

## DESIGN OF STRUT SYSTEMS

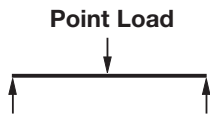
### Beams

Beams are usually defined as horizontal members which are subjected to vertical loads such as shelves, platforms or supports for pipes, conduits or cable trays. The following is a brief overview of common beam configurations:

### Simple Beam

An example of a simple beam is a length of channel placed across two cylinders. When a load is applied, the channel will support the load because of its stiffness. The cylinders serve to support the channel, but do not interfere with its natural tendency to flex or bend. Simple beam analysis is used almost universally for beam comparisons, even though it is seldom practical in field installations.

A cable tray or conduit trapeze hanger closely resembles a simple beam.



### Fixed Beam

This type of fixed support restricts the movement of the ends of the channel when a load is applied. Because of this, the stiffness of the channel at the ends and center is employed to resist the load. The result is a load capability which is greater than that of an identical simple beam.

The fixed beam can be approximated by bolting or welding a length of channel to rigid supports.



### Cantilever Beam

Cantilever beams are often viewed as variations of a fixed beam, but they have special characteristics of their own. One end of the channel is firmly attached to a rigid support while the other end remains completely free.

A shelf bracket is an example of a cantilever beam.



### Continuous Beam

This beam configuration is commonly used in lighting installations. The continuous beam possesses traits of both the simple and fixed beams. When equal loads are applied to all spans simultaneously, the counter-balancing effect of the loads on both sides of a support restricts the movement of the channel at the support, similar to that of the fixed beam. The end spans behave substantially like simple beams.

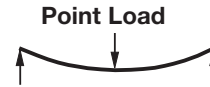


Continuous beam installations can typically support 20% more load than a simple beam of the same span with approximately half the deflection.

Therefore, simple beam data should be used for a general comparison only. An example of this configuration is found in a long run of channel when installed across several supports to form a number of spans.

### Deflection

Deflection, commonly referred to as "sag", is inherent in applying a load to a beam and cannot be avoided. Any and all beams will deflect when loaded. The amount of deflection will vary depending upon the material and the stiffness or moment of inertia. The deflection equations in this section show that increasing the stiffness can be increased by a variety of methods. Increasing the depth of the channel is the most direct method.



The material used affects deflection in a manner which is significantly different from the way in which it affects load capacity. The deflection under load is inversely proportional to a material property known as the "modulus of elasticity" designated by "E".

The modulus of elasticity is dependent upon the basic composition of the material and is not necessarily related to the material's strength.

## Safety Factor

The design loads given for strut beam loads are based on a simple beam condition using allowable stress of 25,000 psi. This allowable stress results in a safety factor of 1.68. This is based upon a virgin steel minimum yield strength of 33,000 psi cold worked during rolling to an average yield stress of 42,000 psi.

Aluminum typically has an elastic modulus which is 1/3 that of steel even though they may have identical strength. As a result, the deflection of aluminum channel will be three times that of steel channel under equal loading. In areas where structures will be subject to general viewing, deflection can produce a displeasing effect. To the untrained eye, a sagging channel may appear to be a result of poor design or excessive loading. This is not usually the case. Many properly designed channel installations will show a noticeable deflection at their designed loads. In areas where cosmetics are not important, deflection should not be a factor. Designing an entire installation based on minimal deflection could result in an over designed structure. This translates into increased material and installation cost. Where cosmetics are important, it may be necessary to limit the deflection to an aesthetically pleasing amount. This "acceptable deflection" amount is typically given as a fraction of the span. **1/240 span** deflection is typically the limit where the amount of deflection appears negligible. For example, a beam span of 240" would be allowed 1" (240/240) of deflection at the mid point. A 120" span would only be allowed 1/2" (120/240) of deflection. The maximum load for the channel must be limited in order to remain under these deflection requirements. The allowable load resulting in 1/240 span deflection is posted in the beam load chart for each channel size.

For even more stringent deflection requirements, an allowable load is listed in the beam load charts which results in **1/360 span** deflection. This amount of deflection is sometimes used for beams in finished ceilings that are to be plastered.

## Twisting & Lateral Bracing

Loading of strut on long spans can cause torsional stress, resulting in the tendency of the strut to twist or bend laterally. This phenomenon reduces the allowable beam loads as shown in the beam loading charts. It is recommended that long spans be supported in a manner to prevent twisting (fixed ends), and that the channel have adequate lateral bracing. Many typical strut applications provide this

support and bracing inherently. Piping, tubing, cable trays, or conduits mounted to the strut with straps and clamps prevent twisting or lateral movement. If no such lateral support exists, contact the factory for loading recommendations.

## Columns

Columns are vertical members which carry loads in compression. One common example of a channel column is the vertical members of a storage rack.

In theory, a column will carry a load equal to its cross sectional area multiplied by the ultimate compressive stress of the material of which the column is made. In reality, there are many factors affecting the load capacity of a column, such as the tendency to buckle or twist laterally (torsional-flexural buckling), the type of connection at the top or bottom, the eccentricity of the load application, and material imperfections. Several of these failure modes have been considered in the allowable column load tables shown in the "Channel" section of this catalog.

