



## Glossary

### Acme Screw

Acme screws are self-locking and will not back-drive. They also withstand vibration and shock better than ball or worm screws and are used for applications with these characteristics. Also see "lead screw".

### Actuator Housing

The actuator housing provides environmental protection for the internal components and may also be a structural member of the actuator.

### Adapters

The front and rear adapters are the connection points for mounting most Thomson actuators. The front adapter is usually a cross hole but optionally may be a tapped hole, threaded rod, or universal rod end. The rear adapter may be cast into the actuator housing or held in place with a nut.

### Adjustable End of Stroke Limit Switches

The adjustable end of stroke limit switches may be moved to positions inside the full stroke of the actuator and will shut off the actuator when it reaches the limit switch. Also see "end of stroke limit switches".

### Anti-coast Brake/Electrical Brake

Depending on the load, AC ball screw actuators may coast to a stop when power is removed. This overrun is eliminated by an anti-coast brake or an electrical brake. The anti-coast brake (pawl type) will allow up to one revolution of the motor after power is removed. They are used on the Electrak GX AC. An electrical brake (electrically released) operates much faster after power is removed and allow less coast than the pawl type. Also see "brake".

### Anti-rotation Mechanism

A feature available on some actuators that resolves the restraining torque within the actuator. The extension tube will not rotate on actuators with this feature when driven without having the ends fixed.

### Auto Reset Thermal Switch

An auto reset thermal will switch off the motor if it becomes too warm which means that the motor has exceeded its maximum allowed duty cycle. When the motor has cooled off, the switch will close again automatically, and the motor will start to run if power is still being applied to it. Also see "duty cycle".

### Ball Screw

Ball screws are highly efficient and are used for high loads and speeds. Also see "lead screw".

### Brake

Actuators using an acme or worm screw are inherently self-locking, while ball screw driven actuators are not. To prevent ball screw actuators from backdriving, they incorporate an anti backdriving brake (holding brake). Ball screw actuators with an AC motor can also be equipped with an anti-coast brake. Also see "Anti-coast brake/electrical brake" and "holding brake".

### Capacitor

AC actuators use permanent split capacitor motors and require the use of a start/run capacitor in the control circuit to operate. The controls for AC actuators have the capacitor included in the control. For customer supplied controls, a separate capacitor is required, and the part number is included on the actuator product page.

### CE Compliance and Certification

All actuators sold in the EU are CE compliant, while some actuators sold outside of the EU may not be. If you order your actuator outside of the EU and need a CE compliance, contact the factory to verify availability and be sure to include the request on your order. Most AC actuators are UL listed as standard. UL has no standard for DC actuators under 48 Vdc.

### Compression Loads

See "Tension and Compression Loads".

### Controls

Controls can be external to the actuator and provide the actuator with the correct voltage, have either membrane or pendant operators, and some have position indicators.

### Cover Tube

The cover tube provides protection for the lead screw and provides protection and support for the extension tube. For the Electrak® PPA, the cover tube also provides the rear mounting connection.

### Customization

Even the most versatile actuator may not always suit all applications. But whatever your need is, our engineers are ready to help you to customize the actuators according to your requirements. We build more exclusive actuators than anyone else and have decades of experience in producing actuators to meet special needs.

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### Duty Cycle

$$\text{Duty cycle} = \frac{\text{on time}}{(\text{on time} + \text{off time})}$$

Example: 15 seconds on, 45 seconds off

$$\frac{15 \text{ s}}{(15 \text{ s} + 45 \text{ s})} = 25\% \text{ duty cycle}$$

The duty cycle is a function of the maximum rated load and the ambient temperature. Ambient temperatures above the stated will affect the duty cycle negatively, while lower temperatures and/or lower load will affect it positively. Also see "on-time".

### Dynamic Load

The dynamic load rating is how much load the actuator will move when power is applied. Also see "load rating".

### Dynamic Braking

Dynamic braking is a feature which short circuits the motor windings at power off, resulting in a shorter coasting distance before the actuator comes to a complete stop. Dynamic braking can be accomplished on other DC actuators by wiring the control to short the motor leads when power is removed.

### Electronic Limit Switches (ELS)

Electronic Limit Switches is a current sensing function used in some actuator control models. The ELS senses the current and if it exceeds a preset level, the control cuts the power to the motor. This function can be used to detect and stop at the ends of the actuator stroke or to stop the actuator if it runs into an obstacle.

### Electronic Load Monitoring (ELM)

A built-in microprocessor inside the actuators continuously monitors the performance of the actuator. The microprocessor will stop the movement at the end of stroke, in case of mid stroke stall, at overload conditions or if the duty cycle is too high. It also eliminates the need of a clutch and provides dynamic braking.

