

Learning About and Maintaining Rieco-Titan Jacks

Have you ever wondered what to do to keep your camper jacks looking brand new?

Jack Maintenance

All of Rieco-Titan's jacks require annual maintenance. Doug recommends maintaining your camper's jacks in the spring before you go out camping for the first time.

The first thing you should do to maintain your jacks is to raise the camper all the way up and to wash each jack with soapy water. If there are any rust spots, take a piece of sandpaper and sand them out. After that, you can apply a coat or two of rust-Oleum paint or metal silver spray to freshen up your jacks. Let that dry and then apply a liquid wax such as Mercury's Corrosion Guard, Mother's Polish, McGuire's or Turtle Wax.

Doug also said that you can use a spray wax monthly if you want to keep them looking good. This is not to replace the annual upkeep. If you live in high maintenance areas where you are exposed to sand, salt, and high humidity, you will need to wash and wax your jacks more often.

Rieco-Titan has installed a rubber boot on the bottom of their jacks to deter dirt and grime from getting up into the jack. You should exercise your jacks by raising and lowering them at least once a month. This spreads the grease around and keeps them healthy.

Winterizing and Jacks

When you winterize your camper, it is best to put your camper on a platform, like some saw horses or a wood base, and get your camper as low to the ground as possible. By elevating your camper in this way, you are taking the stress off your camper, which keeps the weight on the floor and not on the sidewalls. Another option is to keep your camper on your truck and fully retract all of your jacks. If you need to keep the camper on the jacks during the winter, get it as low to the ground as possible.

Electric Jacks

Electric Jacks are typically used on larger truck campers. They automatically work by using a remote control. Rieco-Titan's electric jacks have a 2,500 pound per jack capacity.

Something interesting I learned was that an electric jack uses about fourteen amps going up, but only about six amps coming down. This is based on a 4,000 pound camper.

Receiver Box

There are two power switches; one on the receiver box and one on the remote access panel.

Inside your camper, either in a compartment door or in a cabinet, you will find your Rieco-Titan receiver box. This is the box that receives the message from the remote. You can find the access panel either in an outside compartment or directly inside your camper next to the door.

Everything in the receiver box is fuse protected. There are eight fuses and only if they burn out, should you need to replace them. The fuses are standard 30 amp automotive fuses.

In order to use your remote control, you need to turn on the switch on the receiver box or remote access panel. You will know it is active when the green light turns on. After pressing that switch and seeing the green light, you will be able to use your remote control. This will be activated for fifteen minutes and then automatically shut-off. Rieco-Titan does this so that your camper batteries won't drain and your jacks won't be accidentally activated.

I was absolutely fascinated by the inner workings of the receiver box. You may have never realized, but inside your receiver box, the fuse lights will turn colors when you raise and lower your camper. We usually do not see this because we are busy looking at our jacks and our remote while this process is happening. When being raised, the lights go green and when it's lowered the lights will turn red.

As a camper owner, these lights are used for troubleshooting. For example, if one of your jacks is not working, you can look at your receiver box lights. If there is a missing light in the box, this shows that one of your fuses needs to be replaced. Look at the fuse where the missing light is and you will find the fuse that needs to be replaced.

Rieco-Titan Remote Control

The electric jack comes with a wired remote or a wireless remote. The cord acts as a back-up and supplies the power if the remote does not work.

To maintain the remote correctly, clean it with a damp cloth, not wet. Another way to maintain your remote is to change your battery at the beginning of every season. The remote cover is easily removed by using a small screwdriver. Inside you will find the 12 Volt alkaline A23 battery that you need to replace. You can find these batteries at Walgreens or Home Depot. If your batteries are low, your jacks will not run as effectively; as you lose power, you lose the ability to transfer the signal effectively.

The Rieco-Titan remote is water resistant, not water proof. Rieco-Titan has gone to great lengths to protect and seal their remote. One of the ways they have sealed it is by having a rubber gasket between the two halves of the plastic case to keep water out. In the past year they have also upgraded the wireless remote by putting in a plug where the wire goes to keep out water.

Raising and Lowering Your Camper Using Electric Jacks

Rieco-Titan has some recommendations for raising and lowering your camper. In our discussion, Doug pointed out that the front of truck campers are heavier than the back,

so the front jacks will not move as fast because the motors are working harder. That means that your back jacks will be raising or lowering faster than your front jacks. You might have had the experience of your back jacks coming off the ground while you are lowering your camper.

To avoid this, Doug recommends that before you start with the all lift, you make sure that your front nose is approximately three inches higher than the rest of your camper. When you have achieved this, you can raise your camper about a foot at a time using the all lift button. Doug reminds us that we should continually be monitoring the jacks. Once you have raised the camper a foot, raise the front again approximately three inches so that the front jacks catch up to the back. Then again, raise your camper using the all lift button. Continue this process until you get your camper to your desired height. During the raising process, make sure that the rear of your camper is never higher than the front.

