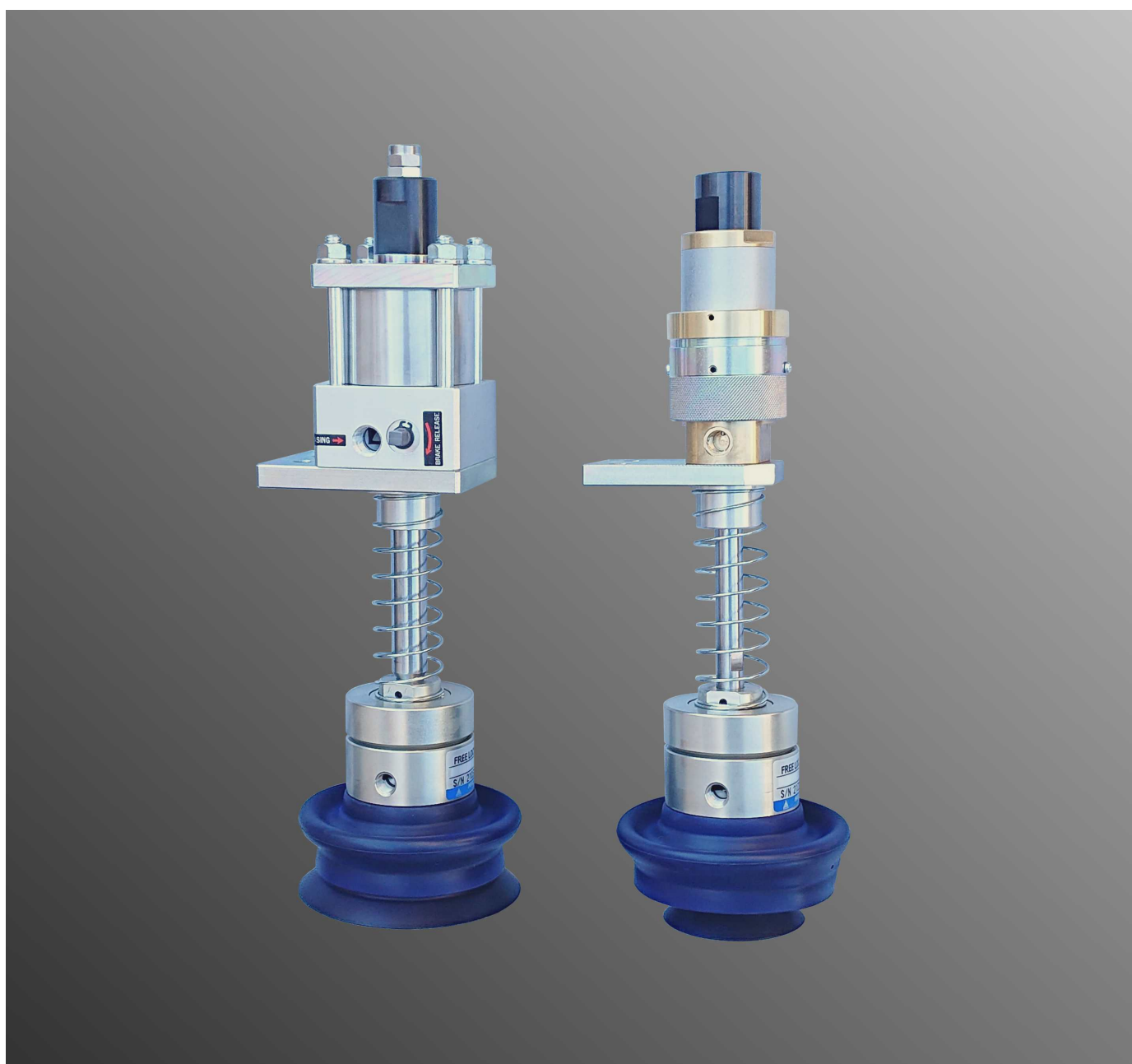




Ball joint type suction cup with locking mechanism

FREE LOCK PAD

The position and angle of the sucked work can be fixed and transported.
Suction cup unit that enabled high-dimensional handling.



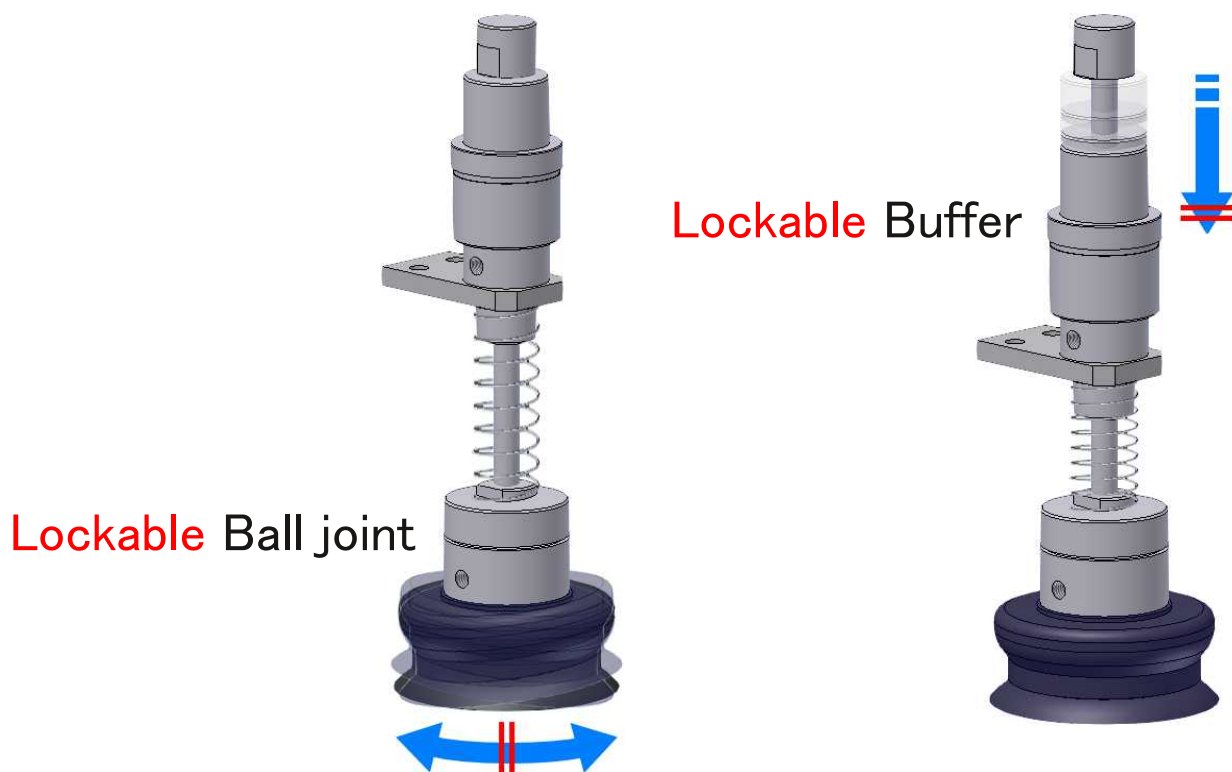
HIROTAKA MFG. CO.,LTD.

Overview

FREE LOCK PAD is a ball joint pad for high-dimensional material handling that enables transportation while maintaining the angle of the suction cup that follows the workpieces surface and the position of the buffer when sucking the workpiece.

Even in the case of multi-item mixed transportation, the angle of the suction cup and the position of the buffer can be maintained by each workpiece, which improves the accuracy of the workpiece installation posture in the next process.

The lineup includes a ball joint type that can fix the swing angle and a unit type that is equipped with a brake mechanism.

