ULS ULTIMATE LIFTING SOLUTIONS

Your Guide to Jib Cranes

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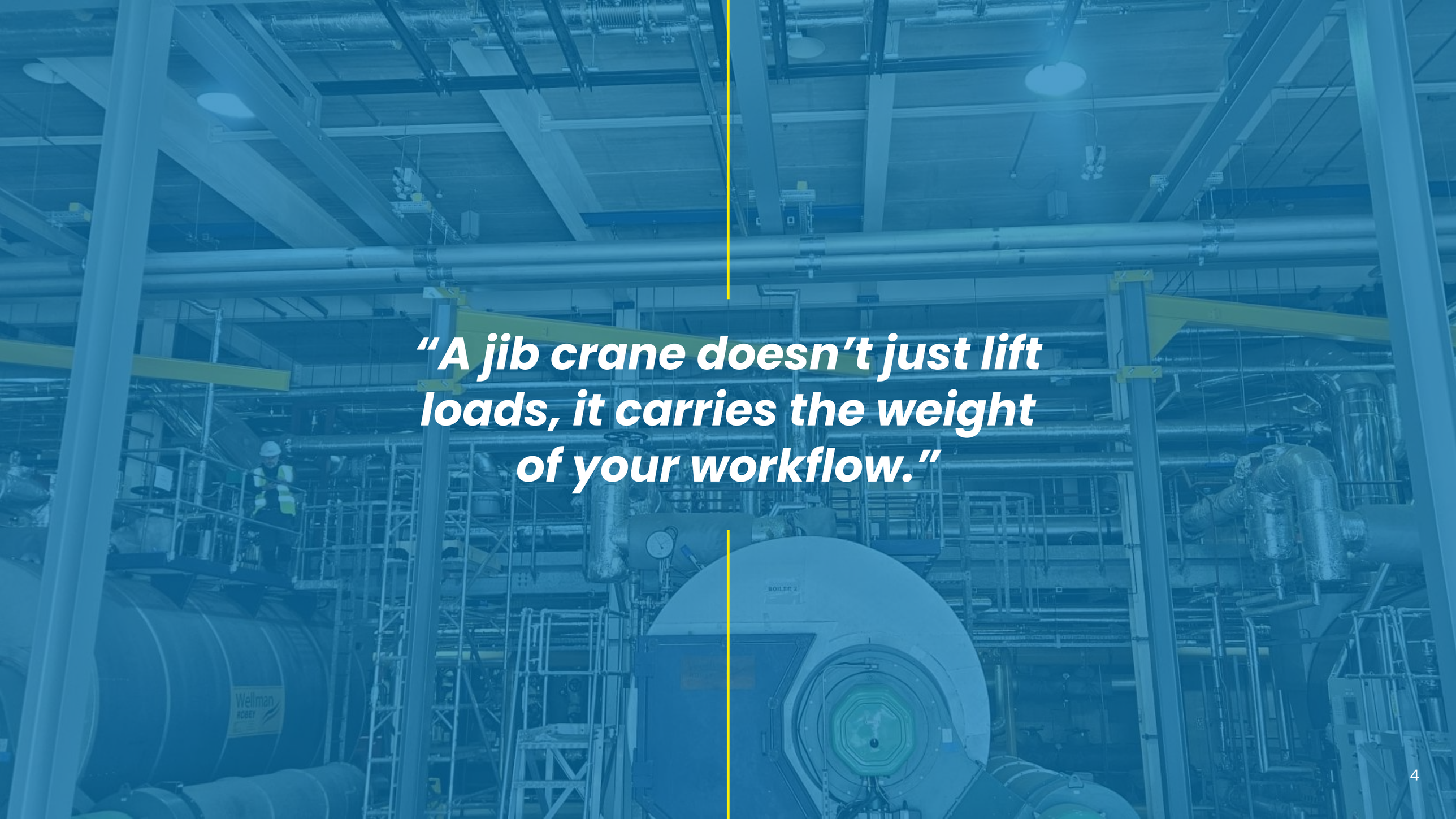
Your essential guide to choosing the right jib crane for your workspace. From specification to installation, we outline the key factors that define a successful jib crane setup, so you can plan with confidence and avoid costly mistakes.

What's in the guide?



“A jib crane doesn’t just lift loads, it carries the weight of your workflow.”

Expert Support from ULS Lifting

Choosing the right jib crane isn't just about picking a boom length and column height. Even seasoned engineers and operations managers can find themselves working around a setup that doesn't quite fit - whether it's a misjudged rotation range, the wrong hoist type, or floor conditions that weren't factored in from the start.

