

# Vehicle hoist buyer's guide

## *Choose the right lift for your workshop*

*The right vehicle hoist can make a massive difference to your workshop's productivity, safety and efficiency.*

*But of course, unless you have unlimited space available in your workshop, you'll probably have to be discerning with the hoists you buy and install. So it's important to find the hoist that ideally meets your particular requirements.*

*Yet choosing the right hoist can often become unnecessarily complicated. Once you weigh up some key factors – such as use, size, quality, price and installation – finding your ideal workshop hoist is straightforward.*

## *Understanding your hoist options*

*In this hoist buyer's guide, we take a look at each basic type of vehicle hoist, and talk about the ROI it can deliver for your business.*

*We start with the five questions which are well worth asking before locking in a particular hoist. We've also summarised the pros and cons of each lift type to give you a clear snapshot of your options.*

***If you'd like a customised explanation of your options,  
call Levanta's hoist experts on 1300 577 541.***

# 5 questions to ask before you lock in a hoist

**Before you get into the technical specs of different hoists, have a think about the answers to these questions for your workshop business.**



## 1 What is the main reason you need a hoist?

Do you need a hoist to perform wheel alignments, or simply for general servicing? Are you mainly servicing cars, or do you need to accommodate commercial vans and pickup trucks? What about low profile cars... expensive cars... mining vehicles... council vehicles – or all of the above?

Different hoists are more capable of handling these jobs, so start your investigation with this basic step.

## 2 Does your workshop have room for your first choice?

Consider the width, length, and height of a hoist. Where are the columns positioned – and how does this relate to any cracks or expansion joints on your slab?

## 3 Is your workshop's concrete adequate?

Speaking of slabs, note that if your concrete can support the vehicle you are putting on it, installing a hoist will only marginally add weight – and may even reduce the ground pressure, depending on the size of the hoist pads.

The most important thing is ensuring you have sound, level concrete. If your workshop doesn't have this, you can generally install a new pad for minimal additional cost.





## 4 Wheel engaging or frame engaging?

Most car and truck lifts fall into two categories based on how they engage the vehicle: whether that's by the wheels or by the frame.

Within these types, the most common wheel engaging lifts are four post hoists, and the most common frame engaging lifts are two post hoists.

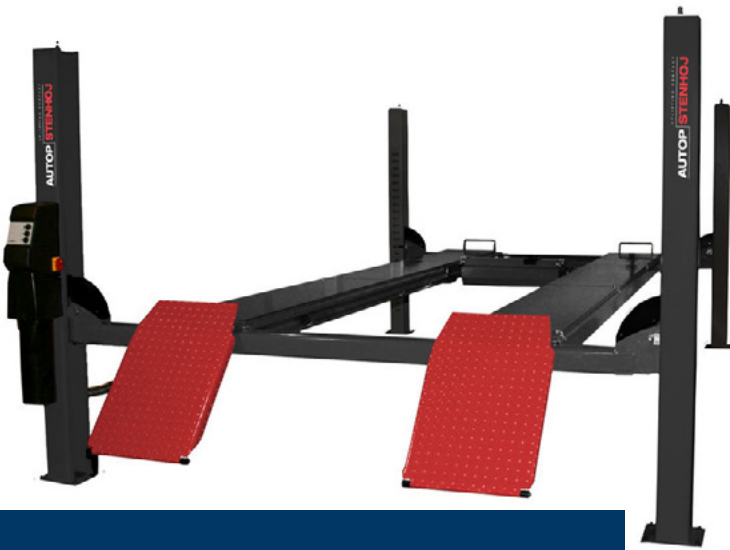
## 5 What are the hoist's power requirements?

Hoists require different power levels depending on their size, usually drawing either 6amps 3 phase or 10-12amps 1phase. Opting for a hoist with 3 phase power will help to reduce spikes and power surges on other equipment.



# Four post vehicle hoists

*Capability, capacity, and storage in one tough package*



## Four post hoists at-a-glance

### Pros

- > High capacity
- > Easy drive-on mechanism
- > Can be used for vehicle storage

### Cons

- > A more expensive lift option
- > Require additional jacks for wheel service applications

If you need a versatile lift with high capacity, four post vehicle lifts are the answer.