**Feature**

- 1 After the suction cup follows the inclination of the workpiece surface, the swing angle can be locked, so the workpiece can be transported while maintaining the shape.
- 2 Model equipped with a lockable buffer can be locked according to the height of the workpieces, so handling can be performed for a wide variety of workpieces with different heights.
- 3 Since the shape and posture of the workpiece is stable when the workpiece is taken out and installed, high-quality transportation that can prevent damage such as installation misalignment and interference can be performed.
- 4 Since the lockable buffer can be locked at the suction position, there is no impact from the stopper, and quick handling can be performed without the workpiece falling off or shifting.
- 5 Since FREE LOCK PAD can handle multi-shaped workpieces, it can be flexibly supported when adding workpieces or updating equipment.
- 6 Since the lock mechanism operates when the supplied air is shut off, the timing of using vacuum and the timing of using compressed air are different. The compressed air can be used efficiently with little effect on the vacuum generator.
- 7 It uses with one 3-port pneumatic solenoid valve for unlocking of ball joint and buffer.

How to Order

FLV - 1B - 12C - S1 - K - H

Series
FREE LOCK PAD

Symbol	Suction cup size
1	φ 100
2	φ 60

Symbol	Lockable buffer
Nil	Without buffer
B	With buffer

Symbol	Rod size
12	φ 12
16	φ 16

※ The rod is not included for models without the lockable buffer.

Symbol	Centering spring
Nil	Without spring
C	With spring

Symbol	Vacuum Retention Supported
Nil	Non support
H	Supported

※ Only models with lockable buffer can be selected.

Symbol	Metal scraper
Nil	With NBR scraper
K	With Metal and NBR scraper

※ The scraper is included with the lockable buffer. Only rod size φ 12 can be selected. NBR scraper is included as standard.

Symbol	Buffer spring types	
S1	Week	Refer to the technical data on page 13 for spring load details.
S2	Medium	
S3	Strong	

Week : Suction or release the workpiece from above.
 Medium: With metal scraper.
 Strong : Suction or release the workpiece from the side or bottom.

※ Refer to “Model Selection Guide” on page 11.

Specifications

【 Lockable boll joint 】

Working fluid	Compressed Air			
Working pressure range	0.4 MPa to 0.7 MPa			
Withstanding pressure	1.0 MPa			
Ambient temperature	-10 to 60°C (no freezing)			
Working humidity range	90% or less			
Rotating angle	Maximum 15° (±15°)			
Lock torque	40 kg·cm			
Durable vibration	1.9 G or less			
Suction force (Theoretical value) Note: Since the theoretical suction force is a value under static conditions, when actually using it, consider the safety factor of 1/4 for horizontal lifting and 1/8 for perpendicular lifting.	Vacuum pressure	-66.7 kpa	-53.4 kpa	-40.0 kpa
	Suction cup size			
	φ 100	53.37 kgf	42.70 kgf	32.02 kgf
φ 60	19.21 kgf	15.37 kgf	11.52 kgf	
Lubrication	No required			

【 Lockable buffer 】

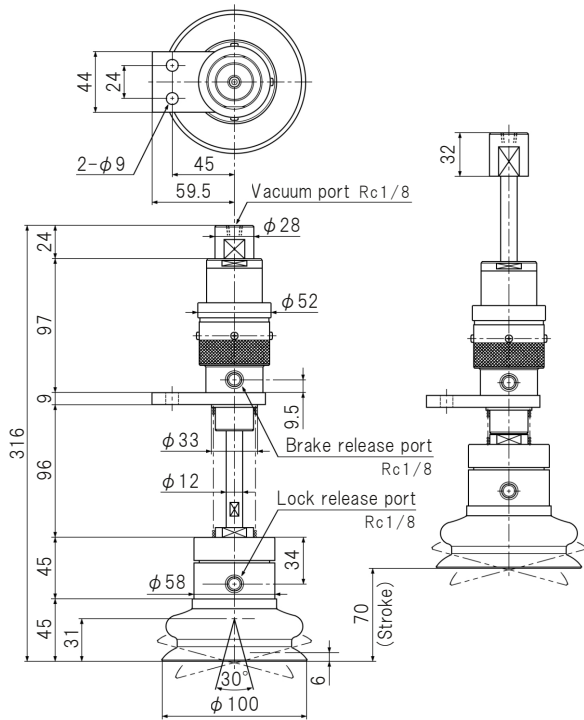
Working fluid	Compressed Air
Working pressure range	0.25 MPa to 0.7 MPa
Withstanding pressure	1.0 MPa
Ambient temperature	-10 to 60°C (no freezing)
Working rod speed	50 to 500 mm/sec
Lubrication	No required
Locking force	200 N (Rod size φ 12 and φ 16)

Mass

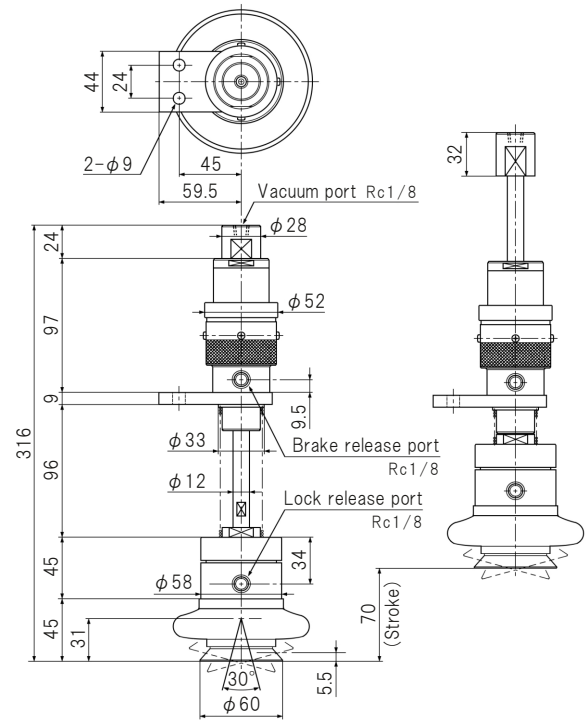
Model	Weight	Model	Weight	Model	Weight	Unit : kg
FLV-1B-12 (C)	2.3	FLV-1B-16 (C)	3.2	FLV-1	0.8	
FLV-2B-12C		FLV-2B-16C				
FLV-2B-12	2.2	FLV-2B-16	3.1	Symbol K or H	0.01	

Dimensions

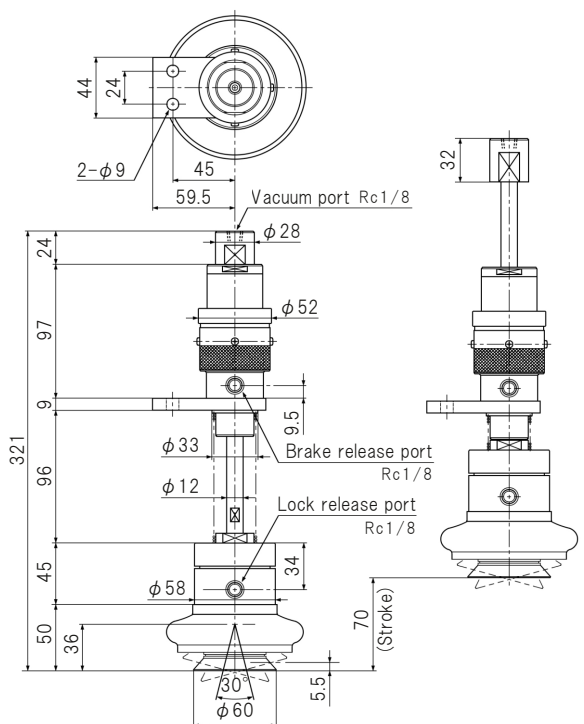
Model number : FLV-1B-12-S※
FLV-1B-12C-S※