Cooper B-Line strongly recommends that the engineer perform a detailed study of the many variable conditions before the selection process begins.

## Design Factors to be Considered

The loading capacity of channel depends primarily on the material, its cross-sectional design, and the beam or column loading configuration. It should be noted that if two lengths of channel have identical designs and configurations, the one made of the stronger base material will support a larger load. Therefore, any comparison of channel should begin by determining whether the materials are approximately equal in strength.

The column loading chart for each channel lists the allowable load for each channel in compression. This load varies depending on the support condition or "K-factor".

Several "K-factors" are listed, which correspond to the following support conditions:

- K = .8 pinned top - fixed bottom
- K = .65 fixed top - fixed bottom
- K = 1.0 pinned top - pinned bottom
- K = 1.2 free top - fixed bottom

There are a number of physical properties which are important to the complete design of a channel member; the "section modulus" designated as "Sx" or "Sy", "moment of inertia" designated by "Ix" or "Iy", and the "radius of gyration" which is given as "rx" or "ry".

Every structural material has its own maximum or ultimate stress, which is usually expressed in "pounds per square inch" (pascals). Any load which causes a member to fail is referred to as its "ultimate" load. In order to prevent channel from being accidentally loaded up to or beyond its ultimate load, a safety factor is included into the design. The ultimate load is divided by the safety factor to obtain the "recommended" or "allowable" working load.

When evaluating channel under various beam conditions, it is often more convenient to compare in terms of the ultimate or recommended "bending moment". Simple equations show the stress is directly proportional to the bending moment.

Therefore, comparing bending moments can save time in repeated calculations. The chart containing Formulas on Common Beam Loadings (following page) shows how to calculate the bending moment for various configurations and load conditions. It should be noted that the bending moment is usually not constant, but varies along the length of the span. However, the channel must be designed for a single point, which is the point of maximum bending moment.

For information regarding dynamic or seismic design, contact Cooper B-Line's Home Office.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Torque







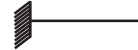
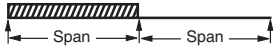
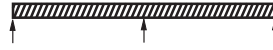
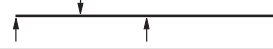

The torque values given throughout the catalog are to be used as a guide only. The relationship between the applied torque or torque wrench reading and the actual tension created in the bolt may be substantially different. For example, a dry non-lubricated bolt with a heavy plating may rate 50% as efficient as a bolt which is lubricated with a mixture of heavy oil and graphite. Other important factors affecting torque-tension relationships include friction under the bolt head or nut, hole tolerances, and torque wrench tolerances. Accuracy of many commercial torque wrenches may vary as much as plus or minus 25%.

### Charts and Tables

Charts and tables in this section are compiled from information published by nationally recognized organizations and are intended for use as a guide only. Cooper B-Line recommends that users of this information determine the validity of such information as applied to their own application.

# Technical Data

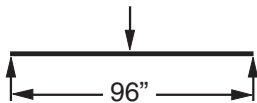
The data shown in the beam load charts for appropriate channels on page(s) 16 thru 37 is for simply supported, single span beams with a uniformly distributed load. For other loading and/or support conditions, use the appropriate factor from the chart below.

LOAD AND SUPPORT CONDITION	Load Factor	Deflection Factor
Simple Beam - Uniform Load 	1.00	1.00
Simple Beam - Concentrated Load at Center 	.50	.80
Simple Beam - Two Equal Concentrated Loads at 1/4 Points 	1.00	1.10
Beam Fixed at Both Ends - Uniform Load 	1.50	.30
Beam Fixed at Both Ends - Concentrated Load at Center 	1.00	.40
Cantilever Beam - Uniform Load 	.25	2.40
Cantilever Beam - Concentrated Load at End 	.12	3.20
Continuous Beam - Two Equal Spans - Uniform Load on One Span 	1.30	.92
Continuous Beam - Two Equal Spans - Concentrated Load on Both Spans 	1.00	.42
Continuous Beam - Two Equal Spans - Concentrated Load at Center of One Span 	.62	.71
Continuous Beam - Two Equal Spans - Concentrated Load at Center of Both Spans 	.67	.48

## EXAMPLES:

### PROBLEM:

Calculate the maximum allowable load and corresponding deflection of a simply supported B22 beam with a concentrated load at midspan as shown.



### SOLUTION:

From beam load chart for B22 (page 22), maximum allowable Load is A and the corresponding deflection is B.  
Multiplying by the appropriate factors shown in the chart above.

LOAD = A x load factor = \_\_\_\_\_  
DEFLECTION = B x deflection factor = \_\_\_\_\_

### PROBLEM:

Calculate the maximum allowable load and corresponding deflection of a cantilever B52 beam with a uniformly distributed load.



### SOLUTION:

From beam load chart for B52 (page 33), maximum allowable load is A and the corresponding deflection is B.  
Multiplying by the appropriate factors shown in chart above.

LOAD = A x load factor = \_\_\_\_\_  
DEFLECTION = B x deflection factor = \_\_\_\_\_