SNATCH STRAPS

Here are a few points to remember when using a snatch strap



Don't use straps that are cut, badly chaffed or otherwise damaged. Straps aren't intended for use as lifting slings or for conventional towing duty.

Carefully assess the situation, including best direction for vehicle recovery (forward or reverse) and other possible hazards. Try to clear mud or sand away from the stranded vehicle's wheels bearing in mind direction of the snatch and if it's bottomed out try and clear under its belly to get the wheels back on the ground.

Position the tow vehicle in line with the stranded car with the distance between them about two metres less than the unstretched strap length.

Lay the strap out between the cars without twists or kinks and attach to the vehicle proper recovery points. DON'T use tiedown eyes, towballs, bullbars, suspension components – they aren't designed for recovery loads which could be extremely high.

Form an S-shape loop of the 'spare' two metres near the strap's middle. Preferably where the drivers can see it. A proper recovery damper bag (inexpensive) or heavy blanket draped across the strap near its mid-point to act as a recoil damper is strongly advised. It is not advisable to use your passengers (read wifes') Sunday best jacket although this can be an effective dampening tool if nothing else is available.

If shackles are required for vehicle connection, only good quality load rated shackles (working load limit, minimum of 3.2 tonnes) should be used, hand tighten pin and back off ¼ turn to help avoid seized pins.

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Avoid joining straps where practical. If required, due to terrain etc, only use correct joining techniques - NEVER use metal or heavy objects including shackles - they can become deadly missiles if anything fails!

Onlookers should not be in front, between or behind the vehicles and must be at least 1.5 times the strap length to the side this includes any controller/supervisor. The recovery vehicle steadily accelerates forward. Steady momentum and strap elasticity does the job. As the slack in the strap just takes up, the stricken vehicle's driver also attempts to drive out of the bog. **Be smooth**, avoid wheel spin and don't use excessive speed or continual jerking.Picking the right gears to use for both vehicles will need some judgement, but as a starting point use 1st gear low range for the recovery car and 1st or reverse low range for the bogged vehicle, depending on direction of recovery.

The above has been included in club training over the past 12 years or so. Some methods have evolved and fine tuned in that time. It is important to "take the recovery slow and be smooth. It's better to have a second attempt rather than stand around wondering how to repair a damaged vehicle