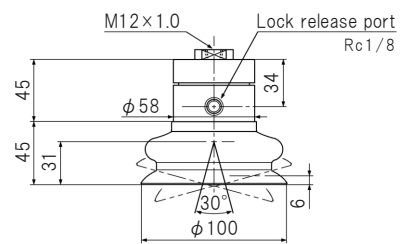
Model number : FLV-2B-12-S※



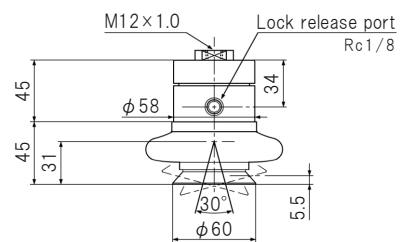
Model number : FLV-2B-12C-S※



Model number : FLV-1



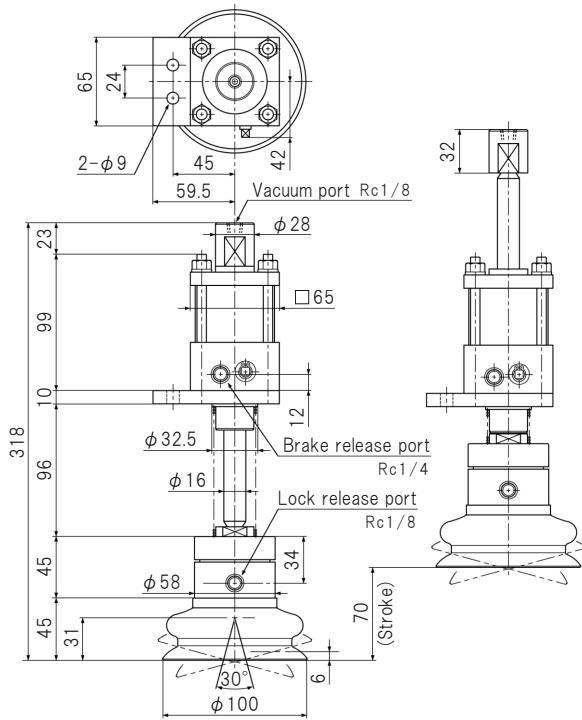
Model number : FLV-2



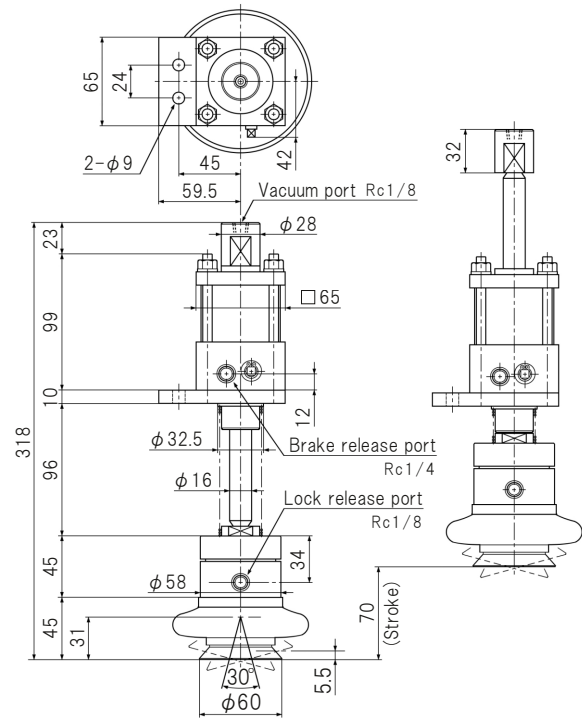
The dimensions of the type with metal scraper are the same.
The size of the suction cup surface in the suction state increases by about 10% compared to the natural state.

Dimensions

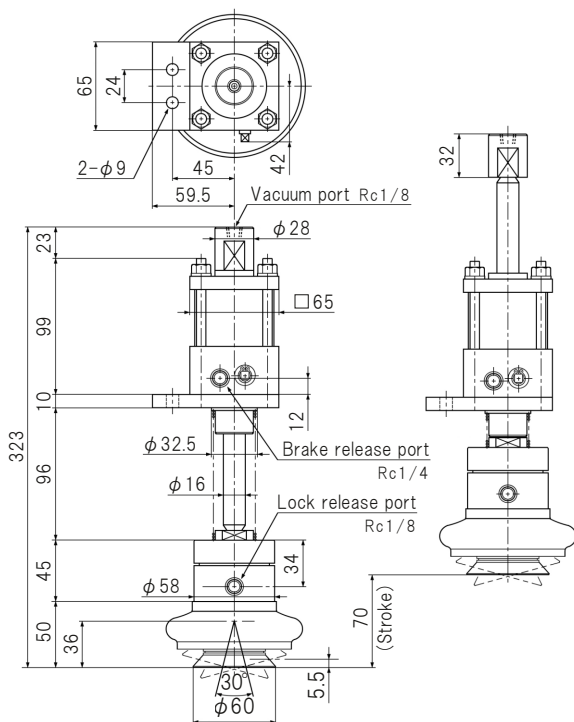
Model number : FLV-1B-16-S※
FLV-1B-16C-S※



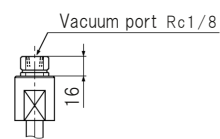
Model number : FLV-2B-16-S※



Model number : FLV-2B-16C-S※



Model number : FLV-※※-H

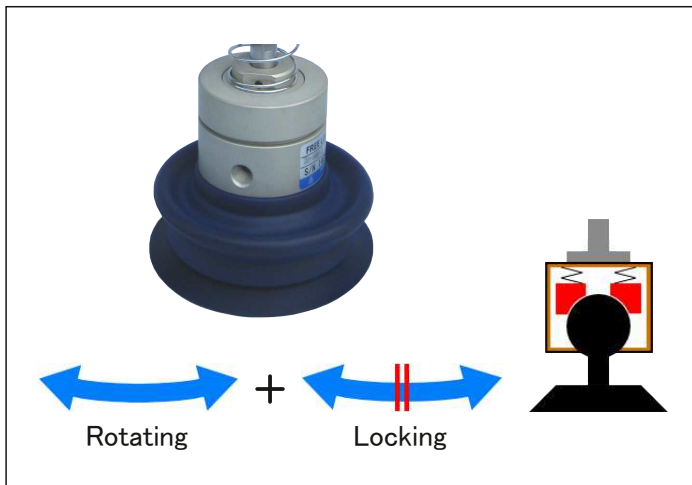


End stopper
(Common in all models)

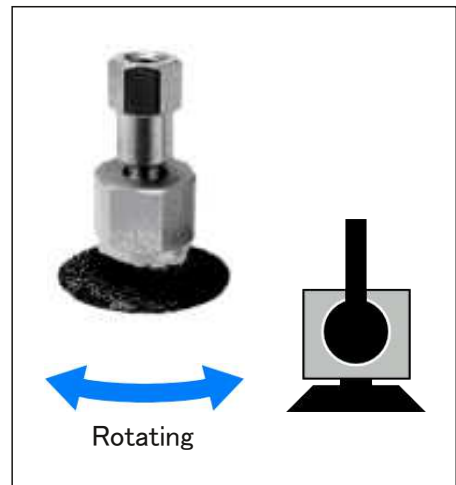
The dimensions of the type with metal scraper are the same.
The size of the suction cup surface in the suction state increases by about 10% compared to the natural state.

