



Complete Guide to Brace Bands & Tension Bands

This comprehensive guide will walk you through Brace Band & Tension Band *Sizing, Installation, Types, Differences*, and more.

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AluminumChainLink.com
ChainLinkFittings.com
DomesticFenceFittings.com
SquareFittings.com

What is a Brace Band?

Brace Bands are necessary pieces of hardware for constructing a chain link fence, and while the look and style may vary slightly, their function remains the same. Brace Bands, sometimes also known as Rail End Bands, are designed to connect to a top rail cup to allow a top rail to be installed onto a chain link fence. These top rails are responsible for holding chain link fence mesh in place and are required as part of the foundation of any chain link fence. Brace Bands can be either round or square, and there are 5 Types of Brace Band:



Standard Brace Bands

Standard Brace Bands are recommended for your classic chain link residential fence or commercial fencing if high-security isn't a concern. These bands tend to be smaller and more lightweight than other bands, making them cost effective.

Beveled Brace Bands

Beveled Brace Bands are suggested primarily for high-security areas such as correctional facilities, government buildings, and places with valuable equipment. This is due to the Beveled (Sloped) edges that give it less of a grip for tampering.

Heavy-Duty Brace Bands

Heavy-Duty Brace Bands are suggested for any industrial fence as they are the most durable, crash resistant Brace Bands due to their thickness. These heavier bands designed for thicker fencing, while they can be used just about anywhere they are primarily only suggested for Industrial fencing.

Two-Way Brace Bands

Two-Way Brace Bands are slightly different than the others as you may notice that it is two-pieces instead of the usual one. This is due to these bands being made for line posts, joining two fence sections along the length of the fence together rather than being at the end or corner of a fence.

Corner Brace Bands

Corner Brace Bands are also two-pieces instead of one. These bands are meant to create 90° angles at the corner of a fence using only one band. Without these Corner Bands, installing a fence that is level on all sides would be impossible as there would be height differences due to needing to stack two bands on top of each other.

How to Install a Brace Band



1. Step One

Measure the *Outside Diameter* (OD) of your post to know what size band you will need.

It's best to select a band that is the same size as your post. For example, if your post is 2" in diameter, we recommend a 2" Brace Band.



2. Step Two

Slide the Brace Band down onto the post to the desired height. It should slide down with ease as it is supposed to be larger than the post when not secured in. If the Band does not move easily or at all, your band is likely too small.



3. Step Three

Squeeze the band tight around the post and insert the carriage bolt. The bolt should have minimal movement if any. Finally, secure the carriage bolt with the included nut. This is recommended to be as tight as possible for security.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What material are Brace Bands made from?

A: Generally speaking, most Brace Bands are made out of some kind of sturdy metal such as steel or aluminum. This is due to its overall weather resistance and durability as any other materials would either warp, fade, or rust rather quickly.

Q: What Brace Bands can be used for Residential & Commercial Fencing?

A: Most Brace Bands can be used for both residential and commercial fencing, depending on the level of security you are looking for. Standard Brace Bands are the best choice as they are the most cost effective, but it's better to choose Beveled or Heavy-Duty Brace Bands for high-security areas.

Q: How tight should a Brace Band be when installed?

A: When installed, a Brace Band should have virtually no movement or play as it is meant to be locked in place indefinitely. If your Brace band is visibly straining or unable to wrap neatly around your post, it is likely too small and will likely be too tight.

Q: Are Brace Bands Round or Square?

A: Brace Bands can be both round or square as Brace Bands are meant for both round and square posts. While the shape may look different, the ends of the Brace Bands (where the carriage bolts are installed) will look identical with that unique outward facing shape.

What is a Tension Band?

Tension Bands, while similar to brace bands, are quite different. Unlike Brace Bands that are attached at the tops and bottoms of chain link fences to rail cups, Tension Bands attach from the post to a tension bar, a piece of metal that creates tension in chain link fabric to keep it secured to the fence. Tension Bands typically are installed at key points along a fence post, but not at the very top or bottom like brace bands. There are 4* types of Tension Band:

Standard Tension Bands

We highly recommend Standard Tension Bands for residential fence or commercial fencing if high-security isn't a concern. These bands tend to be smaller and more lightweight than other bands, making them cost effective.

Heavy-Duty Tension Bands

Heavy-Duty Tension Bands are recommended for any industrial fence as they are the most crash resistant bands. These thicker, heavier bands are designed for larger, wider fence posts. These bands can be used anywhere, however we suggest that you use these for industrial fencing only.

Beveled Tension Bands

Beveled Tension Bands are suggested primarily for high-security areas such as correctional facilities, government buildings, and places with valuable equipment. This is due to the beveled (sloped) Edges that give it less of a grip for tampering. These bands may come in standard or heavy-duty sizes.

