

BELL SYSTEM PRACTICES
Outside Plant Construction
and Maintenance

SECTION G80.802
Issue 1, June, 1941
AT&T Co Standard

TOOLS
CLIMBER STRAPS AND PADS

Contents	Page
General	1
Description of Straps and Pads	1
Inspection of Straps and Pads	2
Visual Inspection	3
Bending Test for Straps	3
Cleaning and Dressing Straps and Pads	3
Oiling Straps and Pads	4
Precautions	5
Disposition of Defective Straps and Pads	5

1. GENERAL

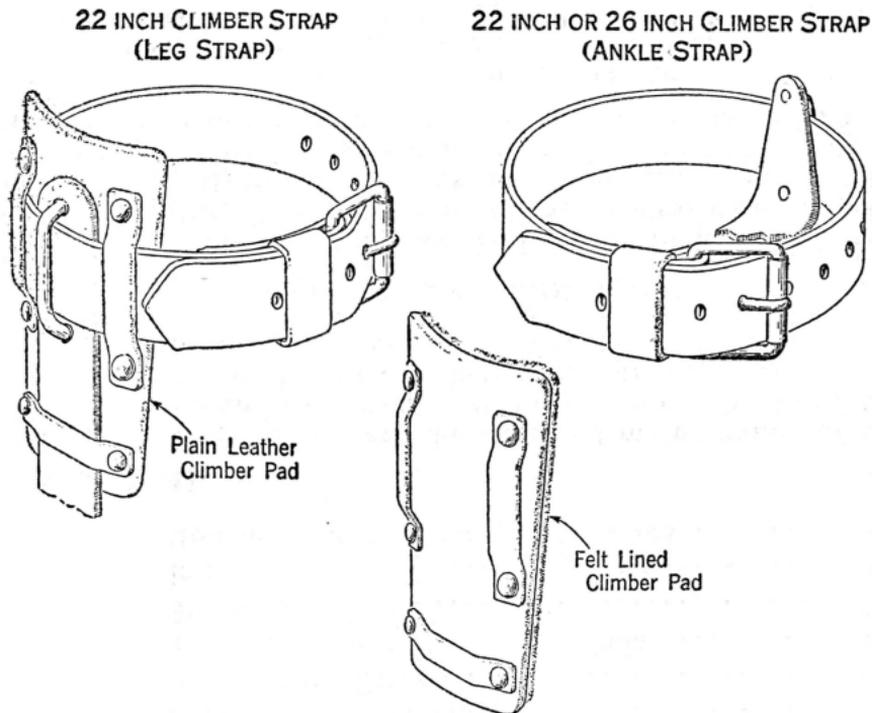
1.01 This section covers the care and maintenance of the straps and pads used with linemen's climbers and the precautions to be observed in their use. This information was formerly contained in Section G80.800.

2. DESCRIPTION OF STRAPS AND PADS

2.01 Climber straps are available in 22 inch and 26 inch lengths. The shorter length is generally suitable for use as a leg strap and also as an ankle strap. The longer length is provided for use when heavy clothing and overshoes are worn or when an ankle strap of this length is desired.

2.02 Two types of climber pads are available for use with climber straps, one a plain leather pad and the other a felt lined leather pad.

2.03 The climber straps and pads are shown in the following illustration.



3. INSPECTION OF STRAPS AND PADS

3.01 Each employee shall assume the responsibility of determining that his climber straps and pads are in good condition at all times. Upon receipt of the straps and pads and at least once each week thereafter he shall inspect them in accordance with Paragraphs 3.04 to 3.07, inclusive, to detect any deterioration or injury that might affect the strength of the straps or the comfort of the pads.

3.02 The employee's supervisor shall make an inspection of the straps and pads at intervals of not more than three months.

3.03 If any of the undesirable conditions listed below are found to exist or if the condition of any strap or pad is such that there is any doubt as to its safety or comfort, it should be replaced at once with one in good condition.

Visual Inspection

3.04 The important conditions to look for when inspecting climber straps are as follows:

- (a) Cracks, cuts, nicks, etc., particularly cuts and tears along the edges of the straps, that would be likely to cause the leather to tear or would otherwise affect the strength of the strap.
- (b) Broken or rotted threads in the stitching.
- (c) Leather hard and dry. Straps in this condition should be treated as outlined in Parts 4 and 5 to determine if they can be restored to a soft and pliable condition.
- (d) Holes for tongue of buckle enlarged excessively.
- (e) Broken or otherwise defective buckle.
- (f) Thickness of leather in any portion of the strap worn to $3/32$ inch or less.