At ULS Lifting, we've helped hundreds of teams cut through complexity. This guide brings together everything you need to make an informed decision, with expert advice on specification, mounting, compliance, and whether refurbished or brand-new is the smarter investment for your site.

What Is a Jib Crane?

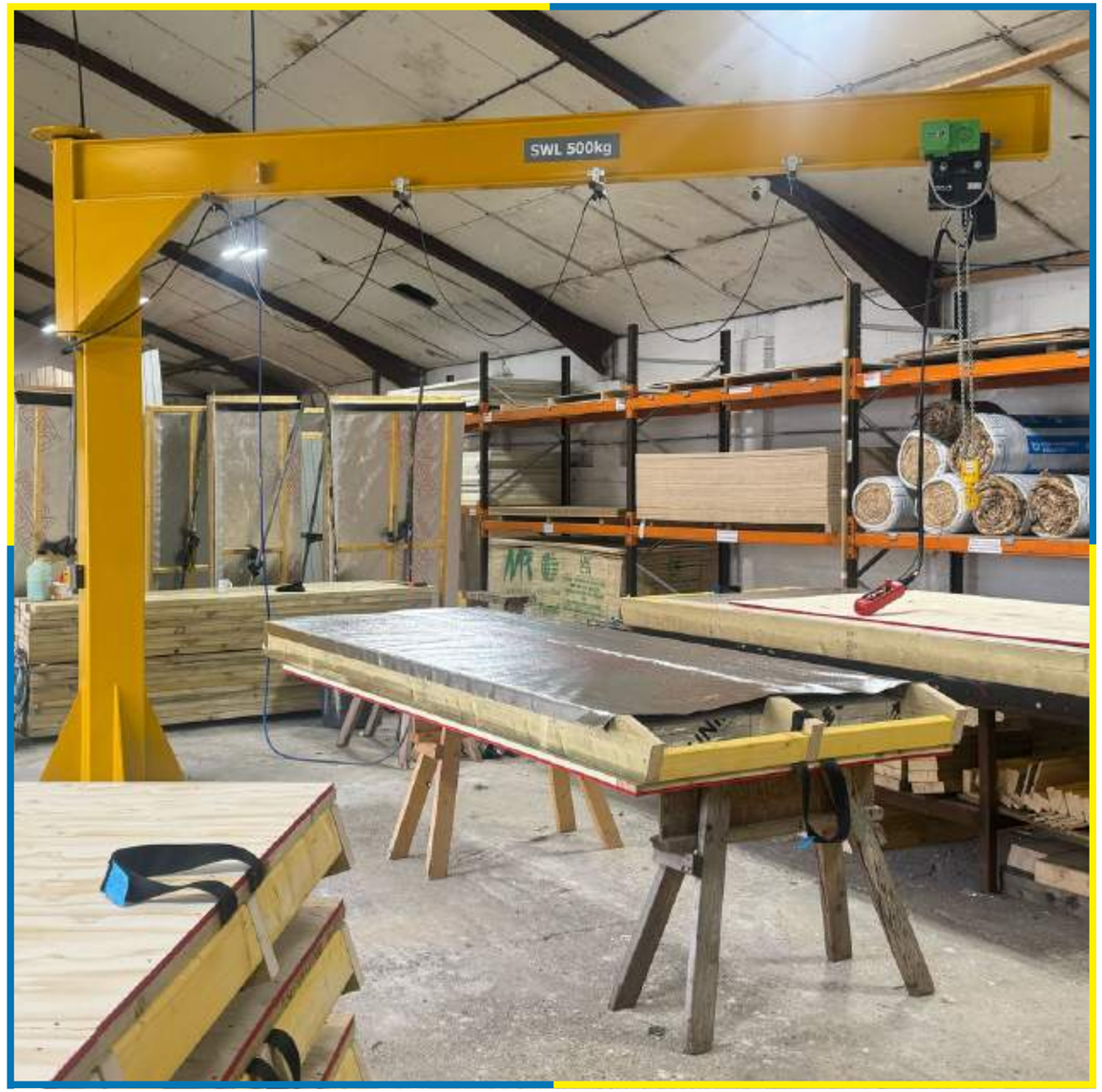
Whether you call it a swing jib, slewing arm, wall jib, or simply a workshop crane, a jib crane is a compact, fixed lifting system designed for repetitive, localised lifting tasks.

Most models consist of a horizontal arm (or boom) that slews (swings) from left to right from a central position. Can be mounted on top of an upright pillar or mounted onto a column or fixed directly to a wall. A hoist or vacuum lifter travels along the arm, allowing loads to be raised and repositioned within a defined working radius.