Features

【Lockable ball joint】



FREE LOCK PAD

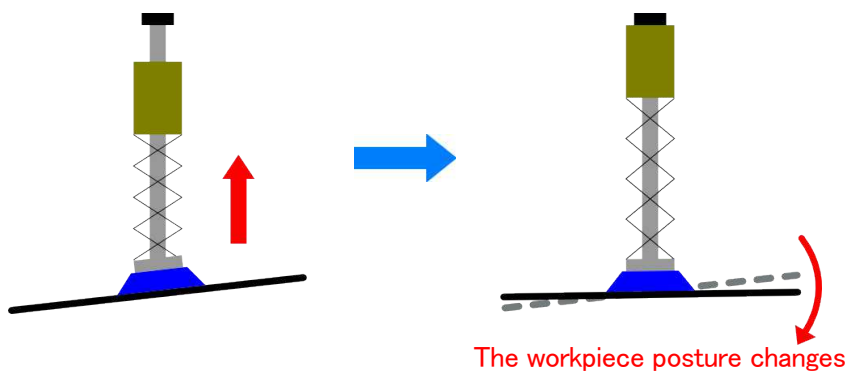


Normal type (Ball joint type)

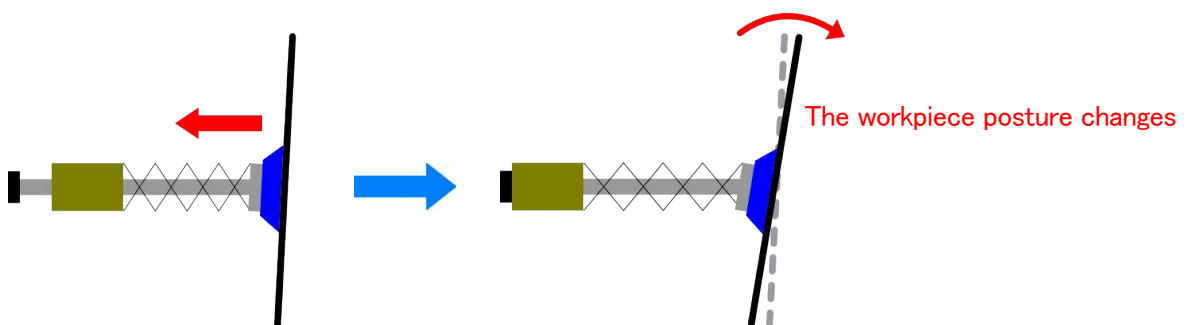
< Normal type >

When the workpiece surface is tilted relative to the suction cup surface, a ball joint type is used. However, since the ball joint in conventional models remains free even after suction, the workpiece posture shifts during transfer due to its own weight or deflection. Consequently, this necessitates manual compensation on the JIG side. Furthermore, lateral gripping is difficult without the combined use of a clamping device.

When a workpiece positioned at an angle is picked up via suction, a gravitational force acts upon it to seek a horizontal balance. This causes the workpiece's orientation to shift during transfer.



Even when the workpiece is held via lateral suction, its posture during transfer will change depending on its weight.



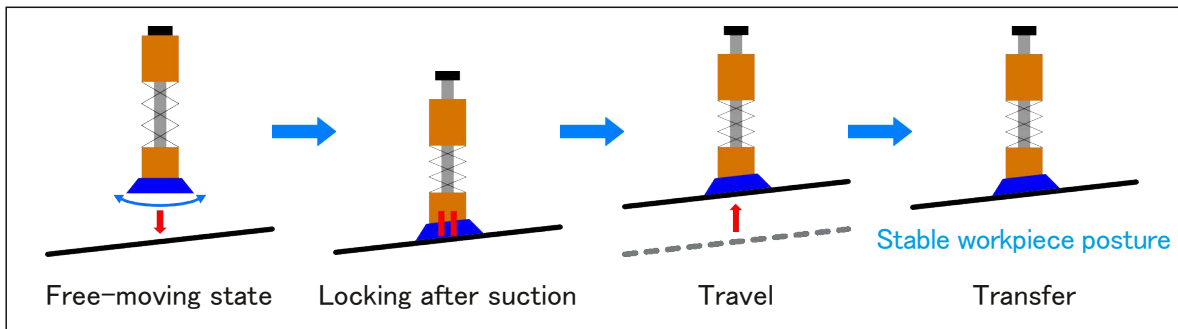
< FREE LOCK PAD >

Free Lock Pad can lock ball joint after suctioning the workpiece surface.

This allows the workpiece to be transported while maintaining its suctioned orientation, stabilizing its posture during transfer and improving placement accuracy in the next process.

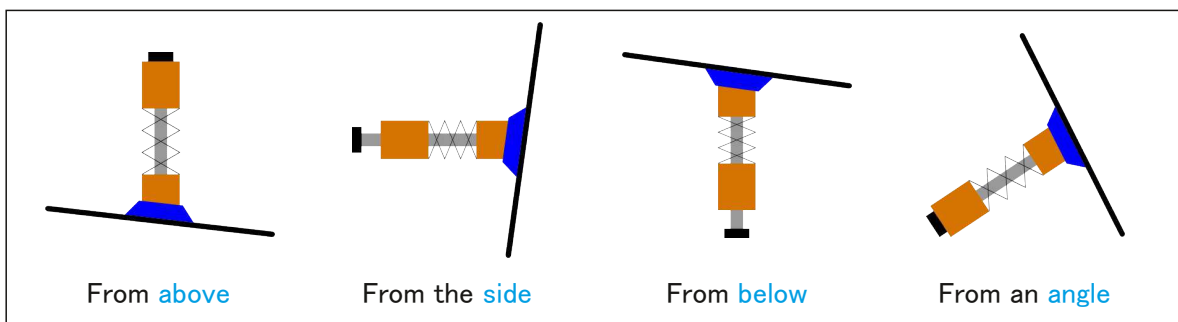
Furthermore, the ball joint can be locked at any position within rotating angle, making it compatible with a wide variety of workpiece shapes and sizes.

【 Basic operation 】

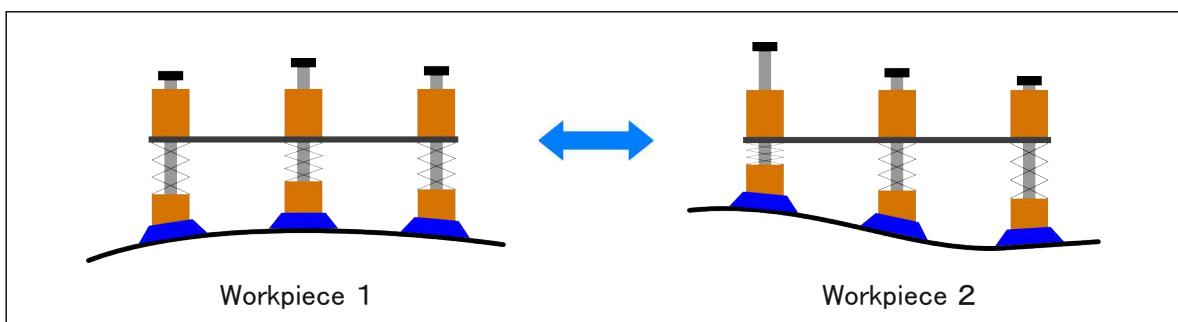


【 Mounting direction, Motion direction 】

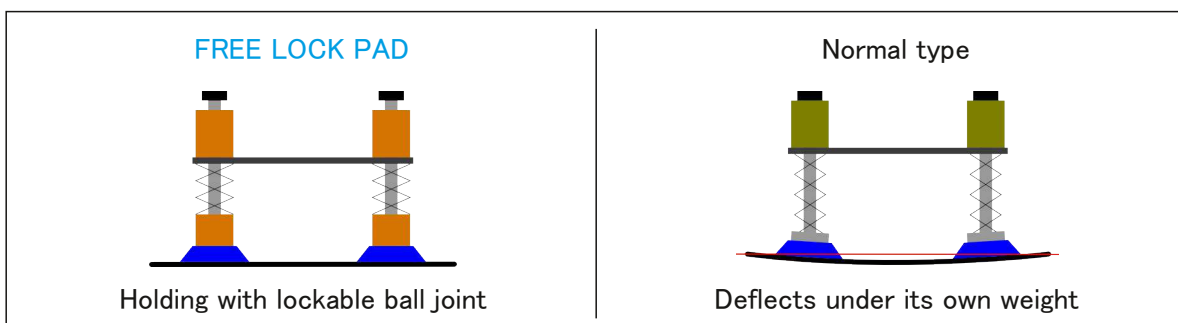
Capable of suction and transport in any direction. (Refer to page 14 notes.)



