



SAFE USE OF MECHANICAL BLOCK GRABS

Applies to: Scanlift, Probst, Conquip, Eichinger, and similar types

Purpose

Mechanical block grabs are designed for lifting and placing packs of blocks, bricks, kerbs, or similar preformed loads using cranes, forklifts, or excavators fitted with lifting eyes. This leaflet provides guidance for safe operation to prevent accidents, equipment damage, or dropped loads.

Before Use

- Inspect the grab – Check frames, arms, pads, chains, and springs for cracks, deformation, or excessive wear.
- Verify SWL (Safe Working Load) – The grab's rated capacity must exceed the total load weight.
- Check certification – All lifting accessories (chains, slings, shackles, etc.) must have valid inspection tags.
- Ensure compatibility – The grab must suit the block size and type being handled.
- Check surface condition – Avoid wet, muddy, oily, or dusty surfaces that could reduce grip.
- Ensure operator training – Only competent persons should attach and signal lifts.

During Operation

- Position correctly – Lower grab vertically over the load and ensure equal contact on both sides.
- Full engagement – Pads must fully grip before lifting; ensure springs and linkages function smoothly.
- Lift vertically – Do not drag or side-load the grab.
- Lift slowly and steadily – Avoid jerks, swings, or sudden stops.
- Stay clear – Keep all personnel out of the danger zone beneath the load.
- Use guide ropes/tag lines – Never steady a load by hand.
- Maintain visual communication – Use standard hand signals or two-way radios where visibility is limited.

Do Not

- Overload the grab.
- Use on uneven, irregular, or loose materials.
- Modify, weld, or drill grab components.
- Use damaged, uncertified, or untested lifting gear.
- Leave suspended loads unattended.
- Work under a raised or moving load.

After Use

- Place the grab on firm, level ground.
- Clean pads and moving parts to remove debris.
- Inspect for wear or damage; tag out defective grabs.
- Store in a dry, secure area.
- Report all faults immediately to your supervisor.

Safety Reminders

- Always follow the manufacturer's specific instructions.
- Never exceed the crane or excavator's rated lifting capacity.
- Conduct a risk assessment and lifting plan before each job.
- Use proper PPE: helmet, gloves, safety boots, high-vis clothing.

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