### Encoder Feedback

Encoders provide a digital output signal that can be used to determine the position of the extension tube. An encoder equipped actuator must return to a "home" position if power is removed and restored in order to reset its starting point. Also see "potentiometer feedback".

### End of Stroke Limit Switches

End of stroke limit switches are incorporated in some actuator models, either as standard or as an option, that will shut off power when the end of stroke is achieved. Also see "fixed end of stroke limit switches" and "adjustable end of stroke limit switches".

### End Play (Backlash)

The stack up of tolerances within the lead screw assembly and gearing allowing some linear movement of the extension tube without rotating the motor. Typical end play or backlash varies by model. The range is 0.3 to 2.0 mm (0.012 - 0.08 inch).

### Extension Tube

The extension tube slides in and out of the actuator and is connected via the front adapter to the load being moved or positioned.

### Fixed End of Stroke Limit Switches

The fixed end of stroke limit switches allow the full stroke of the actuator to be used and will shut off power when the end of stroke is achieved. Also see "end of stroke limit switches".

### Holding Brake

All acme, worm or trapezoidal screw driven actuators are inherently self-locking, while ball screw driven ones incorporate an anti back-driving brake (holding brake) that engages when the actuator has come to a complete stop. Also see "brake".

### Input Voltage

The nominal voltage required to operate the actuator. All actuators will accept at least a  $\pm 10\%$  variation of the nominal voltage, but a change in the voltage will result in a change of the speed of DC actuators. Controls are available that accept 115 or 230 Vac input and provide 24 Vdc output to operate 24 Vdc actuators.

### Inrush Current

Inrush current is a short current peak that appears at the start of an actuator as the motor tries to get the load moving. Typically, the inrush current will last between 75 to 150 milliseconds and can be up to three times higher (on a low-level switched actuator 1.5 times higher) than the current for the actuator and load. Batteries have no problem delivering the inrush current, but if using an AC power supply, it is important to size it to handle the inrush current.

### Installation Instructions

Each actuator has an installation manual to answer typical questions about mounting and wiring the actuators.

### IP Rating

See "protection class".

### Lead Screw

Actuators use four different types of lead screws depending on the configuration and load requirements of the actuator. Ball screws are highly efficient and used for high loads and speeds. Acme, worm and trapezoidal screws are self-locking and will not backdrive. Acme and trapezoidal screws withstand vibration and shock better than the other and are used for applications with these characteristics.

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### Lifetime Expectancy

Life is very complex to calculate and depends on many parameters. Some of the more important parameters includes load, stroke length, operation temperature and how often the overload clutch is operated. Contact customer service for more information.

### Lifting Columns

Lifting columns provide a stable base for adjusting the height of tables or platforms. The column provides both the lifting force and the ability to resolve high moment forces from off axis loads.

### Linear Actuators

Actuators providing a linear thrust via an extension tube to lift, lower, push, pull or position a load.

### Load Rating

The load rating is the minimum amount of force the actuator will provide during its lifetime. The load rating of all rod style actuators is the same for both compression and tension loads. Also see "dynamic load", "static load" and "tension and compression load".

### Low Level Switching

Low level switching allows you to control the direction of the actuator motion by using low level inputs on the actuator instead of having to switch the much higher motor current.

### Manual Override (Hand Wind)

Allows manual operation of the actuator in both directions in case of a power failure. The actuator accepts a standard hexagon key to rotate the motor in either direction. Optional on some models.

### Maximum On Time

The maximum amount of time an actuator may operate without stopping to "cool off". For high load and long stroke actuators, this may be one extend and retract cycle. The actuator should not exceed 25% duty cycle at full rated load. If no maximum on time is stated, the maximum on time is equal to one full cycle at the maximum dynamic load for the actuator in question.

### Mounting

Electrak® actuators are quickly and easily mounted by slipping pins through the holes on each end of the unit and into brackets on the machine frame and the load. PPA actuators are mounted by the rear trunnions on the cover tube and the clevis on the extension tube. Solid pins provide maximum holding strength, and a retaining or cotter pin on each end will prevent the pin from falling out of its mounting bracket. Roll or spring type mounting pins should be avoided. The mounting pins must be parallel to each other as shown (Fig. a). Pins which are not parallel may cause the actuator to bind. The load should act along the axis of the actuator since off center loads may cause binding (Fig. b).

