



# LIFTING GEAR & SAFETY

## SAFE USE OF FIBRE WEBBING & ROUND SLINGS

**Applies to: Polyester, Polyamide, Polypropylene slings, and similar types**

### **Purpose**

Fibre webbing and round slings are flexible textile lifting accessories designed for safe lifting of loads with minimal risk of surface damage. They are ideal for delicate, painted, or irregularly shaped loads. This leaflet provides guidance for safe operation, inspection, and care to prevent accidents, overloading, or sling failure.

### **Before Use**

- Inspect the sling – Check for cuts, abrasions, burns, fraying, loose stitching, chemical damage, or heat exposure.
- Verify WLL (Working Load Limit) – Ensure the sling's rated capacity exceeds the total load weight, considering the configuration (straight lift, choke, or basket).
- Check identification – Ensure the sling label is legible and displays WLL, material type, manufacturer, and length.
- Confirm compatibility – Use suitable shackles, hooks, or lifting points with smooth radii and no sharp edges.
- Check load edges – Protect slings from sharp corners or abrasive surfaces using sleeves or corner protectors.
- Ensure cleanliness – Keep slings dry and free from oil, grease, or chemicals.
- Confirm suitability – Do not use synthetic slings in hot, chemically active, or high-friction environments unless rated for such conditions.
- Ensure operator competence – Only trained and authorised personnel should select and use lifting slings.

### **During Operation**

- Position correctly – Centre the sling over the load's centre of gravity to ensure balance.
- Apply load evenly – Avoid shock loading or jerking. Take up slack before applying full lift.
- Protect sling – Use edge protectors or softeners where the sling contacts sharp or rough surfaces.
- Avoid twisting – Keep slings flat and free of knots or twists during use.
- Lift vertically – Avoid side pulls or angular loading that exceed recommended angles.
- Keep personnel clear – Never stand beneath or near a suspended load.
- Use tag lines – Guide loads safely without hand contact.
- Lower slowly – Set loads down gently to prevent impact damage.

### **Do Not**

- Exceed the sling's WLL or angle limits.
- Use slings without readable identification labels.
- Use slings with cuts, burns, chemical attack, or broken stitching.
- Tie knots or shorten slings by twisting or looping.
- Expose slings to temperatures above 80°C (for polyester/nylon) or to welding spatter and flames.
- Use slings in acidic or caustic environments unless rated suitable.
- Drag loads across rough surfaces.

- Leave suspended loads unattended.
- Use slings for lifting personnel.

### **After Use**

- Remove the sling carefully and clean with mild detergent and water if necessary.
- Inspect for wear or damage after every use.
- Tag out and report any defective slings to your supervisor immediately.
- Store in a clean, dry, ventilated area away from sunlight, chemicals, or heat sources.
- Do not store slings under tension or compressed beneath heavy items.
- Maintain an inspection and test record as required by LOLER and manufacturer guidance.

### **Safety Reminders**

- Always follow the manufacturer's specific instructions and load charts.
- Conduct a risk assessment and lifting plan before use.
- Never exceed the equipment's or supporting structure's WLL.
- Use proper PPE: gloves, safety boots, helmet, and high-visibility clothing.
- Ensure regular thorough examination by a competent person.
- Replace slings immediately if identification tags are lost or damaged.

### **Support and Maintenance**

For service, inspection, and spare parts, contact your local Lifting Gear and Safety Depot

## **Depot List**

**Bristol:** 0117 9714883

**Avonmouth:** 0117 9550456

**Newport:** 01633 334450

**Port Talbot:** 01639 540007

**Pembroke:** 01646 574000

**Plymouth:** 01752 474488

**Fareham:** 01329 550988

**Redruth:** 01209 703990