

HOW WE TESTED

Friction, Function, and a Saltwater Dip

In our testing of six new, top-quality snatch blocks, we looked at real-world hardware ergonomics, and we measured, tugged on, and took apart each piece of gear. We rated each block on line loading ease, both with a slack sheet and with one that was already under tension.

Low friction was deemed a desirable trait, so we built a jig that used hydraulic pressure to induce line load. This allowed us to put each set of blocks under identical load and measure how easily their sheaves turned. We monitored the load in the closed loop with a strain gauge and used a spring scale to measure how much force it took to move the tensioned line.

Our definition of efficiency was defined by how easily the line loop moved



under fixed loads of 100 and 200 pounds.

We compared several older weathered and worn snatch blocks with the new being evaluated, and we also tested a set of Harken fixed Black Magic blocks as a benchmark for low-friction operation.

Using a magnet, magnifying glass, and manufacturer specifications, testers rated the quality of each block's metal components. To test corrosion resistance, we soaked each block for three days in a saltwater bath and noted any visible oxidation.

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Blocks are suspended in a saltwater bath (above) to check corrosion resistance. A test jig (right) is used to evaluate block friction.

