IMPORTANT

Read these instructions completely before installing, using or attempting to repair this product. If you have any questions, call Premier at (800) 255-5387 or (503) 234-9202.

Installation, Inspection, Operation & Maintenance Guide

Model 320 / 320A Hinge Assembly

IMPORTANT

Read these instructions completely before installing, using or attempting to repair this product. If you have any questions, call Premier at (800) 255-5387 or (503) 234-9202.
Selecting The Right Equipment

Whatever your application, selecting the proper equipment for the job is very important. Proper selection along with regular inspection and maintenance will help keep operating costs minimal while providing long life to each component. Below are general guidelines for selecting Premier Couplings and Drawbar Eyes. If you feel that your application is unique, please give Premier a call so that we may help you through the selection process.

Follow these four steps to ensure proper selection of Premier Couplings and Drawbar Eyes.

Step 1: Determine “Gross Trailer(s) Weight”

“Gross Trailer(s) Weight” is usually determined by the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR). This information is attached to the trailer by the trailer manufacturer.

Example only, each application may vary and should be considered unique.

For “Double Trailer” configurations, only the rear trailer is considered when selecting your Premier Coupling or Drawbar Eye. In this example, a Coupling and Drawbar Eye with a “Gross Trailer Weight” rating of 40,000 lbs. (18,143 kg) would be the minimum rating acceptable for normal, over-the-road applications (see Tongue Weight section below).

Example only, each application may vary and should be considered unique.

For “Triple Trailers”, only the two most rearward trailers are considered in selecting your Premier Coupling or Drawbar Eye. In this example, a Coupling and Drawbar Eye with a “Gross Trailer Weight” rating of 80,000 lbs. (36,287 kg) would be the minimum acceptable for normal, over-the-road applications (see Tongue Weight section below).

Step 2: Determine “Tongue Weight Capacity”

“Tongue Weight Capacity” is the maximum expected weight at the drawbar eye. If a hinged drawbar is used, the maximum weight will be approximately 1/2 the overall drawbar weight. If a non-hinged drawbar is used and the actual tongue weight is not known, you can approximate the weight by multiplying the GVWR of the towed trailer by 15%. However, each application is unique and the best practice is to weigh the tongue when the trailer is loaded to its GVWR.

Step 3: Considering Operating Conditions and Environments

Environments such as rough uneven roads or off-road use can dramatically increase shock loads to both drawbar eyes and couplings. In general, increasing the “Gross Trailer Weight” (Step 1:) and “Tongue Weight Capacity” (Step 2:) by a minimum of 25% will be sufficient for many applications. Even if an application is used off-road occasionally, the minimum increase necessary for Gross Trailer and Tongue Weight is 25%. Certain types of equipment and/or operating practices can also dramatically increase loads through equipment binding and/or improper loading practices. Of special concern is high tongue weight. However, each application is unique and every environment different, therefore your application may require more than 25%.

Once both “Gross Trailers(s) Weight” (Step 1:) and “Tongue Weight Capacity” (Step 2:) have been determined, evaluate your operating conditions and apply an appropriate margin of safety.

Step 4: Browse Premier Product Catalog

Browse the Premier Product Catalog and refer to the “Specifications” section of each product. Be sure to review the “Understanding Premier Load Specifications” section and “Coupling to Drawbar Eye Cross-Reference” sheet on the next couple pages.
Understanding Premier Load Specifications

Each Premier product undergoes extensive design and testing prior to being introduced. We use the latest in Computer Aided Design and Analysis Software as well as physical destructive tests. Premier’s published load specifications are the maximum load a given product or part will withstand without failure. Premier’s testing procedures closely follow the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) guidelines of Recommended Practice for testing Couplings and Drawbar Eyes (SAE J847 & J849).

Weight of Trailer(s) being towed (see Steps 1-4 on page 4).

- Maximum occurring tongue weight. Static as well as dynamic loads.
- Maximum load on latch or upper coupling surface containing drawbar eye. Latches and upper coupling surfaces are not designed for sustained load at this stated capacity.
- The largest x-section in eyelet portion of eye. Used to determine compatibility with coupling.
- Minimum inside diameter of eyelet portion of eye. Used to determine compatibility with coupling.
- Minimum inside diameter of eyelet portion of eye. Used to determine compatibility with coupling.

