

CABLE REEL ROLLERS VS. JACK STANDS: *WHICH IS BETTER FOR PULLING?*



Safety and efficiency are critical factors to consider when handling industrial cable spools and reels. Both factors depend largely on the right equipment. For electricians, utility suppliers, and distribution warehouses managing cut-to-length orders, that means choosing between reel jack stands and cable reel rollers — or some combination of both.

Each of these products serves the same basic function: They keep cable reels in place, allowing workers to pull lengths of wire during installations or to fill orders that match customers' specifications. Reel jack stands accomplish this task with two freestanding jacks, which must be properly placed and perfectly balanced. Users insert a spindle into the center of the reel, position the jack stands, and raise them to an equal height in order to elevate the reel for free rotation. Cable reel rollers, as their name implies, use heavy-duty steel rollers to allow a reel placed on top to move freely. Spindles aren't required, although they are recommended for use with safety-enhancing tie-down kits.

Neither piece of equipment is especially complex from a technical standpoint — but in most operations, properly equipped reel rollers offer significant advantages over jack stands. To understand why, it's helpful to understand the benefits and drawbacks of each option.

Advantages of Cable Reel Rollers

Unlike reel jack stands, cable reel rollers consist of a single, static piece of equipment. A low base with steel rollers allows the reel to rotate smoothly. Workers can dispense cable quickly after setting the reel in place without worrying about significant safety issues from improper setup.

Over time, cable reel rollers can improve operational efficiency, as they're significantly quicker to set up and use than jack stands. While cable reel jack stands need to be set up perfectly parallel to one another, reel rollers function as a single piece of equipment; once the roller has been positioned properly, workers can begin the payout.

While they're often more expensive initially, reel rollers are generally sturdier and more durable than jack stands. They're less prone to misconfiguration, which can be crucial when dealing with enormous reels. They can also be secured with tie-down kits for improved dependability (more on tie-down kits in a moment).

The [BHS Dyna Reel Platform](#) (DRP) features a capacity of 5,000 pounds, heavy-duty steel construction, and a powder-coat finish for added durability. It has a small footprint, and when additional flexibility is needed during onsite installations, a model called the Dyna Reel Platform Attachment can be transported easily via lift truck. This allows workers to take reels to different parts of the jobsite in minutes.



That last point can be especially important when working outdoors. Cold temperatures can make cables more difficult to pay out, resulting in potential ergonomic issues and product damage. As cable rollers can be transported and set up quickly, the [Dyna Reel Platform Attachment](#) makes an excellent choice for keeping cable at appropriate temperatures during onsite payouts.

Advantages of Reel Jack Stands

On most sites, reel jack stands are used to dispense larger cable reels, as they're relatively inexpensive, intuitive, and easy to use.

The most significant advantage of jack stands is that they're adept at handling low-weight spools. When workers near the end of a cable run on a roller, the spool can become disengaged from the roller, potentially creating a safety hazard. Of course, this isn't an issue when the spool itself is fairly heavy, but it's certainly a consideration when working with lighter spools.

However, operations that use cable reel rollers can opt for models with tie-down kits to counteract this possibility (BHS Dyna Reel Rollers can be purchased with a tie-down kit and spindle for added stability). When tied down properly, rollers provide quicker, easier payouts without added risk, and tying down a cable roller doesn't add significantly to setup times.

Jack stands can also be used with reels of any width, though this is a minor advantage in most applications; the Dyna Reel Platform and Dyna Reel Platform Attachment are both usable with widths of up to 36 inches, which accommodates most spools easily. For the vast majority of operations, this isn't an important distinction between rollers and jack stands, but it's a notable point for some installers.

Choosing Cable Reel Payout Options For Your Operation

Reel jack stands are currently more popular than cable reel rollers, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they're a better option. Cable reel rollers are more convenient for workers and easier to set up, and over time, they can save considerable labor hours on worksites of all sizes.

Consider the following factors when outfitting your operation:

- **Speed** - Rollers allow workers to run cable quickly and easily. They set up in seconds as opposed to minutes, immediately providing payouts from high-capacity reels where they're needed most.

- **Safety** - By ensuring that each pull results in a consistent amount of cable, unaffected by the weight of the spool or other factors, roller systems reduce fatigue and promote proper ergonomics. When used with optional tie-down kits, rollers are substantially safer than reel jack stands.
- **Spool Protection** - Rollers allow spools to move naturally, reducing the chances of cable damage during payout. The Dyna Reel Platform Attachment can be transported via lift truck, which makes onsite work easier and less risky, both for workers and for the product.
- **Durability** - Roller stands are a single piece of heavy-duty equipment. They often have fewer points of failure than jack stands, and their all-steel construction ensures an excellent return on investment in the long run.

Both jack stands and cable reel roller platforms are compatible with [BHS Spool Winding Trolleys](#), thanks to the latter's unique overhead-engagement design. And many cut-to-length cable distributors already have large collections of jack stands and A-frame stands. For most users, then, a combination of jack stands and reel rollers will provide the most flexibility in terms of storage footprint, order fulfillment, and jobsite payout.

Regardless of which you choose, few operations can function without the ability to utilize cable effectively and ergonomically. For electricians, suppliers, and general warehouses, cable reel payouts are an excellent alternative to reel jack stands with few significant disadvantages. By evaluating this investment carefully, businesses can limit expenses while ensuring efficiency.

