

OWNERS MANUAL



Snatch Strap



OZTRAIL OFFROAD

OZtrail strives to make quality and affordable outdoor products. Our recovery products are a fine example of this ethos. However, it is important to remember that having the gear to use whilst getting away with your 4WD is but one part of being prepared. Being trained and knowledgeable about the product and how to use it effectively is the other crucial ingredient.

4WD touring and vehicle recovery is a dangerous recreational activity by its very nature. As a participant you should do everything possible to make sure you are as knowledgeable about the techniques and equipment you use.

There are many 4WD clubs and nationally recognised professionally run courses that can help in you in learning about recovery techniques. We recommend that before using this equipment you have attended a course that teaches recovery safety, or at least contact them for advice on your product selection and use.

Safety is paramount.

GENERAL PRODUCT INFORMATION

A Recovery Strap, also referred to as a Snatch Strap, is made from heavy duty synthetic materials, normally nylon. The concept of the nylon strap is that it will stretch by a given percentage when it is under load and then return to its unloaded length with dynamic force. When used correctly it can greatly assist in removing a vehicle from a bogged position.

There are a number of safety considerations that you should be aware of:

- Never use equipment that is not designed for vehicle recovery.
- All recovery equipment has a usable life; inspect and replace used equipment regularly.
- Always be aware of the Minimum Breaking Strength (MBS) and Safe Working Load (SWL) of any recovery equipment you use.
- It is important that you use recovery equipment that has a safety margin compared to the Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) that you are attempting to recover. The normal margin is 2 to 3 times the GVM of the lighter vehicle involved in a recovery.
- Always check your recovery gear for signs of wear and tear prior to leaving home. Never use recovery gear that has signs of damage.
- Snatch Straps are designed for dynamic recovery and must not be used for lifting or conventional towing purposes. For lifting and towing you should use products designed for that purpose.

- A recovery dampener must always be used when placing a strap, line or cable under load. If you do not own a purpose designed recovery dampener, a blanket, heavy bag or other material of reasonable weight can be used to reduce any unintentional rebound of the strap, line or cable.
- Spectators should keep a safe distance during a recovery; it is recommended that they remain at least 1.5 times the length of the unstretched strap or cable being used in distance from the vehicles involved in the recovery.
- Spectators must never place themselves in the path of the vehicle performing the recovery or the vehicle being recovered.
- Synthetic materials strength and elasticity/stretch can be reduced when wet. Always use your recovery gear when dry.
- A Snatch Strap's Minimum Breaking Strain (MBS) can be reduced by 20% when wet.
- Use only rated fittings and attachment points for recovery. Tow-balls are not designed for recovery use and can shear during recovery creating a risk to life and limb.

SELECTING RECOVERY GEAR

Prior to purchasing recovery gear you should check the Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) of your vehicles, and those that you plan to travel with. This will enable you to purchase equipment that is rated properly to your vehicle.

It is recommended that you select products with a Minimum Breaking Strain (MBS) that is between 2 to 3 times the GVM of the lightest vehicle you expect to recover. Also consider the areas that you will likely use your products, heavily laden vehicles and those bogged in mud will generally require more force to recover than other situations.

Remember that all of your equipment's MBS need to meet the safety margin of 2 to 3 times the GVM of the lightest vehicle.

THE PROCESS OF A RECOVERY

1. Assess the bogged vehicle

If the vehicle has bottomed out, meaning that the bottom of the body of the car is resting on ground, clear out the area so that the vehicle is resting on its wheels.

2. Position the recovering vehicle

The recovering vehicle should be in line with the bogged vehicle. Professionals recommend no more than a 10 degree angle. The distance between the vehicles should be no more than 2 or 3 metres less than the un-stretched length of your snatch strap.

3. Connecting the Snatch Strap

Inspect your recovery equipment, ensuring that it is free from damage, dirt or defect. If it is damaged, do not use it. If the strap is wet, consider allowing it to dry prior to attempting recovery.

Select appropriate attachment points on each vehicle. The attachment points should be designed for recovery. Check your vehicles owner's manuals for these points, or ensure you use professionally fitted aftermarket rated recovery points. Do not use a tow-ball designed for trailer towing.

Bow shackles are commonly used, as well as equaliser straps. When attaching the bow shackle, screw the pin all the way in, once it has seated, back it off by half to a full turn. This will help reduce the chance of it becoming seized during the dynamic forces.

Never use two recovery straps joined together. Use an appropriate length recovery strap, or reposition the recovering vehicle closer.

Always hang a suitable dampener or heavy material at the midpoint between the vehicles.

Finally, both drivers in the recovery should check all attachments and equipment.

4. Preparing for the recovery

Move bystanders away from the recovery area and make them aware of the direction in which the recovery will occur.

The drivers should agree on the signals to be used whilst the recovery is in action. Radios are recommended, but hand signals and horn signals can be used if these are unavailable.

Both drivers should be aware of the safe area that the vehicles will move to after the recovery.

5. Making the recovery

The vehicle being recovered should be in first or second gear.

The recovering vehicle should move forward at a speed of 10 to 15km/h.

The stranded vehicle should attempt to drive out approximately 3 seconds after the recovery vehicle starts to move.

If the first attempt is unsuccessful, check under the stranded vehicle for obstacles that may have been missed in the initial assessment. Then reset the recovery, check the equipment, and attempt the process again with slightly more speed.

Once the stranded vehicle is clear the two vehicles should travel to the predetermined safe area. The recovered vehicle should then stop with the recovery straps slack between the two vehicles.

IMPORTANT: Recovery straps require resting time between attempts.

Excessive attempts in a short period of time can cause heat build-up that can result in failure or breakage.

Always inspect your gear after a recovery, and inspect your vehicles recovery points for signs of fatigue or damage.

GENERAL CARE AND STORAGE

- Never store recovery gear in direct sunlight or on hot or sharp surfaces.
- Never store your recovery equipment wet.
- After use coil the straps without kinks or twists.
- Clean any equipment with warm water and mild detergent, and allow time for the equipment to dry prior to use or storage.
- Check that pins in shackles turn easily; hard to turn pins is a sign of stress and the shackle may need replacing.
- Damaged equipment should be replaced.
- Recovery equipment should never be used for any other purpose than recovering a vehicle.
- Recovery straps must never be used for lifting or conventional towing.

GOVERNMENT WARNING

WARNING – Always follow product instructions. It is important to correctly attach the motor vehicle recovery strap to a motor vehicle. A standard tow ball or vehicle tie-down point is not designed for this purpose and may result in the strap or a vehicle component detaching from a motor vehicle and striking and seriously injuring or killing a person. Only attach the strap to a vehicle recovery point or device that is suitably rated for use with the strap. Incorrect use has previously resulted in seriously injury and death.

Imported and distributed by :

OZtrail Leisure Products

71 Charles Ulm Place

Eagle Farm QLD 4009

www.oztrail.com.au