Maximum Gross Trailer Weight: 30,000 lbs. (13,607 kg)
Maximum Tongue Weight: 4,500 lbs. (2,041 kg)
Ultimate Latch/Upward Vertical Capacity: 5,000 lbs. (2,267 kg)
Maximum Eye X-Section: 1 13/16 in. (46 mm)
Minimum Eye Opening: 2 in. (51 mm)
Unit Weight: 12.6 lbs. (5.7 kg)

Importance of Inspection and Maintenance

Safety is our #1 Priority: Through high quality designs and unsurpassed quality control procedures, Premier assures our customers that our focus on safety continues to be our #1 priority.

Scheduled Inspection & Maintenance: Regularly scheduled inspection and maintenance are essential for maintaining safe and efficient operations whether you are using Couplings, Drawbar Eyes, Jacks, Hinge Assemblies, or any other Premier product. Inspection and maintenance are necessary for proper function and will also keep repair costs to a minimum.

Technical Literature: Premier provides important literature to assist you with our products. We package and attach Installation, Inspection, Operation & Maintenance Guides, or Service Guides, to each of our major products. This literature is also available to view and/or print from our website at www.premier-mfg.com. These supply you with important information and help guide you through installation, inspection, operation, routine maintenance and part replacement.

Wear Gages: In accordance with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations, we created Wear Gages to assist you in determining the wear limits of Premier couplings and drawbar eyes. See details on catalog pages 7 & 75.

Additional Product Resources at Your Fingertips

Customer Service: We are always here to support you. Do you need additional information or assistance? Your phone calls are greeted by our courteous receptionist, during business hours. We have exceptional, personable Customer Service Reps for you to rely on. If you have product questions or want to place an order, you can speak directly with one of our experienced and knowledgeable Customer Service Representatives.

Sales Representatives: Would you like on site training or assistance? Contact one of our veteran Premier Sales Reps for more information about product training for your staff. Or be sure to visit with them at a Trade Show (see website for schedule).

www.premier-mfg.com: Our website is an informative resource at your fingertips. In addition to our Installation and Service Guides, you will find our Sales Representatives, distributor locations, online catalog pages, product specifications, how to select product, trade show schedule, and links to trucking resources.
Selecting The Right Equipment

**Coupling - to - Drawbar Eye, Cross Reference Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Couplings</th>
<th>Drawbar Eyes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
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<td>24</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

† Saf-Tite Product

* Industrial Application

**CAUTION:** Verify that both the coupling’s and drawbar eye’s rated capacities meet your application(s) requirements.
**SAFETY WARNING**

This product is designed for towing under normal conditions within the stated gross trailer weight capacity of the hinge assembly being used. Do not overload or abuse this product. Overloading or abuse may lead to property damage, severe injury, or death.

**Max. Gross Trailer Weight (pair):** 100,000 lbs. (45,359 kg)
- **Bushing O.D.:** 3 1/2 in. (89 mm)
- **Bushing Length:** 4 1/2 in. (114 mm)
- **Unit Weight (pair):** 50.2 lbs. (22.8 kg)

**STANDARD INSTALLATION DRAWING**

Accepts 3 in. (76 mm) standard channel or square tubing.

**PARTS & ACCESSORIES**

**Parts included**
- 321B Bolt
- 321C Locknut
- 321D Flat Washer (2)
- 344/344A Bushing
- 350 Bracket
- 351 Bolt & Nut (2)
- 352 Taper Pin
- 354 Housing
- 359 Flange

**Bushing Replacements**
(Use ONLY Premier’s Bushings):
- 344 (Rubber) or 344A (Poly)
The 320 and 320A Hinge Assemblies are ONLY to be used and maintained with Premier parts. Any substitution or use of non-Premier parts in a 320/320A Hinge Assembly VOIDS ALL PRODUCT WARRANTY.

**Installation Procedure:**

1. 320 and 320A Hinge Assemblies must be installed to comply with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations. Specifically, Section 393.70, Paragraph C: “Towing of Full Trailers.” Prior to install or operation, consult with local, State and Federal agencies, as there may be additional applicable laws governing the installation and use of this product.