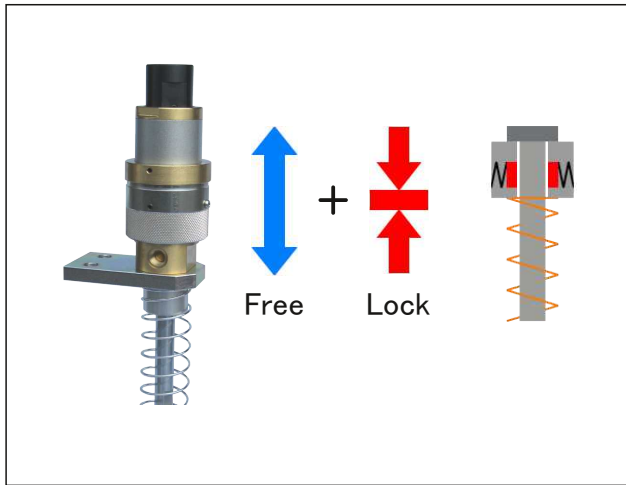
Effects : A wide variety of workpieces can be mixed and transported with a single device.



Since the workpiece can be prevented from deflection, the work placement accuracy of the next process is improved.



【Lockable buffer】



FREE LOCK PAD

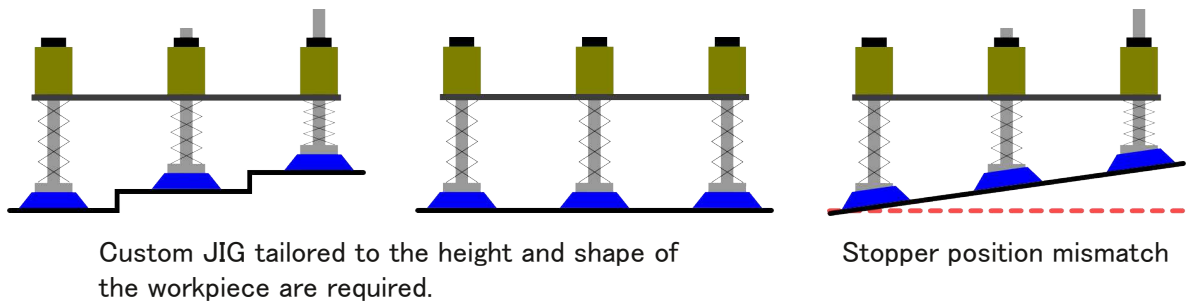


Normal type (with buffer)

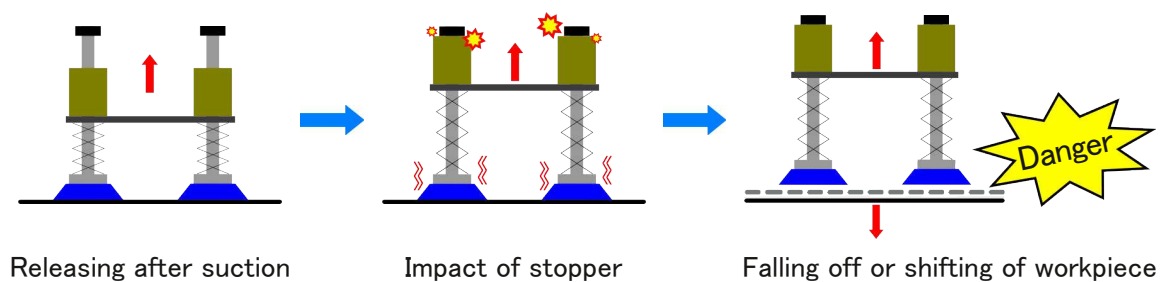
< Normal type >

The buffer is used for buffering purposes when the workpiece height varies or when the suction cup comes into contact with the workpiece. Since the normal type cannot be transported unless the buffer that has shrunk during suction is returned to the stopper, a specialized JIG that matches the distance from the stopper to the workpiece suction surface according to the height and shape of the workpiece was required. In addition, in order to prevent the workpiece from falling off or shifting, the buffer releasing operation to the stopper position must be returned slowly, which is an adverse effect on shortening the production cycle time.

Workpieces of different heights and shapes must change the stopper position.



Stopper impact during buffer extension.



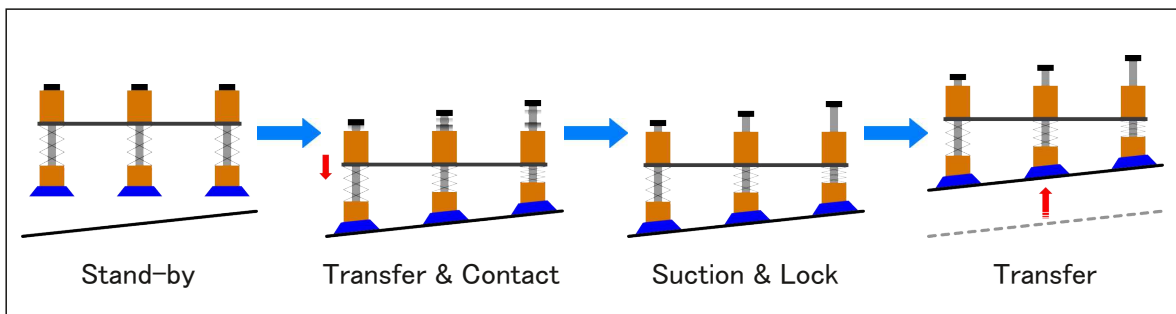
< FREE LOCK PAD >

FREE LOCK PAD can be locked at any position within the buffer stroke.

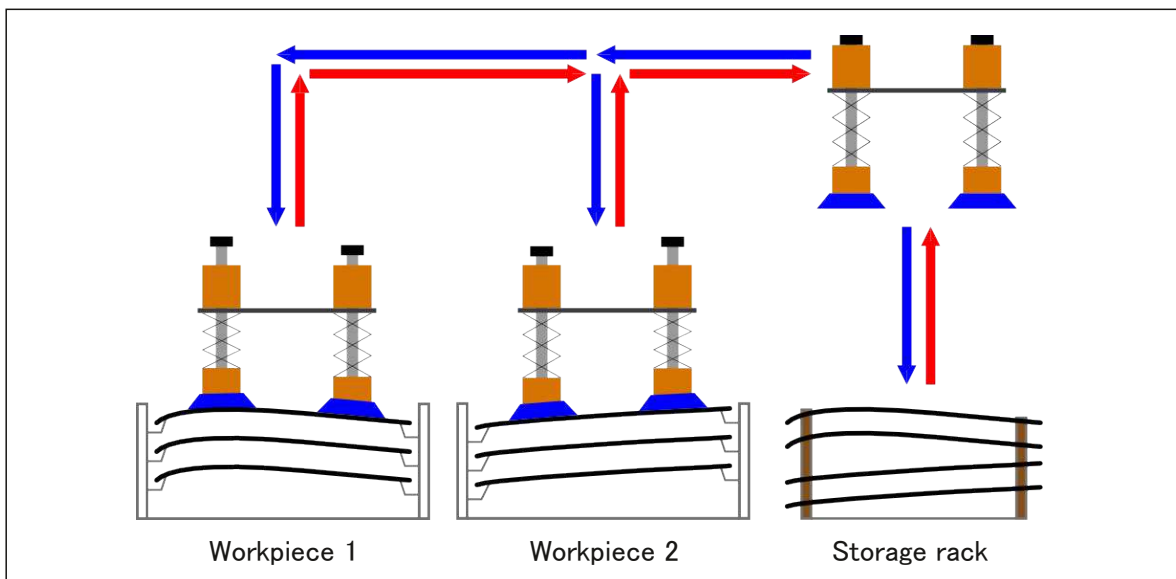
The buffer locks at the height of each workpiece, eliminating the need for stopper position adjustments. This makes it a perfect solution for mixed-model production lines with diverse workpiece shapes.

