



Proper Brake Drum Removal Tips

Get Longer Life with Webb Vortex® Unlimited Brake Drums



Winner of HDT Top 20 Products for 2014, the Webb Vortex® Unlimited patented design features external cooling ribs that conduct heat away from brakes for superior heat transfer efficiency. Running at lower temperatures means the Vortex Unlimited performs better than standard drums and can last up to 25% longer. The Webb Vortex® Unlimited brake drum also includes a patent-pending wear indicator that takes the guess work out of wear measurements.

Brake drums are removed from trucks and trailers routinely. Brake drum manufacturers as well as others in the industry have observed over the last few years a disturbing trend to rely on brute impact force to remove a stubborn drum rather than using the proper tool designed for the task. In fact, the issue of proper brake drum removal is now being addressed by ATA's Technology and Maintenance Council. Recommended Practice (RP 662) is in the works now and expected to be released in May 2015.

The hammer, according to Wikipedia invented a couple million years ago, is a great tool for doing many things, but in the battle of removing a brake drum that may be "frozen" onto the hub pilot pads due to corrosion, it can cost you more than the effort to swing it.

Yes, the hammer can and will get the job done in most cases. However it is not without cost(s):



- Potential injury
- Potential damage to surrounding components (wheel stud threads, drive stud threads or hubcaps) if the operator misses or is not careful
- The inability to reuse the removed drum due to damage.

Hammering on a brake drum can cause damage that might go unseen or un-noticed. Cracks can form, due to impact, in the structure of the material and compromise the integrity of the drum. In most cases, the difficulty in removal is caused by heavy corrosion in the drum to the hub face area.

Note: Any drum that has been impacted in order to "break it loose" during removal should be replaced with a new Webb drum.

Tips to remove "frozen" drums

- Apply corrosion penetrant between the drum and hub mating surfaces
- Allow enough time for release of frozen joint
- Use the proper tool to remove the brake drum (there are many devices available designed to remove brake drums, such as jaws, clamps and drum pullers)

Note: If a corrosion penetrant is used, all mating surfaces between the drum and hub must be thoroughly cleaned before a new Webb drum is installed.

The added cost to acquire the appropriate tool for removing stubborn brake drums will save money in the long run. Over and above avoiding the potential injuries to your technicians, scrapping otherwise reusable brake drums due to hammer damage will simply increase your brake drum part costs over time. To reduce parts usage cost and ensure ability to re-use good, properly measured drums look into the procurement of the proper tools. Check with your heavy duty tool supplier for their recommendations.



If you are a TMC member, watch for RP 662 "Outboard Drum Removal/Installation Procedures" available in May.

Refer to TMC RP's for all proper wheel-end maintenance procedures

