when slinging a load?

- Do not exceed the capacities of slings, fixtures and cranes.
- Do not twist or tie knots in slings or use bolts, nails or pieces of wire to shorten slings.
- Do not splice together broken slings.
- Do not ride on hooks or loads.
- Do not allow workers to walk or work under a load.
- Do not lift a load over a worker.
- Do not attempt to pull or push loads to a spot that is not under the hoist.
- Do not drag slings. Avoid pulling slings out from under loads by crane.
- Do not leave unused slings, accessories, or blocking lying on the floor.
- Do not carry a load by inserting the point of the hook into a link of the chain.
- Do not hammer a sling into place.
- Do not leave loose materials on a load.
- Do not use slings that are stretched, broken, or defective.
- Do not leave suspended loads unattended.

- Do not expose slings to temperatures beyond the range recommended by the manufacturer.

Note: This information is meant to provide general guidance only. Many factors can influence the safe slinging and lifting of a load. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions, health and safety laws, and applicable standards that may apply.

Fact sheet last revised: 2025-04-15

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