

Carrier Considerations for Hydraulic Breakers

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Hydraulic breakers—and the carriers that run them—are critical pieces of equipment on any job site, and the technologies incorporated into both have improved quite a bit over the years. But even the most modern, high-performance breakers can increase the wear and tear on an excavator or other carrier machine. Matching a breaker attachment to the right machine is essential for maintaining maximum production and safety on site as well as getting the most out of your equipment investment—here are several considerations to help match the right carrier to your breaker attachment.

Carrier

The primary machine considerations for breaker usage are the operating weight, tipping load, length of the boom and arm, overall lift capacity and hydraulic flow characteristics—namely operating pressure, hydraulic flow rate and auxiliary flow rate.

Matching the right size carrier to the breaker attachment is essential for safe and productive operation. You also want to make sure that the carrier has the appropriate hydraulic power to meet the needs of the breaker.

Breaker

Operating an oversized breaker will not only cause unnecessary wear—and even critical damage—to your excavator, it will also be extremely unsafe for the operator and everyone around them, so always check the operating manual or consult with your equipment dealer to make sure that you have the right match.

Many modern breaker attachments are designed with fewer moving parts and wear components than their predecessors. While this does make them more durable, it is still critical that the hydraulic flow requirements be properly matched to the carrier.

Coupler

A breaker attachment should be easy for the operator to attach and operate. Be sure that the carrier has the right coupler for the attachment. Many machines can be outfitted with quick-couplers that make it easier than ever for an operator to attach a breaker to the end of the stick without leaving the cab, but the connections should be checked regularly for dirt and debris which can get into the hydraulic lines and cause unnecessary damage to the machine.

Maintenance

Be sure to follow the manufacturer-recommended maintenance intervals for both the carrier and the breaker attachment. For excavators and other heavy equipment, recommended intervals may change based on application, so be sure to check the manual or consult with your equipment dealer to make sure that you're doing everything that you can to protect your investment.

Sticking to the maintenance intervals with help to ensure that proper tolerances are kept up on tool bushings and other common wear items on breaker attachments. Proper care and maintenance of a breaker will also reduce the wear on the bushings and pins on the carrier and increase the overall life of the machine.

The most critical element to productive operation is that operators must follow the manufacturer's recommended guidelines for safe operation — it is especially important to follow all weight requirements for excavators and breakers, as stability is critical for safe, productive operation on the jobsite.