With their additional support columns, they're capable of lifting greater capacities compared to two post hoists. And as a wheel-engaging lift, their "drive-on and park" mounting method means they're also extremely user-friendly.

Four post hoists are ideal if you do a lot of heavy engine work, transmission servicing, or full car underbody work such as exhaust replacement. If you're running a quick-lube workshop or muffler business, a four post hoist should be your ideal solution.

Home users also favour four post car lifts because they don't usually need to be anchored to the garage floor. With the addition of an optional castor wheel package, smaller capacity four post lifts can even be made portable.

A major advantage of four post hoists is that, thanks to their solid four column design, you can safely leave a vehicle parked on the hoist while you store another underneath – effectively doubling your parking space.

The downsides of four post hoists? Thanks to their sturdy construction that uses more steel, four post vehicle lifts are usually more expensive than two post versions. And if you plan to use your four post automotive lift for wheel service, you'll need additional rolling or sliding bridge jacks to lift the car's wheels off the hoist.

# Two post vehicle hoists

*Robust, flexible, and affordable*

## Two post hoists at-a-glance

### Pros

- > A less expensive lift option
- > Need only a small footprint
- > Offer unobstructed access to wheels

### Cons

- > Taller than other lifting options
- > Can't be used for vehicle storage



## Symmetrical or asymmetrical design?

When you're choosing a two post hoist, you'll likely have the option of symmetrical and asymmetrical designs.

With a symmetrical design the hoist's posts each take half the load; while an asymmetrical design uses different length swing arms and a rotated post to handle an uneven load (such as a longer, unbalanced ute or truck). Asymmetrical hoists also allow you to open the car's doors while it's on the hoist, letting you access the interior.

The most common type of frame-engaging car lift, two post hoists are widely used by professional workshops and home users alike.

With their two extremely sturdy posts and supportive stabilisation arms, two post car hoists can lift and hold a large variety of vehicles up at a comfortable working height. Usually more affordable than four post options, two post hoists also need less space and offer clear access to the car's wheels.

On the minus side, two post hoists are much taller than other lifts and require more overhead space for installation. You also won't be able to store vehicles for extended periods on a two post lift, like you can with four post hoists.

# Scissor car lifts

*Compact, adaptable,  
and easy-to-use*

## Scissor lifts at-a-glance

### Pros

- > Available in a wide range of models
- > Easily stored
- > Low profile when not in use
- > Space efficient

### Cons

- > A more expensive lift option
- > Cannot stack two vehicles



Scissor lifts are a broad category of lifts that can be either wheel engaging or frame engaging types. They raise the vehicle by extending an accordion-like mechanism beneath the runway.

Available in a wide range of sizes and capacities, scissor lifts can suit both professional workshops and home users. Depending on your needs, you can choose from low-rise, mid-rise, and full-rise models of scissor lift.

Thanks to their low profile, scissor lifts are easy to position vehicles on. They also let you park over them while they're not in use – a particular benefit to home workshop enthusiasts.

On the other hand, scissor lifts never completely disappear unless they're installed below the workshop floor. Because of their design, they also can't be used for storing two vehicles one above the other.





# In-ground car lifts

## *A powerful yet unobtrusive lifting solution*

*For fast, high production workshops, an in-ground lift is the hoist of choice, offering some excellent standout features.*

### Accessibility

In-ground car lifts are completely hidden in your workshop's floor when they're not in use. No above ground posts means there's no chance of technicians damaging cars on hoist components, and gives your workshop uninhibited access and a clear, clean work area.

### Space saving

With no need for posts, an in-ground lift can be installed in a bay just 3,300mm wide. When you consider that the standard 2 post hoist needs 4,000mm of space, this could mean a 20 bay workshop can fit at least 24 hoists in – making a significant difference to your business's annual revenue.

### Service costs

You might be surprised to learn that an inground lift is typically more reliable than other hoists, as they're simpler, with far fewer moving parts and a very simple operation. It comes up trumps for reliability, user satisfaction, and annual maintenance allowance in terms of both downtime and cost.

### Style

In-ground lifts are by far the most stylish and modern looking solution for an under chassis lift.

### A wide range of available models

In-ground lifts are available in a wide range of lifting capacities, in either frame engaging or wheel engaging formats, depending on your requirements.

