RATCHET STRAPS

Safe load restraint | Briefing & pre-use checklist

DL Safety practical briefing on ratchet straps, with Irish road transport guidance from the RSA.

LOAD RESTRAINT ONLY - NEVER USE FOR LIFTING

1 / Select and use correctly

Ratchet straps tension webbing to restrain cargo. **LC** describes the permitted straight-pull lashing force, usually in daN; it is not the cargo mass. **STF** indicates the tension produced at the specified hand force and matters for frictional, top-over restraint.

Plan the arrangement using load characteristics, friction, restraint angles and rated attachment points. Select suitable capacity, fittings and length. Keep webbing flat, protect edges, remove slack, tension as instructed, lock the ratchet and secure loose ends. Never extend the handle or knot the webbing.

2 / Pre-use inspection checklist

CHECK	REJECT / STOP IF
Webbing and seams	Cuts, abrasion, damaged stitching, burns or chemical attack
Ratchet and fittings	Cracks, distortion, corrosion or unreliable locking
Identification	Capacity or traceability cannot be read
Load and attachments	Unstable cargo, unsuitable anchors or exposed sharp edges

Quarantine doubtful equipment. Recheck after settling or significant manoeuvres. Store dry and protected; follow manufacturer instructions for cleaning and maintenance. A fixed number of straps or replacement age cannot be prescribed for every job.

3 / Irish transport context [1]

The RSA explains that loads must be arranged and attached to prevent foreseeable danger and preserve vehicle stability. Overloading and loads liable to fall or drag are unacceptable. Operators and consignors must manage workplace transport risks. The RSA recommends EN 12195-1 for securing-force calculations and EN 12195-2 for man-made fibre web lashings.

1. RSA: Loading and load securement

Sources accessed 18 October 2026. General awareness only; use the manufacturer's instructions and a competent load-securing assessment for the actual load.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Ratchet straps | Practical answers

How often should ratchet straps be replaced?

There is no single replacement interval suitable for every strap. Frequency of use, loading, storage and exposure all affect service life. Inspect before use and remove the strap immediately if it is damaged, cannot be identified or does not operate correctly.

Can a damaged ratchet strap be repaired?

Do not carry out informal repairs such as stitching, knotting, gluing or heat-sealing. Remove the assembly from service and follow the manufacturer’s instructions or replace it.

What does LC mean on a ratchet strap?

LC means Lashing Capacity. It is the maximum force for which the lashing is designed in a straight pull and is normally marked in daN. It is not a lifting capacity or a simple statement of cargo weight.

Can ratchet straps be used for lifting?

No. Ratchet straps are designed for load restraint. Lifting operations require certified lifting equipment selected for the application.

How many ratchet straps are needed?

The answer depends on the load, restraint method, LC and STF values, friction, anchor points and forces expected during transport. Do not rely on a fixed rule based only on load weight; use an appropriate load-securing assessment or calculation.

Should the strap be checked during a journey?

Yes. Check the restraint after the load has had an opportunity to settle and after any event that could affect it, such as heavy braking or a change in the load. Stop only in a safe and permitted location.