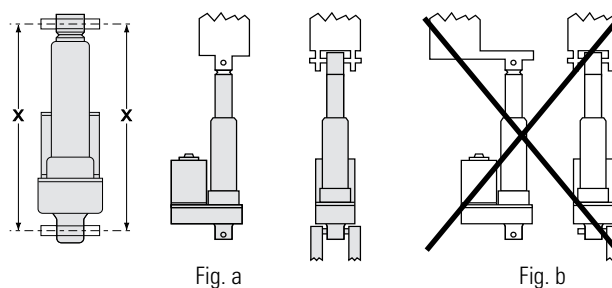


Fig. a

Fig. b

### Non-driven Actuators

Actuators supplied without a motor and driven manually or by a customer supplied motor.

### On-time

The on-time is the time that the motor runs for between two stops. The maximum on-time is the maximum time the motor is allowed to run for between two stops. Sometimes the maximum on-time is the limiting factor rather than the duty cycle rating. Also see "duty cycle".

### Operating and Storage Temperature

The operating temperature is the range in which the actuator may be safely operated. For the high end of the range, the duty cycle will be lower than 25%. All actuators can be stored or transported at the same temperature as the operating temperature. Contact customer support if the operating temperature will be exceeded during storage or transportation.

### Overload Clutch

Electrak 050, GX and PPA Series linear actuators are protected by a load limiting mechanical clutch which prevents the motor from stalling at either end of the actuator stroke. It will also slip when the factory-set load limit is exceeded. The clutch is a ball detent design, assuring a consistent slip point and long life.

### Potentiometer Feedback

Potentiometers provide an analog output signal that can be used to determine the position of the extension tube. A potentiometer will "remember" its position if power is removed and restored. Also see "encoder feedback"

### Protection Class

The protection class refers to the environmental rating of the enclosure, International Protection Marking (IP) ratings are commonly referenced standards that classify electrical equipment using standard tests to determine resistance to ingress of solid objects and liquids. The first digit applies to airborne contaminants and the second digit (and sometimes a third letter) to water/moisture.

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- IP33: protected against the penetration of solid objects with a diameter greater than 12 mm and against direct sprays of water up to 60 degrees from vertical.
- IP44: protected against the penetration of solid objects with a diameter greater than 1 mm and against water sprayed from any direction.
- IP45: protected against the penetration of solid objects with a diameter greater than 1 mm and low pressure water jets from any direction.
- IP51: protected from dust and vertical dripping water/condensation.
- IP52: protected from dust and dripping water/condensation falling at an angle up to 15 degrees from vertical.
- IP56: protected from dust and high pressure water jets from any direction.
- IP65: dust tight and protected against low pressure water jets from any direction.
- IP66: dust tight and protected against high pressure water jets from any direction.
- IP67: dust tight and protected against the effect of immersion in water between 150 mm (5.9 inch) and 1 meter (39.4 inch).
- IP69K: dust tight and protected against the effect of high pressure washing with hot water from any direction.

### Pulse Width Modulation (PWM)

Pulse width modulation control works by switching the power supplied to the motor on and off rapidly. The DC voltage is converted to a square-wave signal, alternating between fully on and zero, giving the motor a series of power "kicks". If the switching frequency is high enough, the motor runs at a steady speed due to its fly-wheel momentum. By adjusting the duty cycle of the signal (modulating the width of the pulse, hence the 'PWM'), the time fraction it is "on", the average power can be varied, and hence the motor speed. Note: Actuators with built-in electronics and CE filters will be affected negatively by the PWM modulation and should not be used together. Contact customer support for more information.

### REACH

REACH is a European Union regulation concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and restriction of Chemicals. It makes manufacturers and importers who place chemicals on the market responsible for understanding and managing the risks associated with their use.

### Restraining Torque

The torque which is developed between the clevis on the extension tube and rear mount (clevis or trunnion) when the unit extends or retracts and ratchets the clutch (Fig. c). This means that if the ends are not fixed by a method that can handle the restraining torque, the extension tube will rotate instead of moving. However, units with anti-

rotation mechanism are internally restrained and can therefore be run in and out without having to be fixed in the ends. Also see "anti-rotation mechanism".

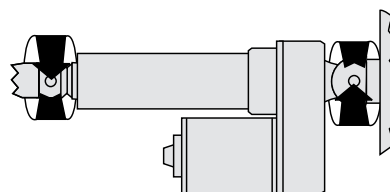


Fig. c

### Rodless Actuators

Rodless actuators provide support for the load as well as thrust. The load is supported and moved by a carriage on the actuator rather than pushed or pulled by an extension rod. Rodless actuators are ideal for applications requiring long strokes (up to 1500 mm), high speeds (up to 110 mm/s), movement of the load within the shortest envelope possible or the load supported by the actuator.

### RoHS Compliance

All actuators, controls and accessories sold in the EU are RoHS compliant unless otherwise stated, while products sold outside of the EU may not be. If you order an actuator outside of the EU and need it to be RoHS compliant, contact the factory to verify availability and be sure to include the request on your order.

