

How to use an Equalizer Towing Bridle

An Equalizer Towing Bridle recovery is where a bogged vehicle is recovered by using another vehicle to pull it free via an elastic poly fibre strap.

An Equalizer Towing Bridle recovery can differ from a normal tow recovery according to the job in hand. Our Equalizer Towing Bridles can be used in a straight line pull or in severe bogging cases, be used in a snatching operation. Please read our freely available "What is a Snatch Recovery" document on our website or email us for an electronic copy.

Tek Trek Equalizer Towing Bridles are constructed from nylon webbing strap approximately 9m in length and 50-75mm wide with eyelets at both ends. They have a typical breaking strain in the order of 6,500kg and they can stretch up to a quarter of their length in use.

It pays to look after your Equalizer Towing Bridle as a nick of only 1cm can reduce its breaking strain by over 50%. The Equalizer Towing Bridle recovery technique requires a second mobile vehicle to be connected via a secure recovery point. Before attaching an Equalizer Towing Bridle and towing strap, suitable connection points should be located on both vehicles.

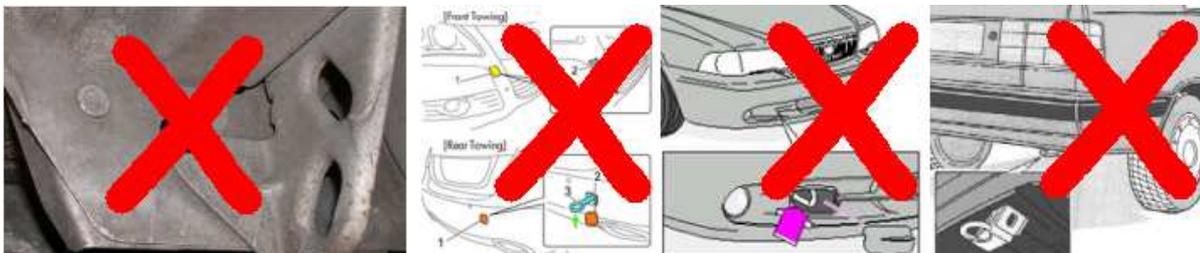
Examples of good and poor recovery points are shown below –



Typical secure front connection

A rear hitch can also be used as a secure point

It is **not recommended** to use a 'tie down' point on either vehicle as these points cannot cope with the forces exerted and are quite often literally torn from their mounts.



The towing vehicle is positioned to allow around 2m of slack in the snatch towing strap of the bridle, while avoiding getting bogged as well. The direction of both vehicles should be lined up as straight as possible and the snatch towing strap should not be twisted. Attach the strap to a suitable tow point using shackles rated to at least 3.25 tonnes.

1. Whilst unrolling the straps in your kit, pass the end of the short bridle strap through an eye of the snatch strap.
2. Next, attach each end of the bridle to the previously located secure recovery towing points with the rated 3.25t orange shackles. Undo the shackle pins ½ turn loose from finger tight!

3. Once connected your vehicle should look similar to this –



How fast do I take off with the snatch strap?

Many people mistakenly think that getting both vehicles as close as possible together at the start is the way to start. This will probably work in most cases but with dire consequences as the forces generated throughout the the strap will physically rip off the towing points of both vehicles into deadly missiles. The power of the strap is such that when used correctly, it can extricate a bogged vehicle that has a massive resistance to being moved due to the suction effect on the underbody from mud, snow or wet sand.

Ensure correct attachment points are being used, and have the bogged vehicle in gear and ready to drive out slowly. The driver of the bogged vehicle is recommended to be in charge as from this position he can see all. All spectators are removed to at least 1.5 times the length of the stretched strap and only 2m of slackened strap used for acceleration distance. No one or vehicle should suffer damage.

The correct speed should not, and cannot be judged by the speed, because the speed is not judged by acceleration, but torque. By aiming for the maximum torque of the vehicle (lowest gearing and low speed) rather than maximum acceleration, it becomes possible for a smaller vehicle to retrieve a larger vehicle quite safely. In the event that the first attempt doesn't work, ensure all obstacles are clear of the stranded vehicle then accelerate a little faster without exceeding the 3m maximum slack strap rule. Driving from a bumper to bumper position achieves little gain if any. A force in the range of 10-15 tonnes can easily be exerted which is well over the the safe working load limit of most straps. There is a very high risk of damage to vehicles and people should this be put in practice.

Where proper use of a Tek Trek Equalizer Towing Bridle and recovery strap is unsuccessful, use an appropriate sized recovery powered winch. Do not attempt to remove the straps (or winch) until both vehicles are stationary and secured.

NOTE: Recovery straps require rest periods between use to return to their original length and capacity. Excessive pulls over a short period of time can cause heat build up and possible failure.

GENERAL CARE AND MAINTENANCE

- Never allow your kit straps to rub against sharp or hot surfaces.
- Avoid twists & kinks when in use when dry;.
- Clean your strap with warm water and a mild detergent, allowing thorough drying before coiling for storage. Foreign material such as sand and grit can permanently damage the strap fibres.
- Check each strap for nicks and cuts before and after use. If damaged, replace it them.
- Never use the straps as a lifting sling.
- Inspect shackles for damage; if pins are hard to turn, the shackle has been overstressed. Replace it.