Since locking the buffer after suction creates the same state as the stopper release position, there is no need for a return-to-stopper motion. This enables rapid handling with zero impact shock.

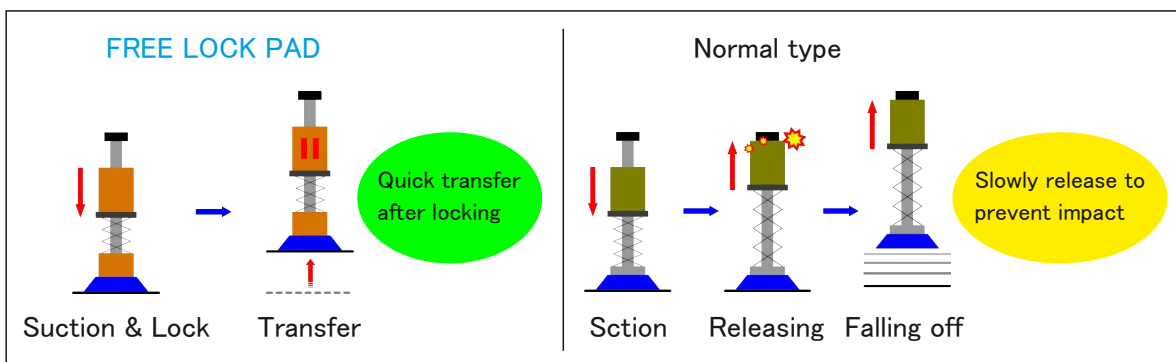
【 Basic operation 】



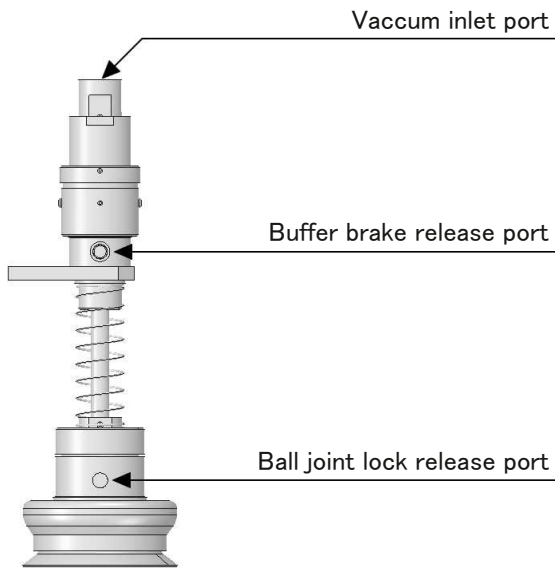
Effects : A wide variety of workpieces can be mixed and transported with a single device.



The buffer locks at the point of suction, enabling rapid handling without impact from the stopper. This ensures workpieces prevents any displacement or dropping.



How to use

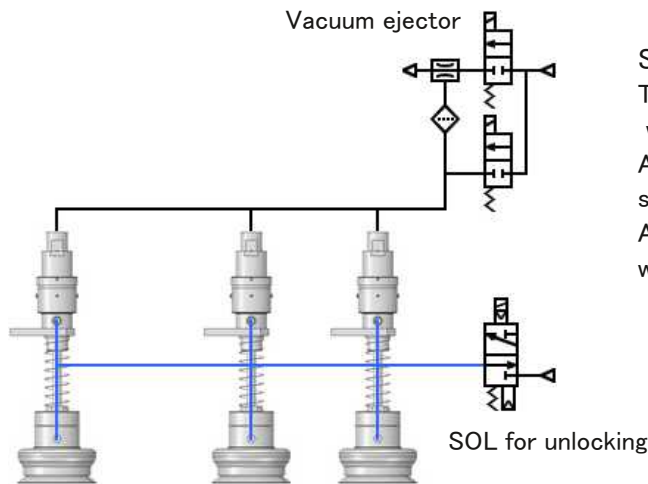


The lockable ball joint and lockable buffer are released by supplying compressed air to each release port, and are locked by exhausting the air.

The ball joint and buffer must be released when making contact with the workpiece.

As the ball joint and buffer conform to the workpiece shape upon suction, lock them to secure the position. When using the ball joint alone, lock it after it has sucked the workpiece and conformed to its shape.

Pneumatic circuit example

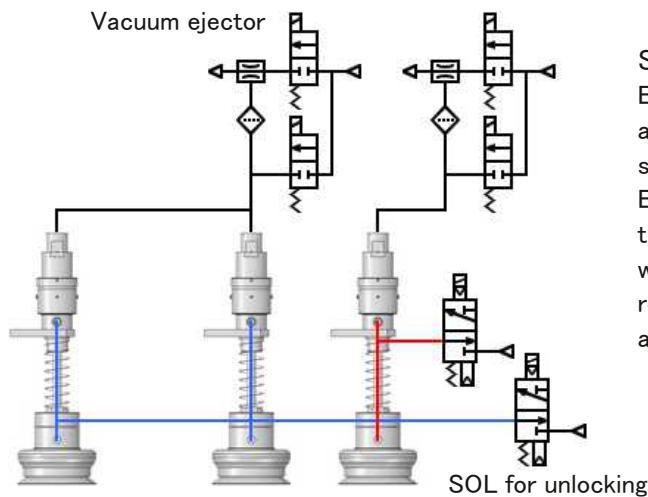


Solenoid valve for unlocking: 1 pc.

This circuit that controls all ball joints and buffers with a single solenoid valve.

All ball joints and buffers are released and locked simultaneously.

A simple pneumatic circuit enables the transfer of workpieces with identical suction positions.



Solenoid valve for unlocking: Multiple

By using multiple solenoid valves for lock release, a single JIG can handle workpieces with different suction points.

By releasing or locking the lockable ball joint and the lockable buffer corresponding to the type of workpieces in combination with a slide mechanism, rotation mechanism, etc., mixed transportation of a wide variety of workpieces can be performed.

Operation chart

○ : Air supply × : Exhaust

Condition	Ball joint	Buffer	Vacuum ejector	Vacuum release
Stand-by	×	×	×	×
Move to workpiece surface	○	○	×	×
Contact with workpiece surface	○	○	×	×
Suction	○	○	○	×
Lock the ball joint	×	○	○	×
Lock the buffer	×	×	○	×
Transport・Installation	×	×	○	×
Turn off suctioning	×	×	×	×
Vaccum burst	×	×	×	○
Move to stand-by position	×	×	×	×
※ Unlocking the ball joint	○	×	×	×
※ Unlocking the buffer	×	○	×	×
Stand-by	×	×	×	×

※ When releasing the ball joint locking and buffer brake with one solenoid valve, it is recommended to perform the release operation (return to original position) once when returned to the stand-by position.

