

TECHNICAL REFERENCE · PRINT & KEEP

Brake Types for Casters Guide

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Quick answer. Four caster brake types serve different jobs: tread brakes lock the wheel only, wheel-and-swivel (total-lock) brakes lock both wheel and swivel, directional locks hold straight-line tracking without stopping the wheel, and face locks engage under load for heavy industrial duty. Match brake type to the application; the wrong choice creates safety events and OSHA non-compliance.

Actuation and Holding Force

Brake Type	Actuation	Typical Holding Force
Tread (cam)	Step-on lever	50-150 lb lateral
Tread (shoe)	Step-on lever	80-200 lb lateral
Wheel-and-swivel	Step-on lever	150-400 lb lateral + swivel lock
Directional lock	Lever or foot pedal	Indexes swivel only, no rolling resistance
Face brake (drum)	Lever, cable, or hydraulic	500-2,000+ lb lateral
Electrical solenoid	Signal-actuated	Depends on actuator spec

Common Brake Failures and Field Fixes

Failure Mode	Signal	Typical Cause	Field Remedy
Tread shoe glaze	Reduced hold, slipping	Heat or contamination	Resurface or replace
Cam pin wear	Lever travel increases	High-cycle duty	Retension, then replace
Swivel lock slip	Cart swivels when locked	Worn lock pin	Replace mechanism
Face brake contamination	Reduced holding force	Debris or lubricant	Clean, reseal drum
Solenoid failure	Brake won't engage	Coil failure	Replace solenoid



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