2. Prior to welding, Premier strongly suggests building a jig to properly locate each mating 354 Housing and 350 Bracket. The jig should ensure the two Hinge Assemblies are of equal height above the ground, parallel and equidistant from the trailer centerline. The outside edge of each housing is to be placed 3/8” from the adjacent inside surface of the bracket as shown in Figure 1.

3. All welds used to install the 320 and 320A Hinge Assemblies must follow one of the three attached Welding Procedure Specifications; GMAW, SMAW or FCAW. Welding should only be performed by a certified welder skilled in structural welding practices.

4. All weld locations must be clean, paint free and void of any moisture, oil, grease, oxides or loose or thick scale.

Because 320/320A Hinge Assemblies operate in pairs, the installation instructions below are to be simultaneously followed for each hinge assembly.

**354 Housing Installation:**

5. The 354 Housings accommodate a front end structure consisting of 3” channel or square tubing. The large welding tab on the housing may be heated and bent outward 10° or inward 20° (see Figure 2) to conform to a wide range of front end angles. Note that the weld tabs on both housings must be bent equally and when the install is complete, the two housings are to be equidistant from the trailer centerline and their bores aligned.

6. Fit-up, between the 3” tube (or channel) and the mounting surface of the 354 Housing, must be flush, as shown in Figure 3. Failure to have a flush fit prior to welding will cause the capacities to be negatively affected. Figures 3A and 3B show two possible examples of an improper fit-up that must be avoided.

7. Attach the 354 Housing to the front end tube with a minimum 3/8” fillet weld that encompasses the entire interface between housing and tube as shown in Figure 3.

**350 Bracket Installation:**

8. The two 350 Brackets must be equal in height above the ground, parallel, equidistant from the trailer centerline and their bases must be flush with the mounting structure surface. Misaligned brackets or a failure to have a flush fit with the mounting surface prior to welding will cause poor hinge operation as well as negatively affect their capacities.

9. Tack weld the 350 Brackets in place and test fit the 354 Housings. Before proceeding, make sure the bores of the housings align with the bores of the brackets and the 3/8” gap exists between each housing and bracket as shown in Figure 1.

10. Attach the 350 Bracket to the mounting surface with a minimum 3/8” fillet weld around the outer and inner surfaces of the bracket as shown in Figure 4.

**320 / 320A Hinge Assembly after Welding**

(320: Premier 344 Rubber Bushings only)  
(320A: Premier 344A Poly Bushings only)

11. Allow the finished structures to cool.

12. Place the 359 Flange into the bore on the vehicle centerline side of the 350 Bracket as illustrated in Figure 5. Make certain that the slit in the flange lines up with the slit in the bracket (shown in Figure 4).

13. Slide the 344/344A Bushing into the 354 Housing making sure that the smaller diameter end of the tapered bore in the bushing is towards the 359 Flange. Place the housing into the 350 Bracket aligning the bores as much as
Model 320 / 320A Hinge Assembly

INSTALLATION

14. Slide the 352 Taper pin into the 350 Bracket bore from the opposite end of the 359 Flange (see Figure 5). Using a rubber mallet only, tap the taper pin into the bracket until the head of the taper pin is flush against the bracket.

15. Place one 321D Washer onto the 321B Bolt and slide it through the 352 Taper pin. Place the second 321D Washer and 321C Locknut onto the end of the bolt. Prior to tightening, check to make sure the 3/8” gap between the 354 Housing and 350 Bracket exists (see Figure 1).

16. Torque the 321C Locknut to 60 ft-lbs. Test the hinge assemblies for desired rotational stiffness. If a stiffer hinge is desired, tighten the locknut in 10-20 ft-lb increments. DO NOT EXCEED 200 ft-lbs of TORQUE.

17. Tighten the 351 Bolts to 80 ft-lbs of torque. These bolts compress the 350 Bracket, clamping both the 359 Flange and 352 Taper pin. Note: Both 351 Bolts must be loosened prior to any future adjustment of the of the 321B Bolt for hinge stiffness. After adjustment, the 351 Bolts must be retorqued to 80 ft-lbs.