The advantage of the wireless remote is that you can walk around the camper and monitor from a distance while the camper is being raised or lowered. Follow the same process described above in lowering your camper.

How To Manually Crank Your Electric Jacks

For those of us who have electric jacks, we may not know how to manually raise and lower our camper. Doug walked me through the process. First, pop-off the manual crank cover with a flat head screwdriver. This will expose the manual crank socket that you will be cranking. Using a three-eighths inch ratchet, manually crank your jacks up or down. When manually cranking, you need to start with your front camper jacks. Raise the front of your camper about three inches on each jack, then go to the back and raise three inches. Repeat this with all four jacks, rotating around the camper until it is at the height you need it at to load or unload.

Troubleshooting

If you are in the middle of nowhere and your camper battery dies, you can still raise or lower your camper.

Options you have are to use jumper cable on your truck to raise or lower your jacks. You can also manually crank them if your power is not working.

If you run over your remote with your truck or your remote is not working, Rieco-Titan has some solutions. You will need to get a new remote, but in the meantime, they have a new product called an Emergency Remote. This remote is bright red and is attached with velcro onto your receiver box. This remote should only be used in emergency situations. The red emergency remote is attached with a four foot wire and will only work using the wire.

Sometimes when running your jacks you will hear the clutch ratcheting when you get to the end of your jack's travel. That is the clutch engaging and disengaging. This is not a bad thing to hear and you are not hurting your jacks. When you hear this, you will then know that you need to stop pressing the remote buttons.

Manual Jacks

Rieco-Titan has five different types of manual jacks. This includes C Clamp mechanical, Welding Mounting plate mechanical, Heavy Duty tripod jacks, standard tripod jacks, and hydraulic jacks.

Four Corner Mechanical Jacks

Mechanical Jacks are jacks that need to be manually cranked with the crank handle that comes with your jacks. You should not leave your crank handle attached while traveling because it could come off.

Cranking mechanical jacks takes a little bit of effort, but is totally doable on a truck camper. The challenge is when the camper gets to be taller than the person cranking. You will receive two crank handles so two people can crank at a time.

There are two types of Four Corner Mechanical Jacks; a C Clamp and a Welded Mounting plate jack. C Clamp mechanical jacks allow you to position your jack to whatever angle you need for cranking. It wraps around the bracket and is squeezed by the bolt. A welded mounting plate jack has a locked in cranking position based on the location of the camper's brackets.

Added maintenance on four corner mechanical jacks that you should be aware of is that once a year you should oil your jacks with 10W40. Squirt enough oil in your gear box to keep the jacks lubricated.

Tripod Jacks

Rieco-Titan offers two types of Tripod Jacks; the Heavy Duty Tripod Jack and the standard Tripod Jack.

Heavy Duty Tripod Jacks have a 2,000 pound per jack capacity and can go be used as a three or four jack system. If you only use three jacks on your camper, they need to go on the front and back of one side and at the balance point of the other side, which is based on your camper's center of gravity. The way to tell the difference between the Tripod Jacks is that the HD Tripod Jacks have chains in the tripod base. Rieco-Titan's standard tripod jack has a 1,000 pound per jack capacity and can be used as a three or four jack system.

With both types of Tripod jacks, the crank has two sockets; one for the wrench and one for the crank. The wrench socket is so that you can change your tripod jack from a vertical to horizontal position when you drive. The tripod part of the jack needs to be stored in your truck or camper.

Alaskan Campers is one of the truck camper manufacturers that uses the tripod jack system. If you now have tripod jacks, you would need to replace them with tripod jacks. Tripod jacks are used because some campers need to be supported by the bottom of the camper instead of the sides.

Just like mechanical jacks, you should squirt 10W40 oil into your gear box once a year to lubricate your jacks. There is also a hole below the gear box to squirt oil on the jack post screw.

Hydraulic Jacks

Hydraulic Jacks are the easiest manual jacks to use because you will exert the least amount of energy. A handle pumps up the jacks, which lifts the camper. Hydraulic Jacks are like car jacks, in that they easily move a lot of weight. Whenever you stop pumping the handle, the jack stops.

A thumb screw is used to release and lock the jack, which lowers the camper. With the hydraulic jacks, check your oil level regularly. When the oil level gets low, the jack won't extend to its full length. Rieco-Titan's hydraulic jacks also come with C Clamps so that you can adjust them as needed. These jacks have a 2,000 pound per jack capacity.

Raising and Lowering Your Camper Using Manual Jacks

When raising your manual camper jacks, you need to start with your front camper jacks. Raise the front of your camper so that the front nose of your camper is higher than the back. Then, rotate around the camper raising your jacks about three inches at a time. Repeat this until your camper is at your desired height.

If you have any questions or want to learn more about Rieco-Titan jacks, visit their website at www.riecotitan.com.