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# FIVE-MINUTE INSTANT EXPERT:

## SNATCH STRAPS

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In our new column brought to you by Drivetech 4x4, we're going to make you an instant expert on a specific topic every issue.

**First up: the no-bull guide to snatch recoveries!**

# 1

Righto, you're stuck, but you've got a mate, a snatch-strap and a couple of shackles. In the right hands, a combination to get you unstuck quick. In the wrong hands... snatch straps have resulted in deaths more than once before, so you need to know how to use one properly. First – let's talk the strap itself. Check that it says it's a 'snatch' strap like this 8,000kg

snatch strap from Drivetech 4x4, which means it is designed with a certain amount of stretch built into it, that's crucial for what we're about to do. Winch extension straps and tree trunk protectors aren't suitable for snatch recoveries. Be sure to choose a snatch strap that's minimum breaking strength is two to three times your GVM. Next, check that the strap is clean, in good nick and free from any physical cuts or nicks that could cause it to fail.



# 2

Next, let's talk attaching it to the vehicle. Always, always use proper, rated recovery points. Tie-down points that have a couple of spot-welds on them are not suitable for this job. You need an eyelet or a hook that's bolted to the vehicle's chassis rails, or is welded to the bullbar. Towballs are never, ever okay, as they're designed for gradual loads like a trailer would apply, not shock loads. The pin that secures your tow-hitch is okay in a stretch – a rated hitch-receiver tow point is better.



# 3

Now you've got the strap attached to the stuck vehicle, it's time to bring the recovering vehicle in. When hooking up the strap, it's solid practice to ensure there aren't any twists in it. You need to check that there aren't any knots in the strap, because you'll never get them undone again and they compromise strength. The easiest way to do this, is to ensure there aren't any twists in the strap when you attach it to the vehicle.



# 4

Snatch recoveries involve huge forces, but they don't necessarily have to. A lot of the time, you'll find that a gentle tug will free a stuck vehicle, so rather than back right up and hit it in third-gear, take up the slack and see if you can tow the vehicle free. It's safe, it's a lot easier on all the gear involved (including the vehicles) and it works more often than you'd think.



# 6

Using your UHF's or someone external to the vehicles but well out of the way, the front vehicle takes off in second-gear low-range. As the tension is taken up, the stuck vehicle starts to drive – enough to spin the wheels slowly to assist in the recovery, but not excessively. If everything goes to plan, the strap should stretch as the tension's taken up, and then as it recoils it will sling-shot the stuck vehicle up and out of where it's stuck. If it doesn't work, hop under the vehicle and figure out why. Move rocks or dig away mud and sand to clear a path, then give it another try.



# 7

When you're back home and it's time to clean muddy gear, there's a simple way to do it – clean water, and lots of it. Fill a bucket and gently massage the mud out of the strap. Don't pressure-wash it as this only forces grit into the strap and can damage it. Leave the strap to dry somewhere out of the sun, then roll it up and store it for use next time, because you can be sure there'll always be a next-time!



# 5

Okay, so the gentle tug didn't work, and you need a decent snatch recovery. Back up the recovering vehicle so there's a decent amount of slack in the strap, and then position the strap with an S up near the recovering vehicle. That way, the person in the vehicle being recovered can watch as the strap takes up tension, and you can ensure that it's not going to knot up on itself in the process.



The new Drivetech 4x4 range of recovery gear includes complete recovery kits, underbody armour and high-lift jacks. The 8t and 11t snatch straps are available separately for \$65 and \$85 respectively, or as part of the \$209 Jumbo Recovery Kit or the \$339 Mammoth Recovery Kit.

To find out more or find the details of your nearest stockist visit [www.drivetech4x4.com.au](http://www.drivetech4x4.com.au) or call 1800 463 646.