18. An “IMPORTANT WARNINGS!” sticker was enclosed. This must be attached to the front end, adjacent to the drawbar eye, visible for the end user to read.
Model 320 / 320A Hinge Assembly

**Figure 3**

![Figure 3 illustration](image)

**Figure 4**

![Figure 4 illustration](image)
1. Visually inspect the hinge assembly for cracks, impact damage and/or deformation before each and every use. Do NOT use if any of these conditions exist.

2. Over time, slack may develop in the hinge assembly due to normal bushing wear. Therefore, clean and inspect every 90 days or sooner if your application dictates, and adjust or replace the bushings if slack is noted.

3. To check for bushing wear, place a crowbar near the center of the bracket adjacent to the housing. Apply pressure to the bar and visually test for free-play between either the bushing & the housing or the bushing & the taper pin. If free-play is noted tighten and/or replace bushing.

NOTE: Pulling forward or backward while the trailer brakes are set is not an acceptable method to check for bushing wear.

4. This product is designed to be operated within the free rotation limits of the coupling to drawbar eye connection. It is the responsibility of the vehicle designer/end user to ensure that these limits are not exceeded (do not bind-up/jackknife).

5. WARNING: Prior to towing, make certain that adequately rated safety chains have been properly connected.

6. Never weld on any Premier part in order to repair damaged or worn areas. Field and/or shop weld repairs are inadequate and may further weaken the hinge assembly.

**IMPORTANT GUIDELINES that apply to all Premier Hinge Assemblies**
- Never attempt weld repair of damaged or worn components
- Clean and inspect hinge assemblies for damage or excessive wear before each and every use
- All welds should be performed by a certified welder skilled in structural welding practices
- The mounting structure the hinges are welded to must be of sufficient strength to withstand load ratings of hinges
- Do not bind-up (Jackknife) any application as stresses can cause damage to products or components, resulting in failure and detachment of the trailer while in use
### GMAW

**Identification #:** PGM-1  
**Revision:** 0  
**Date:** 2/1/00  
**By:** PT

<table>
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<th>Company Name</th>
<th>Premier Manufacturing Co.</th>
<th>Authorized By</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>Type: Manual</td>
<td>Semi-Automatic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting PQR No. (or) PQA</td>
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<td>Prequalified</td>
<td>No</td>
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**Joint Design Used**

- **Position:** Double Weld (X)
- **Electrical Characteristics:**
  - Single (X)
  - Double Weld (X)
  - Vertical Position: 1G (X)

**Welding Procedure:**

- **Type:** All Fillets, Duts (See Attached)
- **Base Metal:** M-I-P-S-1 Group 1 & 2
- **Root Opening:** Double Face Dimension: 10/32
- **Groove Angle:** V-groove (3-3/4)
- **Backing Strip:** Yes (X)
- **Method:** Mech/Thermal

**Filler Metals / AWS Classification:**

- **E70S-A: 0.036**: ODCP
- **E70S-A: 0.045**: ODCP

**Shielding:**

- Gas: CO₂
- Interpass Cleaning: Mechanical

**Post weld heat treatment:**

**Preheat:**

- Min: 100°F
- Max: 500°F

**WELDING PROCEDURE**

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<tr>
<th>Pass or Weld Layer(s)</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Diam.</th>
<th>Type &amp; Polarity</th>
<th>Amperage or Wire Feed Speed</th>
<th>Volts</th>
<th>Travel Speed</th>
<th>Joint Details</th>
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<td>ODCP</td>
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<tr>
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<td>GMAW</td>
<td>E70S-A</td>
<td>0.045</td>
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<td>290-269</td>
<td>27-31</td>
<td>13 ± 1 RPM</td>
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### SMAW

**Identification #:** PSM-1  
**Revision:** 0  
**Date:** 2/1/00  
**By:** PT

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<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Joint Design Used**

- **Position:** Double Weld (X)
- **Electrical Characteristics:**
  - Single (X)
  - Double Weld (X)
  - Vertical Position: 1G (X)

**Welding Procedure:**

- **Type:** All Fillets, Duts (See Attached)
- **Base Metal:** M-I-P-S-1 Group 1 & 2
- **Root Opening:** Double Face Dimension: 10/32
- **Groove Angle:** V-groove (3-3/4)
- **Backing Strip:** Yes (X)
- **Method:** Mech/Thermal

**Filler Metals / AWS Classification:**

- **E70S-A: 0.036**: ODCP
- **E70S-A: 0.045**: ODCP

**Shielding:**

- Gas: CO₂
- Interpass Cleaning: Mechanical

**Post weld heat treatment:**

**Preheat:**

- Min: 100°F
- Max: 500°F

**WELDING PROCEDURE**

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# ATTENTION!