You'll typically find jib cranes in:

- Machine shops and fabrication bays
- Loading docks and warehouse stations
- Plant rooms or Laboratory departments
- Manufacturing production lines

They're ideal when you need consistent lifting operations in a defined area, especially where overhead gantry cranes can't be used.



When is it Time to Buy a New Jib Crane?

Jib cranes are built to last, but like any working asset, they don't last forever. The trick is spotting the signs early, before a tired or misaligned setup starts affecting productivity or safety.

Obvious Signs

- Inconsistent hoist performance
- Bearing wear
- Insufficient reach
- Rotation arc clashing with new equipment

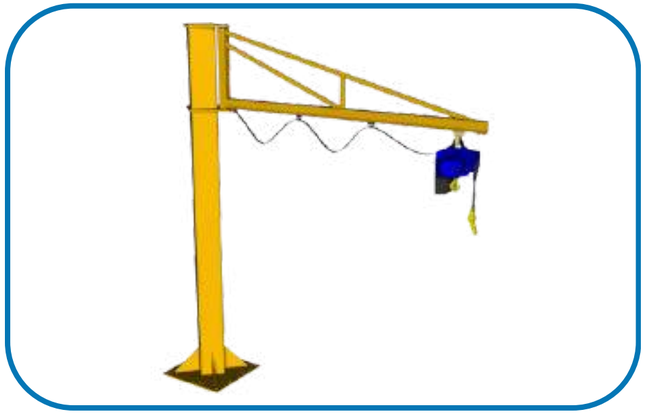
Subtle Changes

- Crane is being used for heavier loads than designed
- Higher frequency usage
- More awkward lift paths

Other times, it's the cost of patching that becomes the issue. You've already upgraded the hoist. The trolley's been replaced. You've added travel limiters, and remote control, but you're still working around the original crane's limitations.

When you start adapting more than you're using, it's probably time to think again.

Types of Jib Cranes - And Where They Really Work



Freestanding Jib Cranes

The most flexible option, offering 270° rotation and can be positioned any where on a suitable floor. Ideal for maximum coverage in an open bay or when existing building structure can't support the load.

Note: Please check floor strength – if in doubt, seek assistance from a structural engineer.

Wall-Mounted Jib Cranes

No need for a supporting column or stanchion to bolt to. Utilising existing walls frees up valuable shop floor space. Much cheaper to buy than floor-mounted Jib crane.

Note: Please check the suitability of the wall; if in doubt, seek assistance from a structural engineer.

Column Mounted Jibs

Space-saving and cost-effective when a suitable structural column/stanchion already exists. Works well along production lines and on work stations.

Note: Not suitable for all columns, please check the suitability of the wall; if in doubt, seek assistance from a structural engineer.

For environments where hygiene or corrosion resistance is key, such as food production, chemical handling, or coastal/marine settings, stainless steel cranes are non-reactive and easy to clean, while galvanised finishes offer robust protection for outdoor or semi-exposed applications.

Key Components of a Jib Crane

Arm (Boom)

The part that does the heavy lifting. This horizontal beam carries your load via the hoist.

Wall or Column

The strong vertical support that keeps everything grounded. Mounted to a wall, column, or floor, depending on your setup.