Model Selection Guide

① Suction cup size

The number of suction cups and the cup size are determined by the weight, shape, suction position, etc. of the workpiece. Determine the number and diameter of suction cups after fully considering the suction direction, moving acceleration, wind pressure, etc., and ensuring the lift force in consideration of the safety factor. (Refer page 3)



Horizontal lifting

② Rod size

Rod size $\phi 12$ is recommended when both suction and installation postures of the workpiece are horizontal lifting, and rod size $\phi 16$ is recommended when either or both are vertical lifting, upward suctioning, or diagonal suctioning. In addition, even in the case of horizontal lifting, if there is a change in the horizontal posture such as turning by a robot while transporting the workpiece, rod size of $\phi 16$ is recommended.



Vertical lifting

③ Centering spring

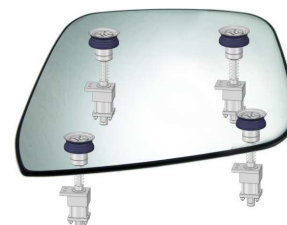
With centering spring is recommended for vertical lifting, upward suctioning, and diagonal suctioning.

④ Type of buffer spring

For horizontal lifting, select from “S1”, “S2”, and “S3” in consideration of the strength of the workpiece and the dent when pushing the buffer.

For vertical lifting, upward suctioning, and diagonal suctioning, select from “S2” and “S3” in consideration of the strength of the workpiece and the dent when pushing the buffer.

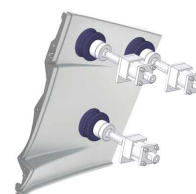
If “S1” is selected, the buffer may not be completely released.



Upward suction

⑤ Metal scraper

Select “K” for use in an environment where there is concern about welding spatter adhesion. (Only rod size $\phi 12$)



Diagonal suction

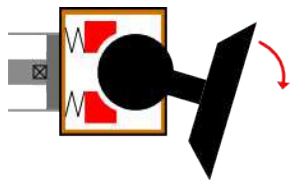
⑥ Vacuum holding support

Select “H” when installing a vacuum holding check valve to fall prevent the workpiece.

Centering spring

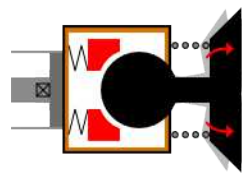
When the lockable ball joint is released, the suction cup will move freely.

In particular, in the case of vertical lifting, upward suctioning, and diagonal suctioning, the weight of the suction cup makes it easier to point downward when the lockable ball joint is released, and it may not smoothly contact between the workpiece and the suction cup. In that case, it is recommended to a with centering spring type.



Without centering spring

The weight of the suction cup makes it easier to point downward when the lockable ball joint is released, and it may not smoothly contact between the workpiece and the suction cup.

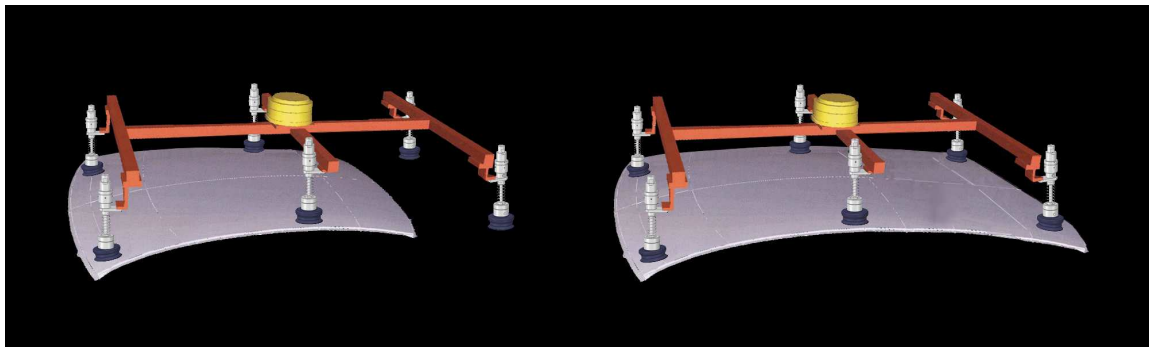


With centering spring

When the lock is released, the restoring force of the built-in spring cause the suction cup to face approximately the center, so workpiece contact is smooth.

Applications

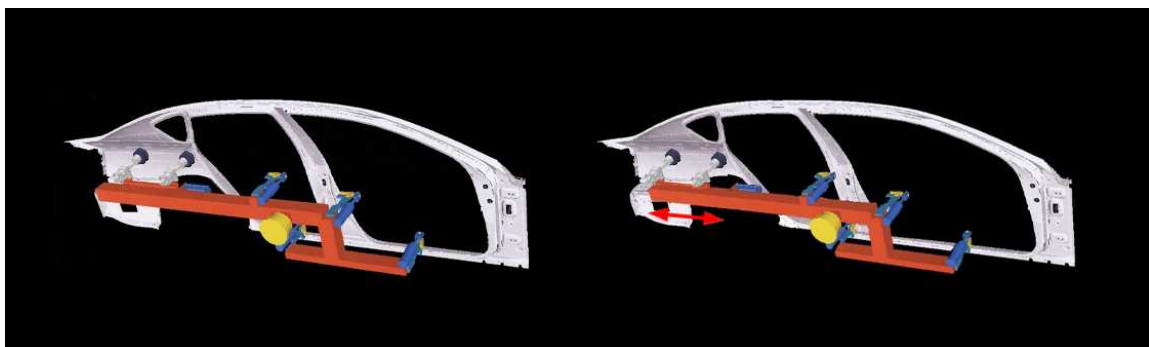
Industry: Automotive, Glass, Aerospace, Marine, Railway, Construction machinery, Home appliances, Building materials, etc.



Roof panel transfer device (Automotive assembly line)

A single transfer device can handled a wide variety of multi-shaped roof with high quality.

Since the lockable ball joint and the lockable buffer can be locked according to the shape and height of the workpiece, flexible handling with a stable workpiece posture is possible.



Body side panel transfer device (Automotive assembly line)

Workpieces of different sizes with different suction positions can be handled with the minimum quantity by changing the position of the FREE LOCK PAD in combination with a slide mechanism such as an air cylinder or electric actuator.

Precautions for safe handling

When using FREE LOCK PAD (with lockable buffer) in vertical lifting, upward suction, or diagonal suction.

When the FREE LOCK PAD is used for vertical lifting, upward suctioning, or diagonal suctioning, the rod $\phi 12$ type may have insufficient rod strength and the buffer braking mechanism may not operate normally due to the influence of the moment generated by the weight of the workpiece. Please use in consideration of the following usage conditions. Unless otherwise specified, it is strongly recommended to use rod $\phi 16$ type.

