

SAFE USE OF RATCHET LEVER HOISTS

Applies to: Yale, Tiger, William Hackett, CM, and similar types

Purpose

Ratchet lever hoists are manual devices designed for lifting, lowering, or pulling loads using a ratcheting handle and load chain. They are used to accurately position loads or apply tension where powered lifting equipment is not practical. This leaflet provides guidance for safe operation to prevent accidents, overloading, or mechanical failure.

Before Use

- Inspect the hoist – Check hooks, body casing, load chain, and lever mechanism for cracks, corrosion, deformation, or missing parts.
- Verify SWL (Safe Working Load) – The hoist's rated capacity must exceed the total load weight.
- Check certification – All lifting accessories (slings, shackles, chains, etc.) must have valid inspection tags.
- Ensure correct configuration – Hoist must be attached directly to a suitable suspension point rated for the load.
- Check hook latches – Ensure safety latches close properly and are not bent or missing.
- Check the load chain – Ensure it hangs freely without twists, kinks, or knots.
- Confirm brake operation – Test the hoist under light tension to verify the ratchet and brake engage correctly.
- Ensure operator competence – Only trained and authorised personnel should operate the hoist.

During Operation

- Position correctly – Align the hoist and load vertically; avoid side-loading or angled pulls.
- Lift smoothly – Operate the lever with steady, controlled movements; do not jerk or shock-load.
- Test lift – Raise the load slightly to confirm balance and security before full lift.
- Keep clear – Never allow personnel under or near a suspended load.
- Maintain control – Use tag lines to guide loads if necessary.
- Maintain communication – Use standard signals or radios where visibility is limited.
- Lower carefully – Control descent slowly and steadily to prevent swinging or sudden drop.

Do Not

- Exceed the hoist's rated capacity.
- Use the load chain as a sling or wrap it around the load.
- Extend the lever handle with bars or tubes for extra leverage.
- Use the hoist to lift or support people.
- Leave loads suspended and unattended.
- Operate a damaged, uncertified, or modified hoist.
- Use near corrosive or explosive environments unless rated for that use.
- Drag loads horizontally across the ground.

After Use

- Lower the load fully and remove tension from the chain.
- Wipe clean and inspect for any signs of wear or damage.
- Tag out and report any defects to your supervisor immediately.
- Store the hoist in a clean, dry area, hanging by its top hook if possible.
- Protect the chain from moisture and contamination.

Safety Reminders

- Always follow the manufacturer's operating instructions.
- Conduct a risk assessment and lifting plan before use.
- Never exceed the equipment's or supporting structure's SWL.
- Keep all lifting zones cordoned off.
- Use correct PPE: safety helmet, gloves, safety boots, high-vis clothing.
- Only competent, trained persons should perform inspection or maintenance.

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