Rotation System

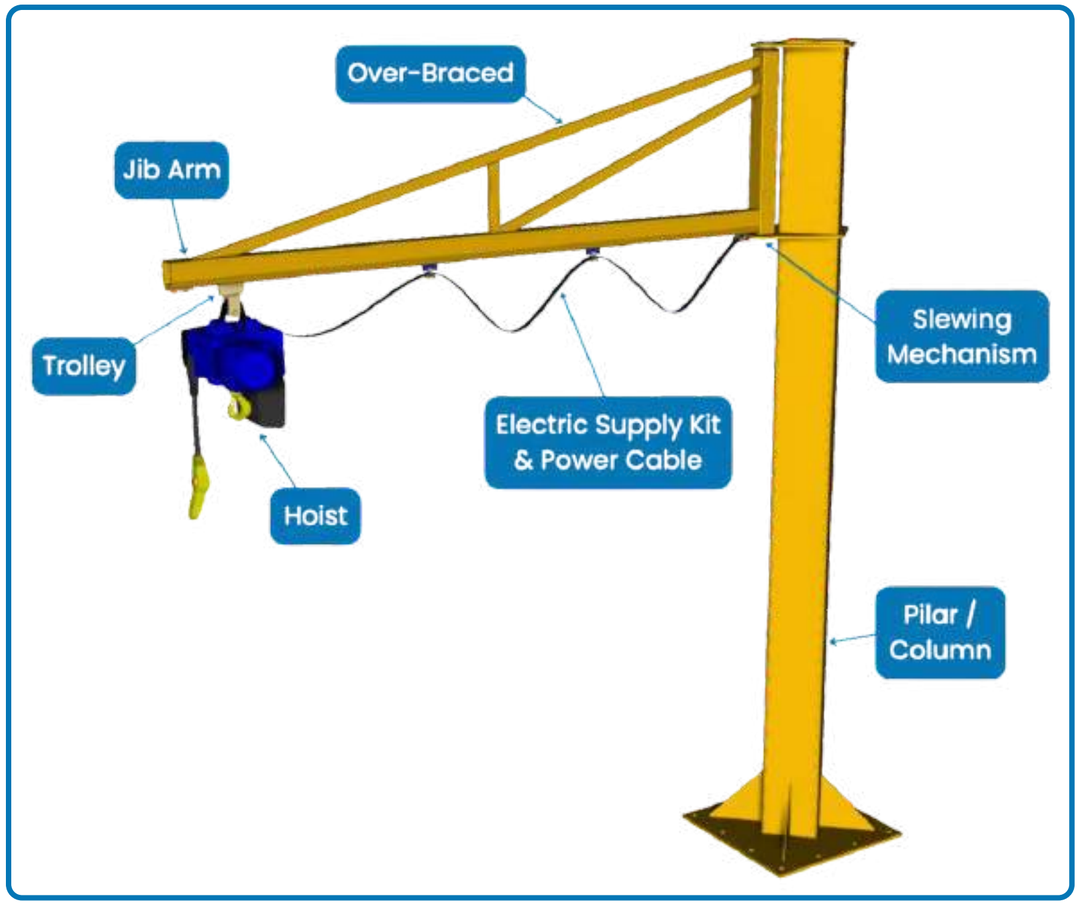
Allows the jib arm to swing into position. Available in manual or powered operation, with rotation from 180° up to 360° depending on your needs.

Hoist

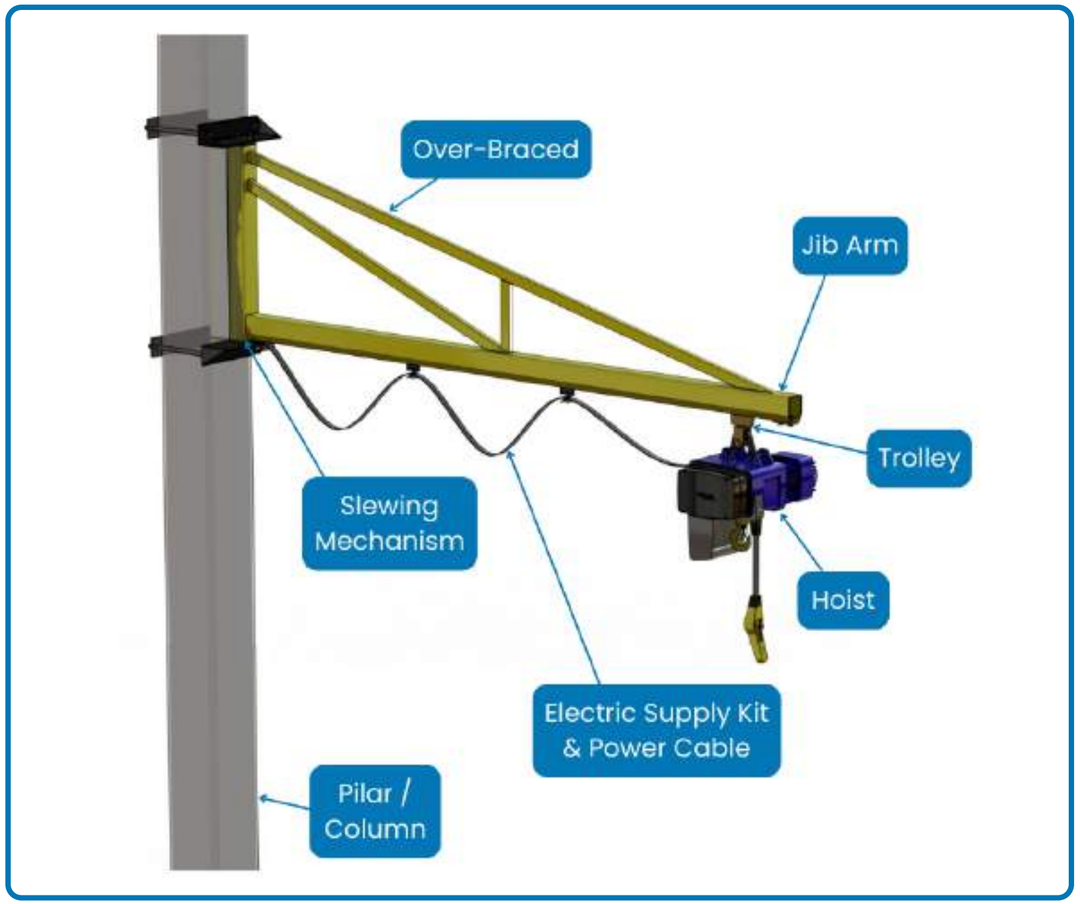
The lifting muscle of your jib crane, manual, electric, or pneumatic, tailored to suit your operation.

