



# LIFTING GEAR & SAFETY

## SAFE USE OF SHEAR LEGS

**Applies to: All shear-leg lifting frames, alloy tripod lifting sets, portable 3-leg shear legs, and shear legs fitted with manual chain blocks**

### ✓ Purpose

Shear legs (tripod lifting frames) provide a temporary lifting point for hoisting loads vertically using a chain block, lever hoist, or winch.

They are commonly used for lifting pumps, equipment, machinery, and materials into confined spaces, shafts, manholes, and trenches.

This leaflet provides safe-use guidance to prevent collapse, leg movement, overloading, or tipping.

### ⚙ Before Use

- Inspect all legs – Check tubes, joints, welds, hinges, chains, feet, and pulleys (if fitted) for damage or corrosion.
- Verify SWL – Ensure shear legs' rated capacity matches or exceeds the lifting load.
- Check the head / apex – Ensure bolts, pins, and plates securing the legs are tight and undamaged.
- Inspect the spread chain – Ensure the chain linking the legs is in good condition and properly attached.
- Inspect feet – Check rubber pads, steel shoes, or spikes for wear and secure fixing.
- Ensure correct height – Confirm the shear legs can be safely erected with enough working clearance.
- Verify ground condition – Must be level, firm, and able to support the point loads from each leg.
- Check chain block or hoist – Inspect and ensure it is correctly rated and compatible with the lifting point.
- Confirm guy lines (if required) – Some shear-leg systems require additional stabilising ropes.
- Test the setup – Fully assemble and check stability before attaching any load.
- Ensure operator competence – Only trained personnel should erect and use shear-leg lifting frames.

### 🚧 During Operation

- Ensure legs are fully spread and the spread chain is tight before lifting.
- Position the load directly beneath the apex lifting point.
- Keep legs equally loaded — avoid side loading or angled lifting.
- Lift slowly, maintaining vertical alignment of the load.
- Keep all personnel clear of legs, feet, and the area beneath the load.
- Use tag lines to steady the load if needed.
- Continuously check that legs remain stable on the ground.
- Avoid sudden movements that may cause leg shift or sinking.
- Monitor ground settlement — stop immediately if any leg begins to sink or move.
- Ensure chain block hook remains central and not rubbing the structure.
- Maintain clear, constant communication between the operator and signaller.

### ⊘ Do Not

- Exceed SWL under any circumstances.
- Erect shear legs on soft, sloping, or unstable ground without suitable spreaders.
- Use shear legs with missing or damaged spread chains.

- Lift loads at an angle or drag sideways.
- Use damaged, bent, or twisted legs.
- Use in high winds unless secured with guy lines.
- Leave a suspended load unattended.
- Stand beneath the load or inside the footprint of the legs during lifting.
- Replace manufacturer fittings with improvised pins, bolts, or chains.

### **After Use**

- Lower the load fully and detach hoist.
- Collapse shear legs carefully, avoiding trapping fingers or hands.
- Clean leg joints and apex head of dirt and debris.
- Inspect all components for damage, wear, or bending.
- Lubricate hinges and pivot points where recommended by the manufacturer.
- Store shear legs in a clean, dry, secure area.
- Tag out damaged items and remove from service.
- Maintain LOLER inspection records for lifting appliances and accessories.

### **Safety Reminders**

- Always erect shear legs fully before attaching a hoist.
- Keep lifts vertical to avoid overturning.
- Ensure spread chain is engaged and legs cannot move during the lift.
- Never exceed SWL or modify equipment.
- Maintain safe working zones and communication.
- Use correct PPE: gloves, safety boots, hi-vis, helmet.
- Only trained and competent persons should erect and operate shear legs.

### **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