

# WIRE ROPE SUPPORT SYSTEMS VS. JACK CHAIN

Jack chain is a popular hanging method for supporting lighting, cable tray, signs and other miscellaneous applications. Although jack chain is used in many of the same situations where wire rope is used, there are several key differences that make wire rope a superior option for any hanging application.

**FLEXIBILITY:** Flexibility of jack chain is one of the main reasons contractors use it. However, the shape of the links makes it impossible to arrange at certain angles due to the links getting twisted around each other or being unable to bend. In contrast, wire rope is made of several twisted strands, and is equally flexible throughout.



**ADJUSTABILITY:** It can be difficult to get a large piece properly hung without needing some final adjustments. With the locking device on a wire rope system, it is easy to move the assembly up or down to the appropriate height. However, with jack chain, it is much more labor intensive. The entire piece needs to be taken down and the chain has to be adjusted.

**STRENGTH:** Wire rope is much stronger than jack chain. The entire length of the chain is only as strong as the weakest link. If a link is damaged during production, storage or installation, it can compromise the security of the entire fixture. Wire rope is made up of individual strands and is much stronger and less likely to be damaged.

**TOOL-FREE:** It takes several tools to properly cut, position and secure jack chain. However, many wire rope systems are tool-free, making them easier for installers to work on, especially when suspended in the air on a lift or ladder.

***Cable support systems can be a better choice when compared to jack chain due to their flexibility, adjustability, strength and tool-free installation.***