

GUIDE TO CAR LIFT MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR



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There are very few pieces of equipment in your shop that are as important as your vehicle lifts. They let you perform service and repairs efficiently, profitably and with minimal maintenance. That said, they're not maintenance-free. Preventive maintenance minimizes downtime and increases the life of your lift. Most importantly, it reduces the chance of injury to your service techs and to your customer's property.

This guide provides information and checklists for daily, weekly and monthly inspection and maintenance to keep your lifts operating well into the future.

DAILY INSPECTION

CHECKLIST:

- Before the first vehicle of the day, raise and lower each lift to ensure it's operating properly.** Does it rise smoothly? Are the posts or platforms rising simultaneously so that everything remains level? Are the restraint mechanisms for the arms and carriage locking latches working properly?
- Inspect your lifts' cables, hoses and chains.** Are there any signs of wear? If any wires are broken you should immediately stop service on the lift and replace the cable.
- Every time a lift is operated, perform a quick check.** Do you see any leaks or any other obvious malfunctions? Is there anything in the tracks or carriage—tools, shop rags, anything?
- Check accessibility & readability of the safety labels and rated load capacity.**

WEEKLY INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

CHECKLIST:

- Check safety locks.** Are they in good operating condition?
- Lubricate cable pulleys, chain rollers and safety lock pivot points.** Use general purpose oil to keep everything running smoothly.
- Check cable connections, bolts and pins.** Do you need to make any adjustments so that these are properly mounted and have the correct torque?
- Check all nuts and bolts.** Does anything need tightening?
- Replace any and all faulty parts.** Don't operate the lift without all parts in perfect working order.

MONTHLY INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

CHECKLIST:

- Check and lubricate all safety mechanisms.**
- Spray cables with penetrating oil and wipe down.** This will help protect your cables from corrosive agents and should extend life and prevent failure.
- Check anchor bolts.** Do they need tightening?
- Check all columns.** Are they square and plumb?
- Check all pivot arm pins.** Are they properly secure?
- Inspect all moving parts.** Are any of them worn or defective? Replace them.

ANNUAL INSPECTION

The Automotive Lift Institute standards require every vehicle lift be inspected once every year, at a minimum, by a Qualified Lift Inspector in accordance with ANSI/ALI ALOIM-2008 (R2013). This inspector will thoroughly examine the structural integrity, operating mechanisms, safety systems and maintenance of the lift, as well as any modifications the lift may have undergone.

Spotlight on Your

LIFT'S CABLES

A lift's cables are one of the most critical things to inspect. It's worth an extra page to call out the specific, detailed care you should take in ensuring they're in safe operating order at all times.

- **Replace cables the moment you notice damage.** If any wires are broken, you should immediately stop service on the lift and replace the cable. If no damage is apparent, replace them at least every three to five years.
- **Maintain cables so that they're well lubricated.** Each wire strand needs internal and external lubrication at all times. Use penetrating oil to penetrate to the core of the cable. To ensure the inner layers of the cable remain properly lubricated, never go longer than three months without applying lubrication.
- **Check sheaves and rollers for wear.** Regularly give them a good look to make sure that they're running freely. If they are not, use a standard grease or gear oil on the pin or axle only, being careful to not apply to the inside surface of the sheave. You can apply by hand, with a brush or with a dispenser that sprays or pumps lubricant.

KEEP DETAILED RECORDS TO KEEP YOUR TECHS AND YOUR SHOP SAFE

Detailed, up-to-date files on your lift's maintenance, repairs and inspections are essential. You also need all third-party certification documentation. These are required for any kind of warranty claim you might need to make. Just as importantly, they can prove you weren't negligent in your responsibilities should an unfortunate accident occur where a tech is injured or a customer's property is damaged.

American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and Automotive Lift Institute (ALI)

American National Standards Institute and Automotive Lift Institute outline the requirements for safe operation, maintenance and inspection of vehicle lifts, including:

- Qualifications, training and responsibilities for lift operators
- Procedures, documentation and frequency of lift maintenance
- Periodic qualified lift inspection

For complete information on these and other guidelines on vehicle lifts, visit the Automotive Lift Institute's website at www.autolift.org.



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