The downsides of in-ground lifts start with the fact that they do need greater initial investment than a similar capacity two post hoist. They can't be installed in a basement or on the ground floor, as they need 2.5m of dirt to operate in. And because they require extensive preparation of your workshop's concrete floor, your workshop will be out of action for an extended period during installation.

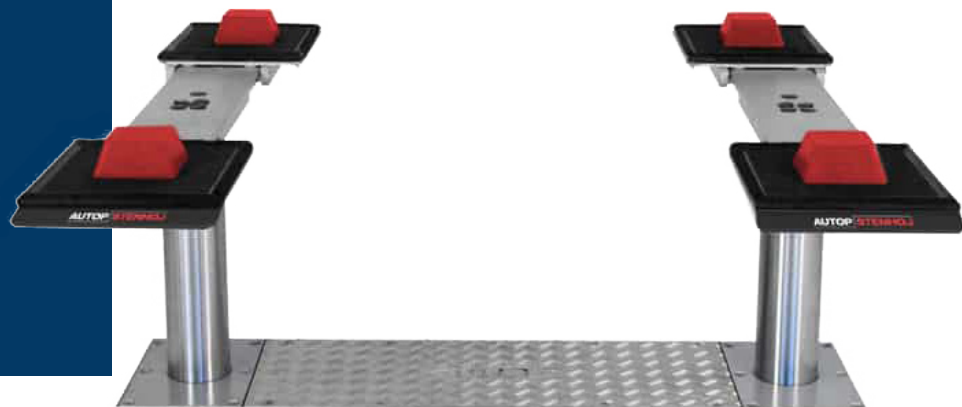
## In-ground car lifts at-a-glance

### Pros

- > Don't take up workshop space
- > Help your workshop stay tidy
- > Can lift large capacities
- > A stylish-looking lift

### Cons

- > Are more expensive to install
- > Can't be installed in a basement or ground floor



# Alignment car lifts

## *A specialist solution for your workshop*

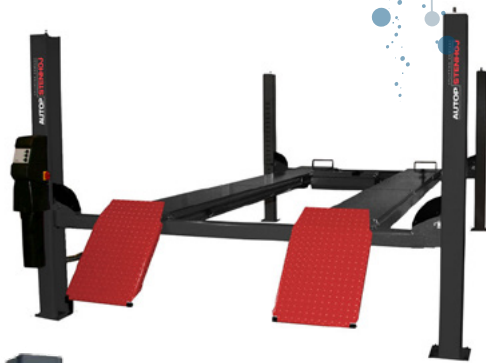
**Alignment auto lifts offer you a special type of lifting solution.**

Their additional features – such as built-in turn plates and slip plates that allow the vehicle's wheels to easily turn without resistance – let you perform wheel alignment services on cars or trucks.

As a wheel engaging lift, they can be supplied in a number of formats such as four post lifts, scissor lifts and in-ground lifts.

This also means that mobile column lifts (where each wheel is securely held in an arm assembly) cannot be used as an alignment lift.

The detailed discussion around which alignment lift is best is beyond the scope of this paper.



## Alignment car lifts at-a-glance

### Pros

- > Specialist alignment lift
- > Available in four post, scissor, and in-ground formats

### Cons

- > Not the first choice for general servicing





# Parking lifts

## *Multiply your workshop's car parks*

*If you need to increase the parking capacity of your workshop, look no further than a car parking lift.*

Exclusively a wheel engaging lifting method, parking lifts raise one car up to allow another to be parked beneath. If you have enough headroom in your workshop, or space outdoors, there are even models that let you park three cars in a space that previously accommodated just one.

You should note that, because parking lifts use a full drive-on deck instead of two runways, you won't be able to carry out automotive service, maintenance or repairs with this type of car lift.

Our sister company LevantaPark can advise you on the perfect car parking lift for your building design.



## Parking lifts at-a-glance

### Pros

- > Multiply your available car parks

### Cons

- > Can't be used for vehicle servicing or repair





# Need advice on the ideal hoist for your workshop? Talk to Levanta

For expert advice on selecting the right vehicle  
hoist to provide the ROI you need for your workshop,  
speak to the hoist experts at Levanta.

*For customised advice on the right hoist for your workshop, contact Levanta's support team  
on 1300 577 541. We'll be happy to help you choose the ideal lift for your needs.*

**1300 577 541**

[www.levanta.com.au](http://www.levanta.com.au)