Trolley

Available in manual or powered operation, it lets the hoist glide smoothly along the boom to position your load precisely.



Freestanding Jib Crane



Wall / Column Mounted

Jib Spec Sheets Aren't the Whole Story

On paper, choosing a jib crane looks simple: define your safe working load, select a boom length, decide on a hoist type - job done. But in practice, getting the right jib crane means understanding how your workspace behaves when people, materials, and processes come into play.

⚠ Jib crane selection isn't just a technical exercise. It's an operational one.

1 Arm swing overlapping racking or doorways

Rotation limits often get overlooked when site layout changes after install.

2 Height of lift that doesn't match the load path

If the hoist can't clear the machine or the loading dock, it bottlenecks productivity.

3 Foundations that don't meet spec

Especially on older sites - floor-mounted jibs need slab thickness verification to avoid long-term fatigue or anchor failure.

New vs Refurbished: Making the Right Call

New Jib Cranes

If you're designing a new process line or fitting out a bay with tight tolerances, a new jib crane gives you full control, from arm length and mounting type to hoist travel and finishes.

It also brings peace of mind when compliance is critical, especially in regulated settings like pharmaceuticals, food handling, or marine applications.

Refurbished Jib Cranes

Refurbished jib cranes can be a smart choice when time and cost are under pressure. If the lifting requirements are standard, and the key dimensions of the Jib crane is not critical, a well-sourced refurbished crane can offer excellent value.

A good refurbished unit will be fully LOLER compliant once installed and tested. But with anything that has been recycled parts wear out quicker and need replacing sooner.

Key Considerations When Choosing a Jib Crane

Even if you've bought jib cranes before, no two installations are ever quite the same. Site layout, handling requirements, load characteristics - they all shift the spec. This isn't about ticking boxes; it's about choosing a configuration that performs reliably and safely for the long haul.

Working Load Limit (WLL)

The WLL isn't just about the heaviest load you'll lift, it's about factoring in regular use, potential shock loading, and the safety margin. Simply put it is the maximum load that can be lifted by the Jib Crane.

Slew or Rotation Range

Standard ranges are 180°, 270° or full 360°, but the usable arc may be constrained by site layout. Think about what the jib crane could hit, not just what it should reach.

Height of Lift (HOL)

Always measure from the floor to the highest lift point, not just to the boom. Account for the hoist body and any required headroom clearance above the load.

Arm Length (Reach)

Longer reach increases flexibility, but are there other structures or objects the arm might collide with? Maybe slew limits are required.

Advanced Jib Crane Considerations

Height of Lift

When determining your jib dimensions and the required height of lift (HOL), it's important to factor in the space occupied by the jib arm itself. For example, a 500 kg overbraced jib with a 3m arm typically has an arm depth of around 80 cm. This reduces the overall height, in turn lowering the clearance to the underside of the arm.

For this reason, customers with limited headroom often choose an underbraced design, as it provides greater usable height beneath the arm.

Hoist Control & Power

- Check what voltage is available near the Jib location, **400volt/110volt**
- Do you need **powered** travel along the jib arm
- **Hoist control** via wired pendant or radio remote control

Specialist Lifting Attachments

- **Vacuum lifters, Bag Lifters, Plate Grabs and Lifting Magnets** make short work of non-standard items - from sheet materials and boxed units to oddly shaped components

Planning a New Jib Crane Installation

Foundation Requirements

For floor-mounted systems, slab condition and foundation spec are often the first limiting factors. A standard bolt-down might look simple on paper, but if the concrete depth isn't sufficient, you're looking at core drilling, epoxy anchors, or a full foundation pad.

Column Mounting Considerations

Clamp around Column Mounted Jib Cranes require knowing what you're fixing to, how load is transferred, and whether the column/pillar/stanchion can take the dynamic forces involved. Just because there's steelwork in place doesn't mean it can take a crane.

Access & Clearance

Is there space for the jib arm to swing freely without hitting ductwork, lights, or racking? How much room above the jib is there? Is it going into a toolroom with low ceiling? Can materials be delivered to the install zone without disassembly? Can we get a forklift/access equipment into the area for installation?