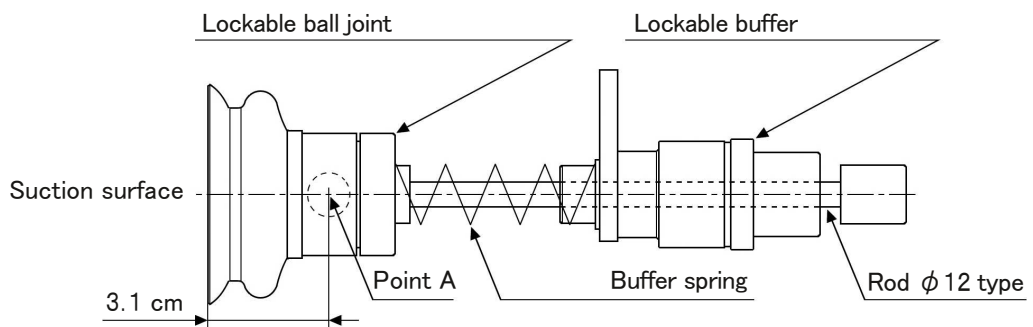
Allowable workpiece mass when using rod $\phi 12$ type

Locking torque at Point A	Allowable workpiece mass	(When moving the workpiece while suctioning it, attention to acceleration, impact, deflection, wind pressure, etc.)
40 kg. cm or less	12.9 kg or less	

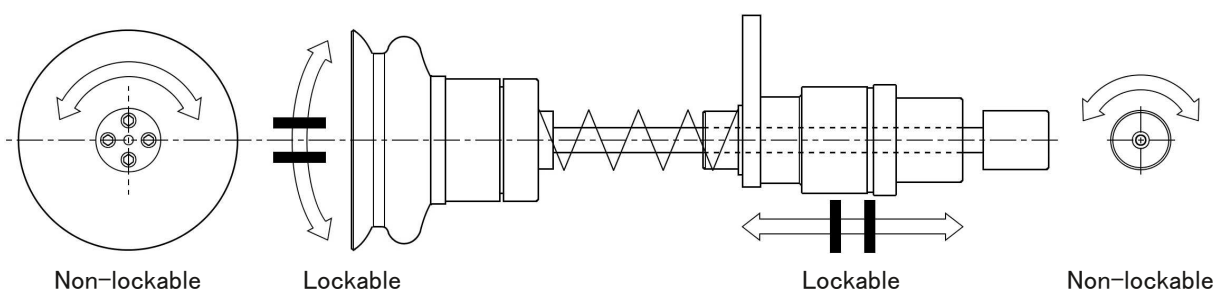
Example of lock torque

Lock torque (kg. cm) = Workpiece weight (kg) \times 3.1 cm

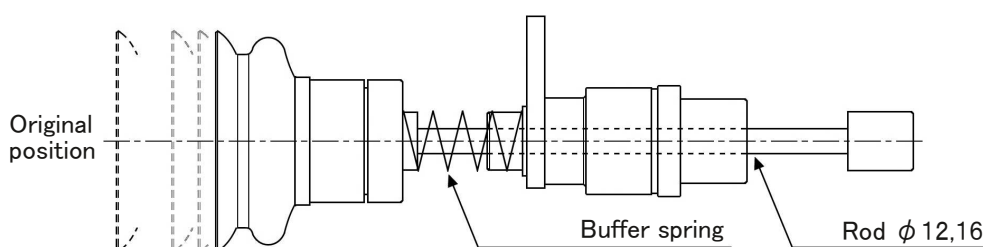
(The center gravity of the workpiece must be on the suction surface.)



The lockable ball joint and the lockable buffer cannot lock the rotational force with respect to the central axis. If rotational force is generated on the workpiece depending on the usage conditions, or if the workpiece weight exceeds the allowable workpiece mass, use two or more FREE LOCK PAD in parallel.



When releasing the brake of the lockable buffer with the FREE LOCK PAD facing sideways, upward, or diagonally upward, if the buffer spring "S1" is selected, the spring force is weak, so the buffer may not be completely released to the origin. Select from "S2" and "S3" in consideration of the strength of the workpiece.



Spring load		Unit: kgf
Symbol	Minimum load	Maximum load
S1	0.37	1.6
S2	1.26	5.58
S3	2.2	7.1

Be sure to read this before handling products.

These safety instructions are intended to prevent hazardous situations or equipment damage. These instructions indicate the level of potential hazard with the levels of “Warning”, or “Caution”.



Warning

This symbol indicates a hazard with a medium level of risk which, if not avoided, could result in death or serious injury.



Caution

This symbol indicates a hazard with a low level of risk which, if not avoided, could result in minor or moderate injury.



Warning

If the workpiece drops and consider dangerous, take sufficient safety measures by providing drop prevention measures.

Consider safety measures for the human and machinery when the workpiece is dropped due to a decrease in suction transfer and other factors, and design so that the human and machinery are not damaged.



Caution

- ① Use clean compressed air. Use compressed air that does not contain chemicals, synthetic oil containing organic solvents, salt, corrosive gas, etc., passes through an air filter with a filtration degree of 5 μm or less, and if there is a lot of drainage, use compressed air that has passed through an aftercooler, air dryer, drain catcher, etc.
- ② There is no need to lubrication the lock release port and the brake release port. Since it is initially lubricated by the manufacturer, it can be used without lubrication.

(If a lubricant is used in the release port, use turbine oil (no additives), ISO VG32.
Once lubricant is utilized within the release port, since the original lubricant applied within the product during manufacturing will be washed away, please continue to supply lubrication to the release port.
Without continued lubrication, malfunctions could occur.)

- ③ When suctioning and transporting the workpiece, be sure to lock the lockable ball joint and the lockable buffer.
- ④ The lockable ball joint and the lockable buffer cannot lock the rotational force with respect to the central axis. If rotational force is generated on the workpiece depending on the usage conditions, or if the workpiece weight exceeds the allowable workpiece mass, use two or more FREE LOCK PAD in parallel.
- ⑤ Leakage or clogging of the air pressure circuit, wear, cracks, or deterioration of the suction cup, or buffer sliding failure may lead to problems. Make sure to perform periodic maintenance and inspection.
- ⑥ Please be careful that it dust or the like gets mixed in from the vacuum hole on the suction cup surface, it may cause a malfunction.
- ⑦ When using FREE LOCK PAD for vertical lifting, upward suctioning or diagonal suctioning, refer to “Precautions for safe handling” (Page 13).
- ⑧ If the vacuum circuit stops while sucking the workpiece, the vacuum pressure cannot be maintained and the workpiece may fall off. By selecting a circuit that can temporarily hold the vacuum circuit with a check valve and FREE LOCK PAD that supports vacuum holding (symbol : H), it is possible to temporarily prevent the workpiece from falling off due to the vacuum circuit interruption.

As a guide, the amount of decrease in vacuum pressure of the vacuum holding support type is about -1 kPa per minute. (Per 1 unit)

 **Caution**

Recommended inspection / Replacement cycle			
FREE LOCK PAD	Rough standard for inspection		Rough standard for replacement
	Cycle	Method	
	Every 400 K times	Check the operation	2.4M times

【 Lockable buffer Individual precautions 】

Selection

 **Caution**

① Installation

Omnidirectional possible. However, the mounting flange of the lockable buffer must be fixed.

② Using fluid

Use clean compressed air. Use compressed air that does not contain chemicals, synthetic oil containing organic solvents, salt, corrosive gas, etc., passes through an air filter with a filtration degree of 5 μm or less, and if there is a lot of drainage, use compressed air that has passed through an aftercooler, air dryer, drain catcher, etc.

③ Lubrication

No require. (If a lubricant is used in the release port, use turbine oil (no additives), ISO VG32.)

④ Rod rotation

Lockable buffer cannot lock the rotational force with respect to the central axis.

If rotational force is generated on the workpiece depending on the usage conditions, or if the workpiece weight exceeds the allowable workpiece mass, use two or more FREE LOCK PAD in parallel.

Maintenance

 **Caution**

Recommended inspection / Replacement cycle			
Position	Rough standard for inspection		Rough standard for replacement
	Cycle	Method	
Scraper	Every 500K times or 1 year	Visual check	1.5M times
Brake			5.0M times



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FLOATING CONNECTOR

AUTO CLAMPER

SEL NUT

LINEA BRAKE

PNEUMATIC AND HYDRAULIC

EQUIPMENT