



CASE STUDY

## How to correctly track a conveyor belt

Keeping a factory running efficiently can be complicated. One of the challenges maintenance teams face is conveyor belt tracking. Aligning a belt so it maintains its path can sometimes be difficult. There are many factors that could affect a belt's ability to be tracked correctly. These are a few things to consider when troubleshooting a conveyor belt with tracking issues.

### Product and debris build-up

One of the main causes of a belt mis-tracking is the build-up of product and material on the bottom side of the conveyor belt or pulleys. This can result in creating a raised portion on the pulley which can cause the belt to mis-track to one side or the other.

Check the conveyor frame is level and square. In a factory, product and line changes are often made. This means that existing conveyor systems are moved or adjusted to meet the latest production requirements. Sometimes during these operations, the bed of the conveyor may become uneven or out of square.

If the conveyor bed is not level or square, the belt can move toward one side or the other. This can be checked by using a spirit level, checking both the frame and pulleys.

Ensuring the conveyor bed is square is quite straightforward. Measure the dimensions from one corner to the opposite corner on each side of the conveyor. These measurements should equate. If it is slightly out of square it is not a major problem, because most OEM's include squaring rods on the bottom side of the conveyor. These can be adjusted to realign the frame.



### **Check end pulleys are square**

Sometimes the incorrect pulley can be used to track or adjust the belt. This is a common problem when the conveyor has a centre drive and tracking configuration. Start by ensuring all pulleys are in alignment with the conveyor frame. Use only the snub rollers and idlers when you are adjusting the tracking, and never use the drive roller to track the belt.

### **Check the belt has been made correctly**

Normally all belts are made correctly. However this is not always the case. If a belt is slit incorrectly or misaligned during the joining process, this can also cause tracking problems. If you think either of these could be the case, take the belt of the conveyor, lay it out on a flat surface, if you can see an arc or curve in the belt or if it is not straight, the belt will need to be replaced.



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