### Rotary Actuators

Actuators providing a rotary output to position a load, turn a winch, or rotate a gear or sprocket.

### Service and Maintenance

Actuators are generally maintenance free. Electrak GX have repair kits available from your local distributor or OEM.

### Side Loading

Side loading occurs when the extension tube/moving member is subjected to loads from the side. Most actuators cannot handle any side loads, and a proper design of the application should eliminate any side loads or keep it within the permissible limits.

### Sizing and Selection

The Thomson web site ([www.thomsonlinear.com](http://www.thomsonlinear.com)) includes an online tool that can be used to walk through the decision process for picking the best actuator and get the ordering data for your choice.

### Speed

DC actuators have a direct load/speed relationship. As the load increases, the speed decreases. There are curves on each product page to show the speed from no load to full rated load. AC actuators have little speed fluctuations based on load but there are load/speed curves on all the AC actuator product pages.

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### Spline Safety Function

An optional safety function on the rodless actuator (LM80) that will stop downward motion in case the carriage (the moving member) collides with an obstacle. The motor will keep running but the carriage will stand still and not pull down on the obstacle. When reversing the motor rotation, the carriage will automatically start to move upwards again.

### Static Load

The static load rating is how much load the actuator will hold with power off. The static load rating is normally twice the dynamic load rating. Also see "load rating". If nothing else is stated, the static load rating is for the actuator extension tube being fully retracted. The static load rating will decrease as the tube extends.

### Synchronous Operation

Normally motor speed cannot be controlled with enough precision to ensure that the actuators will remain synchronized, and a binding effect could take place. However, there are some solutions. Non-driven actuators may be mechanically linked and thereby synchronized. Actuators equipped with an encoder can be synchronized using controls designed for synchronous operation as long as there is no onboard electronics preventing PWM operation. Electrak HD models with SYN option have a built in control which enables synchronized operation between two or more Electrak HD SYN units of the same type.

### Tension and Compression Load

A tension load tries to stretch the actuator, and a compression load tries to compress the actuator (Fig. d). Most actuators can manage the same tension and compression load. Also see "load rating". With bi-directional loads, the end play of the actuator extension tube may need to be taken into consideration when using the actuator for positioning tasks.

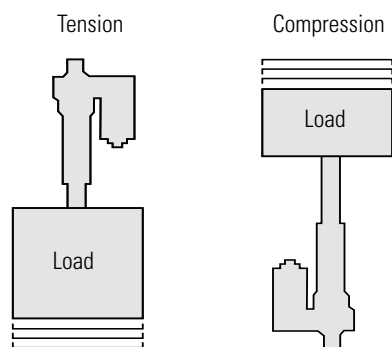


Fig. d

### Trapezoidal Screw

Screw type with similar characteristics as an acme screw. This type of screw is used in LM80. Also see "acme screw" and "lead screw".

### Vent Tube

Electrak® 050 actuators have a breather tube in the wiring harness to allow the actuator to operate without creating a vacuum and drawing water through the seals on the cover tube.

### Voltage Drop

Long leads/cables between the power source and the actuator will result in a voltage drop for DC units. This voltage drop can cause malfunction and are avoided by sizing the leads in accordance with the following lead cross section selection table. The table is based on an ambient temperature of 30 °C (86 °F) or less. A higher ambient temperature may result in the need for a greater lead cross section.

**Lead Cross Section Selection Table [mm<sup>2</sup> (AWG)]**

Current draw [A]	Cable length [m]	Actuator input voltage [Vdc]		
		12	24	36
0 - 10	0 - 3	2.5 (14)	1.5 (16)	1.5 (16)
	3 - 6	2.5 (14)	1.5 (16)	1.5 (16)
	6 - 10	1.5 (16)	2.5 (14)	1.5 (16)
10 - 15	0 - 3	2.5 (14)	2.5 (14)	1.5 (16)
	3 - 6	2.5 (14)	2.5 (14)	1.5 (16)
	6 - 10	2.5 (14)	-	-
15 - 20	0 - 3	2.5 (14)	-	-
	3 - 6	6 (12)	-	-
	6 - 10	2.5 (14)	-	-
20 - 28	0 - 3	6 (12)	-	-
	3 - 6	10 (8)	-	-
	6 - 10	6 (12)	-	-
28 - 35	0 - 3	6 (12)	-	-
	3 - 6	10 (8)	-	-
	6 - 10	10	-	-

### Worm Screw

Worm screws are self-locking and will not back-drive. This type of screw is used in Electrak 050, Throttle and Max Jac. Also see "lead screw".

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