



# BUYERS GUIDE: FOUR-POST LIFTS

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Choosing the right four-post lift for your shop.

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## A Well-Equipped Shop

Keeping your shop efficient and productive is a top priority, and to achieve that, it's crucial to put the right equipment into place. Often, that involves investing in equipment that will speed up repairs, boost accuracy and give technicians what they need for safety and reliability. Four-post lifts offer all of those benefits, making them a great fit for many shops, from fleet maintenance garages to commercial repair operations to dealership service bays. But not all four-post lifts are the same.



Because they come in a variety of configurations, it's important to consider what your shop needs to make the right choice. In this guide, we'll highlight what you should know when comparing lifts, including:

- Benefits of four-post lifts
- What each configuration includes
- Cost vs. value considerations
- Rotary Lift options

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**Let's get started.**

# Benefits of Four-Post Lifts

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Whether you're tackling light duty or heavy duty vehicles, you need a lift that can help your techs get the job done safely and efficiently. Sounds like the perfect description for four-post lifts.

Four-post lifts:

- Are dead simple to load. Techs just drive on and lift with no need to crouch down and reposition lift arms like they do with two-post options.
- Offer quick setup for undercarriage repairs.
- Can be used for wheel maintenance when combined with included or optional accessories.

And, because they're available in several configurations, you can choose the lift that's right for your shop, based on the types of jobs you do most often. We'll explore the specifics of each configuration in the next few pages.

# Four-Post Lift Configurations

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Ideal for numerous service tasks, well-made general service four-post lifts are able to accommodate a variety of wheelbases and offer several safety and efficiency features.

General lifts can be enhanced to handle additional tasks with accessories like:

### **A 4-Wheel Alignment Retrofit Kit**

Converts a general service four-post lift into an alignment lift that's compatible with new 3-D alignment technology.

### **Rolling Jacks**

Allow you to increase your service opportunities by lifting a vehicle off the runways for brake, tire, suspension and alignment tasks.

When evaluating general service four-post lifts, consider:

### Efficiency

How quickly can techs raise and lower jobs? Those minutes add up over time and can make a big difference.

### Ease of use

It's smart to get your hands on a lift and test it, if possible. Is it easy to load? Can you release air locks quickly?

### Safety

Is there a backup lock feature? Do you trust the reputation and history of the manufacturer? Also look for third-party certifications that back up safety claims.

### Quality

You want your lift to last a long time. Look for longevity-focused features like an air filter, regulator, lubricator; powder-coated paint; a one-piece runway; and a well-protected hydraulic cylinder.

## Alignment Service Four-Post Lifts

One of the most common tasks in any shop is alignment, and some shops end up doing dozens per day. While some general four-post lifts can be retrofitted with alignment kits and support jacks, alignment four-post lifts come from the factory ready for action. When choosing a four-post lift for alignment service, remember the same considerations we outlined for the general service lifts and also look for one that can hoist a variety of vehicles and work in conjunction with the newest alignment systems.

Alignment lifts can also be customized with accessories like a ramp kit, which allows for drive-through capabilities. That gives you more flexible options for repairs and shop setup.

## Product spotlight

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### Rotary's AR18 Lift

The AR18 four-post alignment lift is one of Rotary's most adaptable products with a capacity of up to 18,000 pounds and an adjustable runway. Other features include:

- Longer free-floating slip plates
- Stainless steel radius gauges, so your alignment jobs are easier to manage
- Ramp chocks that automatically engage when you raise the lift
- Dual-function Sentinel Lock system, which kicks the lock latch into position when it detects a slack cable

## **Open Front or Closed Front?**

Whether you're choosing an alignment lift or a general service lift, you'll need to decide between an open-front or closed-front design. Both have their advantages, and the choice usually comes down to how your techs prefer to work and what's most appropriate for your shop's jobs. Here's what to consider:

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### **Open Front**

Many techs find open-front lifts easier to use because they can maneuver under and around the vehicle more easily, which lets them work faster. But keep in mind that open-front designs are only appropriate for lighter-duty jobs. If your shop does most, if not all, its repairs on light duty vehicles, this is a great option. Techs will be happy with the convenience that open-front lifts offer as they're able to move back and forth from vehicles to tools more rapidly.

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### **Closed Front**

If your shop handles mostly heavy duty vehicles, then you're in the market for a closed-front lift. This design has a bar connecting the two front posts. That makes the lift able to safely withstand much heavier vehicles. Although techs won't be able to move with the kind of speed they'd have with an open-front design, a closed-front lift offers the hefting power they need.

