

RATCHET STRAP OPERATION AND SAFETY

INTRODUCTION

A ratchet strap consists of webbing, a ratchet mechanism, and hooks to securely tie down any load being transported. The ratchet mechanism increases the tension on the webbing with little effort needed from the operator. If you know how to use them, ratchet straps (or ratchet tie downs) are efficient and secure.



APPLYING THE STRAPS

Before applying the strap, make sure you have the right sized strap for the job. Each strap has weight restrictions assigned by the manufacturer, and you must know how heavy your load is as well as the weight rating for your straps. After you have verified that you have the correct strap size and the strap is free from any knots, tears, or damage of any kind:



- Attach the hook to a secure anchor point.
- Guide webbing across the cargo, making sure there is no twisting over the load.
- Attach the hook with ratchet mechanism onto the opposite side anchor point.
- Making sure that the loose end is on top, thread webbing through the center slot of the spindle.
- Pull the strap to remove most of the slack, but not so tight that it damages the cargo.
- Crank the ratchet handle back and forth to tighten the strap until there is sufficient tension.
- Close the ratchet handle completely to lock it in place.
- Secure the extra webbing so that it does not come loose in the wind.
- Before driving, check all tie-downs to make sure they are adequately secure.
- It is recommended to check all of the tie-downs again after 20-30 miles of driving.



RATCHET STRAP OPERATION AND SAFETY

REMOVING THE STRAPS

Once the cargo has arrived at the final destination, you must know how to remove the ratchets without causing any damage. If you do this incorrectly, you may end up tightening the strap instead of loosening it, which will result in possible loss of inventory.

- Pull and hold the release handle while lifting the grip to release.
- Open the ratchet mechanism completely.
- Pull the loose webbing free from the device.
- Release the hooks from their anchor points.



ADDITIONAL TIPS

Proper care will extend the life of your ratchet tie-down straps. Old or worn straps must be replaced immediately, but you can help them last longer by using the following tips.

- Practice applying and removing the ratchet tie-down straps before transporting the load.
- Edge protectors may be necessary to keep the webbed straps free from damage.
- Make sure the tie-down straps are clean and dry before storing.
- Do not store the ratchet straps in direct sunlight.
- To clean, scrub with water and a mild detergent without any bleach additives. Hang to air dry.
- Broken stitching, burns, stiff, or unevenly worn tie-down straps are signs that the strap needs to be replaced.

CONCLUSION

Proper application, removal, and care of your ratchet tie-down straps will help them to be as effective as possible. Take care of your straps according to the manufacturer's recommendations as well as the tips included in this lesson – and at the same time, dispose of them as soon as they show any signs of damage.