Certification

Every ULS installation is LOLER-compliant by default, but if you're managing a site under CDM or integrating with wider mechanical works, we'll liaise directly with your contractor or project lead to align safety, timelines, and commissioning.

How We Work: From Specification to Installation

Whether you're fitting out a new facility or replacing a crane that's come to the end of its life, getting the right jib crane in place isn't just about product. It's about process. At ULS, we support that process from first enquiry to final sign-off and beyond.

Our comprehensive approach ensures your jib crane isn't just installed correctly, but perfectly matches your operational needs and site conditions.

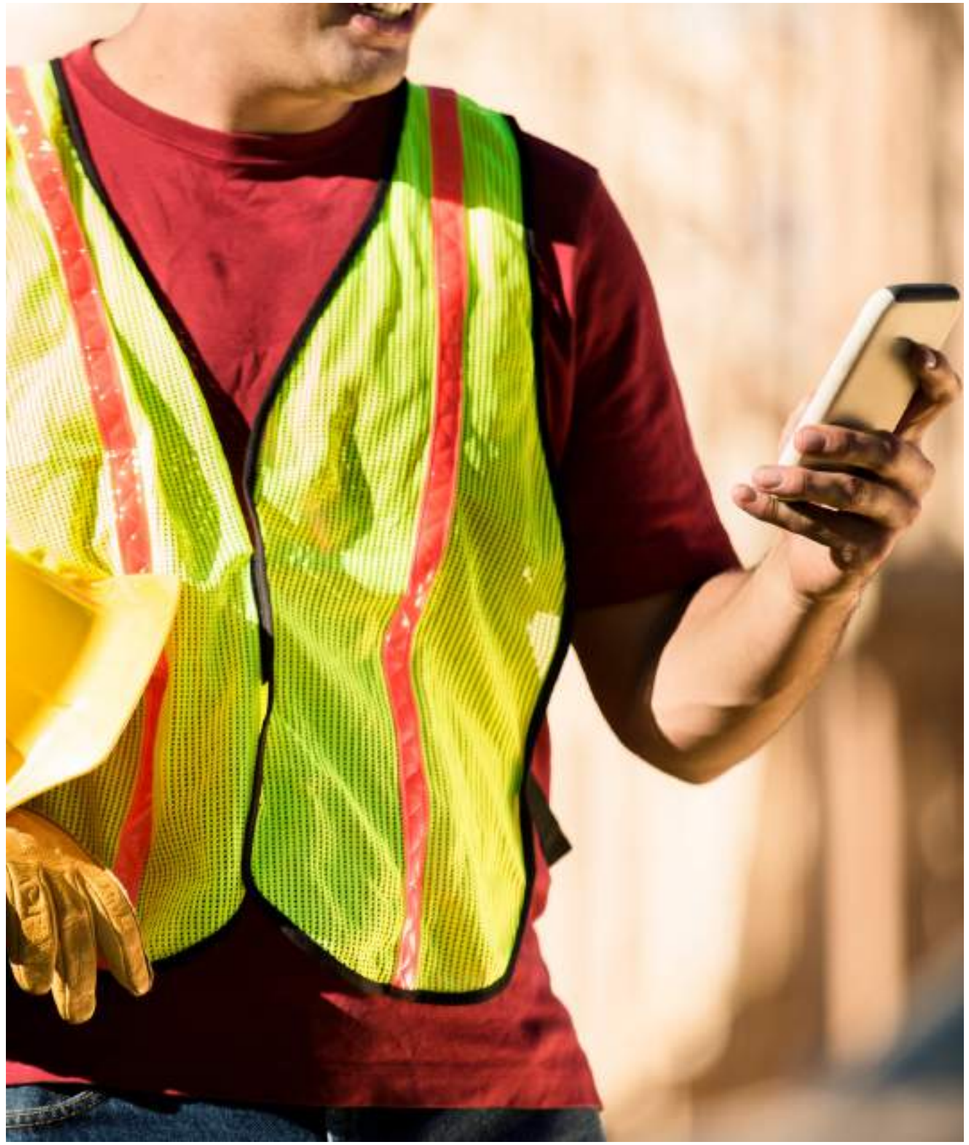
Step 1: Understanding Your Setup

Every successful crane starts with the right questions. We'll speak with you to understand your working environment, lifting requirements, floor or wall structure, and any known constraints - physical, logistical, or regulatory.

Some clients come to us with a full spec; others need help building one. Either is fine.

Key Questions We Ask

- What are you lifting and how heavy is it?
- How frequently will the crane be used?
- Floor mounted or column mounted?
- Are there any space constraints or obstacles?
- What are your specific workflow requirements?
- Do you require a hoist with your Jib Crane?