3.05 The important conditions to look for when inspecting climber pads are as follows:

- (a) Broken rivets.
- (b) Broken or torn leather loops.

Bending Test for Straps

3.06 The following bending test should be made only when the leather is soft and pliable. If the leather is hard and dry, it should first be treated as outlined in Parts 4 and 5.

3.07 With the grain (smooth) surface on the outside, bend the climber strap over a mandrel not less than $3/4$ inch in diameter, such as a $3/4$ inch Guy Rod. The strap should be bent snugly around the mandrel to avoid introducing a sharper bend in the leather. The bending test should be made in at least two places, namely, near the buckle end and at the middle of the strap. The strap shall be exchanged for one in good condition if the leather shows any cracks, other than slight surface cracks, when it is tested in this manner.

4. CLEANING AND DRESSING STRAPS AND PADS

4.01 Climber straps and pads should be cleaned and dressed in accordance with the following at intervals of not more than three months. These intervals should be shortened when the straps frequently become wet from rain or perspiration and when they are subjected to contact with paint or creosote. Wet paint and creosote should be

removed from the leather with a dry cloth as soon as practicable.

4.02 The following method has been found satisfactory for cleaning and dressing climber straps and pads:

- (1) Wipe off all surface dirt with a sponge dampened (not saturated) with water. NEVER USE GASOLINE, AS IT TENDS TO CAUSE A DRY CONDITION OF THE LEATHER.
- (2) Rinse the sponge in clear water and squeeze it practically dry, then with the aid of a neutral soap (free from alkali), such as castile soap or white toilet soap, work up a thick, creamy lather.
- (3) Thoroughly wash the entire surface of the leather with the lathered sponge to remove embedded dirt and perspiration, and wipe with a cloth to remove excessive moisture.
- (4) Repeat the procedure outlined in (2), using a good grade of saddle soap.
- (5) Work the lather well into all parts of the strap or pad and place the article in the shade to dry.
- (6) When the lather has practically dried, rub the leather vigorously with a soft cloth.

4.03 In general, treating climber straps and pads with saddle soap at regular intervals will keep the leather soft and pliable for a reasonable length of time. However, from time to time and when the leather cannot be made sufficiently soft and pliable by the saddle soap dressing, it should be oiled as described in Part 5.

5. OILING STRAPS AND PADS

5.01 Climber straps and pads ordinarily require oiling about every six months.

5.02 The following method has been found satisfactory for oiling the leather of climber straps and pads so as to restore it to the proper condition.

- (1) Clean the leather with a neutral soap as outlined in Paragraph 4.02 (1), (2) and (3). OIL APPLIED TO DRY OR DIRTY LEATHER HAS A HARMFUL EFFECT UPON THE FIBRES.

(2) While the leather is still damp, use on each pair of straps and pads about 1/8 ounce (1 teaspoonful) of neatsfoot oil and apply the oil gradually, with the hands, using long, light strokes to work it into the leather. A light, even distribution of the oil is desirable.

Note: Do not use mineral oils or grease, such as machine oil or vaseline. The leather should never look or feel greasy, as this is an indication that too much oil is being used. Leather containing too much oil will stretch and is likely to pick up sand and grit, which will injure it.

(3) After oiling, set the straps and pads aside in a dry, shady place for about 12 hours in order to permit the leather to dry slowly and then rub it vigorously with a soft cloth to remove excess oil.

6. PRECAUTIONS

6.01 The following precautions should be observed when using and storing climber straps and pads.

(a) In the event that climber straps are received by the workman with insufficient oil, they should be oiled at once in accordance with Paragraph 5.02.

(b) When not in use climber straps should be oiled at least once every six months. The straps should be oiled three months after they have been received for stock and at intervals of not more than six months thereafter as long as they remain in stock.

(c) Never store or place straps and pads where they will be subjected to extreme heat, such as near radiators, steam pipes, etc., or in damp locations. Either of these conditions is likely to impair the strength of the leather.

(d) Never use an improvised substitute of rope, wire, etc., for the climber straps.

(e) Never punch extra holes in climber straps.

7. DISPOSITION OF DEFECTIVE STRAPS AND PADS

7.01 Climber straps and pads which have developed defects (see Part 3) shall be withdrawn from use for repair or destruction. Employees shall see that defective straps and pads in their possession, other than those which can be restored to a satisfactory condition by treating the leather as specified in Parts 4 and 5, are returned in accordance with the Company's established routine properly tagged to indicate the nature of the defect.