### Light Duty or Heavy Duty?

It's important to make sure you're choosing a lift that can handle the jobs at hand. It's dangerous to try to stretch a lift beyond its listed capacity, so this is a number you'll need to pay close attention to. There are four-post models for both light and heavy duty jobs. Ultimately, it comes down to the breadth of vehicles that your techs service. Here are some examples for each:

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#### Light and Medium Duty

Rotary's many four-post lifts for light and medium duty jobs offer versatility and performance. With capacity that ranges from 10,000 to 18,000 pounds, the lifts offer features for even specialized vehicles. For example, the SM101 is longer than other four-point lifts, making it ideal for servicing limousines and other extended-wheelbase vehicles.

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#### Heavy Duty

Rotary has heavy duty four-post lifts that can handle between 18,000 and 60,000 pounds, giving you the flexibility to choose one that's appropriate for your fleet or most common jobs. For instance, the HDC50 and HDC60 have capacity for 50,000 to 60,000 pounds, with patented control operation from any column. And because the lift operates on DC battery power, it's faster and easier to use and can work even in the event of a power failure.

# Cost vs. Value

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As you consider the factors involved in a major equipment purchase like a four-post lift, price will naturally be part of your deliberations. For shops of any size, cost absolutely needs to be weighed alongside value.

With four-post lifts, you can expect a strong return on investment. Not only do well-made lifts like those from Rotary hold their value over time, but they also drive efficiencies across shop operations. Techs are able to work faster with these lifts, and more safely, which increases productivity and lowers downtime. Well-made lifts also require less maintenance, something that often can't be said about cheaper lifts. The big-picture look at it? Factors like productivity gains, safety, efficiency and repair speed make high-quality four-post lifts a no-brainer.

### Upgrade spotlight

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#### Shockwave

Another way to increase efficiency and get a great return on investment is Shockwave, an accessory that allows lifts to rise and descend two times faster than standard lifts. The speed is achieved through a unique design that uses DC power—a feature that means your power bills won't go up, but your efficiency will.



# Rotary's Four-Post Lifts

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Our four-post lifts have several notable features that can fit into any shop. Here's a closer look:

# SPECIFICATIONS Rotary's Four-Post Lifts

## Light and Medium Duty

Specifications	SM14	AR14
Max Wheelbase	158"	158"
Max Two Wheel Align	—	152 1/4"
Min./Max. Four Wheel Align	—	66 3/4–142 1/2"
Rise/Floor to Top of Runway	78 3/4"	78 3/4"
Length Overall	18' 10"	18' 10"
Width Overall	10' 11 3/4"	10' 11 3/4"
Inside of Columns	116 1/4"	116 1/4"
Between Front and Rear Columns	171 1/4"	171 1/4"
Height of Columns	7' 6 1/2"	7' 6 1/2"

Specifications	SM14	AR14
Width of Runways	20"	20"
Height of Runways	7"	7"
Width Between Runways	43–46"	43–46"
Front of Runway to Center of Radius Gauge	—	Adj. 18–24"
Lifting Capacity	14,000 lbs.	14,000 lbs.
Motor	2 HP	2 HP
Voltage Single Phase	208v–230v	208v–230v
Time of Full Rise	65 seconds	65 seconds
Min. Bay Size	15' x 23'	15' x 23'

# SPECIFICATIONS Rotary's Four-Post Lifts

## Heavy Duty

Specifications	SM30	AR18
Max Wheelbase	235"	194"
Max Two Wheel Align	—	177"
Min./Max. Four Wheel Align	—	63"—162"
Rise/Floor to Top of Runway	68"	70"
Length Overall	25' 8 1/8"	274"
Width Overall	12' 4 3/16"	137 11/16"
Inside of Columns	132"	122"
Between Front and Rear Columns	249"	212"
Height of Columns	7' 3/4"	6' 5 3/4"

Specifications	SM30	AR18
Width of Runways	24"	22"
Height of Runways	8 3/8"	7 1/2"
Width Between Runways	41"—48"	43"—46"
Lifting Capacity	30,000 lbs.	18,000 lbs.
Motor	4 HP	2 HP
Voltage Single Phase	208v—230v	208v—230v
Time of Full Rise	105 seconds	80 seconds
Min. Bay Size	16' x 30'	13' x 27'

Choosing the best four-post lift for your shop can be a major decision, but fortunately, Rotary has plenty of experienced distributors who can help you evaluate your needs. Contact one in your area, or get in touch at [RotaryLift.com](http://RotaryLift.com).

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