Step 2: Technical Review & Recommendations

Once we understand your brief, we'll work with our engineers and project team to recommend the best-fit solution, whether that's a new build, a refurbished crane, or a combination of systems across your site.

We'll flag any risks or dependencies early, including:

- Floor depth concerns
- Ceiling clearance issues
- Movement zone conflicts
- Structural support requirements
- Potential workflow bottlenecks

Our recommendations are based on decades of practical experience, not just theoretical specifications.

Step 3: Quotation with No Surprises

Clear Specification

Your quotation will clearly outline the crane specification, including all components and their capabilities.

Optional Upgrades

We'll highlight any optional features that might enhance performance for your specific application.

Realistic Timelines

Delivery timelines are transparent and realistic, accounting for manufacturing and site preparation.

Installation Scope

If installation is required, we'll detail exactly what's included and any site preparations needed.

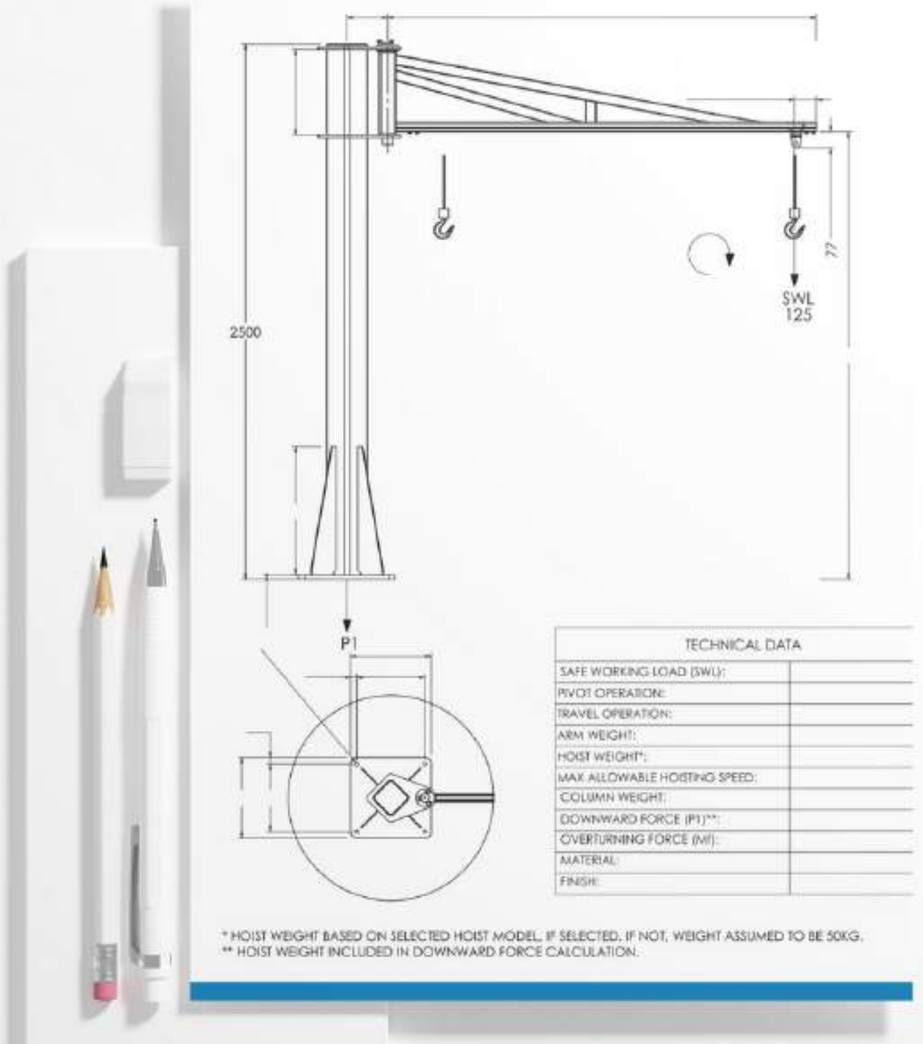
We're transparent about lead times and realistic about site conditions - and we'll never quote until we're confident the solution fits.

Step 4: Drawings & Approval

You'll receive dimensioned drawings for approval, showing:

- Layout and positioning
- Swing arc and coverage area
- Mounting interface details
- Change to overall & working height dimension
- Confirmation of downward and overturning forces generated
- CAD files can be provided upon request.

This isn't just paperwork, it's where final adjustments happen. We'll liaise with your engineer, contractor or facilities team to make sure everyone's aligned before fabrication begins.