End Users must read and follow this information.

**DISTRIBUTORS & OEM’S:** Please ensure that your customers are made aware of the following information on this page.

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<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>VERIFY THAT BOTH COUPLING’S AND DRAWBAR EYE’S RATED CAPACITIES MEET YOUR APPLICATION(S) REQUIREMENTS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>DO NOT OVERLOAD COUPLING OR DRAWBAR EYE.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>INSPECT COUPLING, LATCH AND DRAWBAR EYE FOR CRACKS, BENDING DAMAGE OR EXCESSIVE WEAR. <strong>DO NOT USE IF ANY OF THESE CONDITIONS EXIST!</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CHECK FOR GAP BETWEEN CLOSED LATCH AND TOP OF HORN OR COUPLING BALL. <strong>DO NOT USE IF GAP IS 3/8 IN. OR MORE.</strong></td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>MAKE SURE COUPLING IS LATCHED AND THAT LATCH WILL NOT OPEN.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>PRIOR TO USE, ALWAYS CONNECT SAFETY CHAINS OF ADEQUATE STRENGTH FOR LOAD(S) BEING TOWED.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>DO NOT BIND-UP (JACKKNIFE) ANY APPLICATION AS STRESSES CAN CAUSE DAMAGE TO THE COUPLING, DRAWBAR EYE, OTHER COMPONENTS OR ANY COMBINATION OF THEM. JACKKNIFING MAY RESULT IN FAILURE OF PRODUCTS OR COMPONENTS, RESULTING IN DETACHMENT OF THE TRAILER WHILE IN USE.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>DO NOT APPLY LUBRICANTS TO THE COUPLING HOOK OR DRAWBAR EYE LOOP, AS THEY CAN COVER UP POSSIBLE DAMAGE AND ACCELERATE WEAR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ALWAYS ABIDE BY ALL APPLICABLE STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATIONS GOVERNING SAFE AND PROPER TRANSPORTATION.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>NEVER STRIKE ANY OF THESE COMPONENTS WITH A HAMMER OR ANY OTHER DEVICE.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ALWAYS VERIFY PROPER OPERATION OF LATCHING SYSTEM AND COUPLING COMPONENTS PRIOR TO DRIVE OFF.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>NEVER USE A COUPLING THAT YOU DO NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND HOW TO PROPERLY OPERATE AND VERIFY SECURE LATCHING OF.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>NEVER REPLACE ANY PART IN ANY OF PREMIER’S ASSEMBLIES WITH NON-PREMIER COMPONENTS. DOING SO WILL VOID ALL WARRANTY AND POTENTIALLY COMPROMISE THE UNIT’S INTEGRITY, WHICH COULD RESULT IN PROPERTY DAMAGE, SERIOUS INJURY, OR DEATH.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
WARRANTY: We warrant all Premier products to be free from defects in material or workmanship for one year. We will repair or replace, at our option, any Premier product which our examination reveals to be defective, provided that the product is returned to our factory, at Tualatin, Oregon transportation prepaid, within one year of purchase by the first retail purchaser. Our warranty does not extend to products which have been subject to misuse, neglect, improper installation, maintenance or application, nor does our warranty extend to products which have been repaired or altered outside of Premier’s facility unless the repair or alteration has been expressly authorized in writing by Premier. *This warranty is in lieu of all other warranties, express or implied, and excludes warranties of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose and otherwise, and in no event will Premier be liable for incidental, special, contingent or consequential damages.*

DISCLAIMER: Although great care has been taken to ensure accurate information throughout this document, Premier Manufacturing Company must reserve the right to alter any information contained within. These changes include but are not limited to: Dimensional changes, load capacity and availability of any part or assembly.

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