Specialty Tension Bands*

Some Tension Bands like the ones below are unique in terms of shape and installation. Some may be boltless, some may have an aluminum button, these can come in a variety of shapes and sizes. In most cases these are used as easy to install, cost-effective methods for residential fencing as well as some commercial fencing.



Tension Band with Aluminum Button



Boltless Tension Band

How to Install a Tension Band



1. Step One

Measure the *Outside Diameter* (OD) of your post to know what size band you will need.

It's best to select a band that is the same size as your post. For example, if your post is 4" in diameter, we recommend a 4" Brace Band.



2. Step Two

Slide the Tension Band down onto the post to the desired height. It should slide down with ease as it is supposed to be larger than the post when not secured in. If the Band does not move easily or at all, your band is likely too small.



3. Step Three

Squeeze the band tight around the post and insert the carriage bolt. The bolt should have minimal movement if any. Finally, secure the carriage bolt with the included nut. This is recommended to be as tight as possible for security.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the difference between Tension Bands and Brace Bands?

A: Tension Bands attach to a tension bar along the side of a fence post, creating tension along the chain link fabric, holding it upright and secure. Brace Bands are responsible for clinging on to the top rails and tension wire at the top and bottom of a chain link fence. An easy way to think of this is Tension Bands holding the middle of a fence, and Brace Bands hold the top and bottom.

Q: Do I need tools to install a Tension Band?

A: Generally speaking, nothing more than a carriage bolt & nut as well as a wrench for tightening should ever be needed to install a Tension Band. They can easily be fit onto a post by hand and thumb screwed into place before being tightened securely by a wrench.

Q: How long should a Tension Band last?

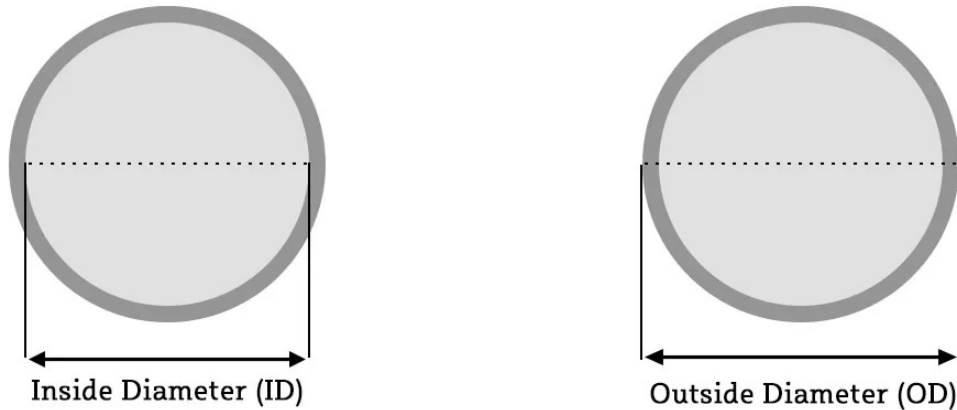
A: More often than not, Tension Bands will last a lifetime. While yes, rusting over time is possible, they are designed to be permanent installations to a chain link fence with minimal upkeep. To put it in perspective, these bands will last longer than the mesh that it holds.

Q: Do Tension Bands only come in Silver?

A: No, generally Tension Bands come in a galvanized steel (silver) finish or a vinyl coated Finish (black). This will change the look of the bands but they will function identically. Tension & Brace Bands can also be painted with any metal safe paint.

How to Size a Brace or Tension Band

Before trying to figure out the size of Brace or Tension Band you need, it's important to understand what *Inside Diameter* (I.D) means as well as *Outside Diameter* (O.D). Inside Diameter is measured by measuring the width of the Inside of the pipe from inside wall to inside wall.



Outside Diameter is measured the same way, except instead of measuring the inside wall, you measure the outer wall of your Post. Notice how in the examples below, Example B says that it is 3" but has an OD size of 2 7/8". This means that despite measuring at 3" in diameter, it will only fit around a 2 7/8" post.

Example A: Chain Link 3" Two-Way Brace Band

Example B: Chain Link 3" (2 7/8" OD) Two-Way Brace Band

When Installing Your Bands

While Brace Bands and Tension Bands when installed may look identical, they will feel very different when squeezing the ends together. This is normal as Brace Bands and Tension Bands are slightly differently shaped.

Brace Bands: the ends face away from one another, sort of like a broken "O" or a broken square if it is a Square Brace Band

Tension Bands: one end is going straight, and one end moving away from it, just like the letter "R", which can be big and blocky on a Square Tension Band.