Step 5: Fabrication & Testing

Your Jib Crane is manufactured in the UK to your exact specification by our trusted manufacturing partners, with quality control at every stage, and will arrive fully certified.

You can expect:

- **Quick delivery**, usually within 10–14 working days
- **Made to order**, with no costs for excess steel or cutting
- Free and **Easy to operate**
- **Low maintenance** requirements
- **Braking device** to control slewing speed
- **Lubrication-free acetyl bearings** used on the majority of jib arms
- **Base fabricated directly to pillar**, so expensive foundation frames are not required

Hoists, controls, and attachments are matched to your application, and we're on hand throughout if any changes or questions arise. Testing and certification will be required after installation. If installed by ULS Lifting, this will be included as part of your package.

Step 6: Delivery & Installation

1

Schedule Coordination

We'll schedule work to suit your programme and minimise downtime, coordinating with your site team.

2

Professional Installation

Our engineers are experienced in working on live sites and follow strict safety protocols during installation.

3

Testing & Certification

As part of our installation service, we conduct all LOLER testing and certification as standard, ensuring your crane is fully compliant from day one.

4

Handover & Training

We provide comprehensive documentation and operator guidance to ensure safe, effective use.

Please note: in accordance with current LOLER (Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations) requirements, the crane must be thoroughly examined and tested by a competent person after installation before being put into service. For complete peace of mind, our professional installation service includes this testing and certification as part of the package.

Step 7: Aftercare That's Actually Helpful

Our support continues long after installation.

Your jib crane must be inspected and recertified annually under LOLER. Regular servicing not only keeps you compliant but also extends lifespan, reduces downtime, and avoids costly call-outs.

ULS Service & Maintenance Packages
From one-off annual services to bespoke maintenance plans, we cover:

- LOLER inspections & recertification
- Full mechanical/electrical checks & lubrication
- Preventive maintenance to minimise breakdowns

We schedule visits around your production and keep detailed records, so servicing is smooth, efficient, and hassle-free.

Ongoing Maintenance

Regular service visits to ensure continued safe operation and compliance.

Spare Parts Supply

Quick access to compatible components when replacements are needed.

Future Modifications

Support for adapting your crane as your needs evolve over time.

The Right Jib for Every Lift

No two workspaces are the same, so why settle for a one-size-fits-all jib crane? At Ultimate Lifting Solutions, we design, supply, and install lifting systems that fit your exact space, load, and workflow requirements.

Our range covers every style to help you lift smarter:

- **Articulated Jib Arms –** Perfect for working around obstacles or in tight spaces
- **Goal Post Jibs –** Large span coverage with open access
- **A-Frame Mobile Gantry Cranes –** Portable lifting for flexible operations
- **Ceiling-Mounted Jibs –** Save floor space while maximising reach
- **Twin Arm Jibs –** Extended coverage for multiple work zones
- **Ultra-Low Headroom Jib Cranes –** Ideal for restricted height environments

Why Choose ULS Lifting?

We focus on the solution that's right for you, taking a consultative approach that asks the right questions and spots details others miss. Every jib crane is tailored to your site, team and workflow, supplied with engineer-ready drawings, clear communication, and fully briefed installation teams. Compliance is built in, all cranes are LOLER tested and certified, and our support continues long after installation, with full service records to make parts, modifications, or relocations quick and hassle-free. Choosing ULS means choosing safety, productivity, and long-term value.

Frequently Asked Questions: Jib Cranes

1

What's the typical lead time for a new jib crane?

For standard models, expect 2 to 4 weeks. For bespoke systems with custom boom lengths, hoists, or finishes, 6 to 10 weeks is more typical. Installation schedules may add to this depending on site readiness.

2

Can I install a jib crane myself?

While some experienced facilities teams may handle installation in-house, professional installation is strongly recommended. Factors like correct installation, accurate alignment, commissioning and function testing of all parts before conducting proof testing and final sign off with certification, all impact long term performance and safety.

3

What foundation is needed for a freestanding jib crane?

ULS Lifting can offer a suggested minimum floor thickness. But, we always advise customers to seek professional assistance from a qualified structural engineer.

4

How often should a jib crane be inspected under LOLER?

LOLER regulations require lifting equipment to be inspected at least every 12 months. If the jib crane is used constantly all day, every day, we would discuss that inspections must occur every 6 months.

Ready to get started?

Whether you're planning your first install or refining an existing setup, ULS Lifting is here to help, get in touch today.

Ultimate Lifting Solutions Ltd,
Dawley House,
Dawley Brook Road,
Kingswinford,
DY6 7BB

01384 986 026
sales@ulslifting.com

WWW.ULSLIFTING.COM