

How To Choose the Most Cost Effective Alignment Dowel

by Christie Jones, Market Development Manager
SPIROL International Corporation, Danielson, CT, U.S.A.

There are many ways to align components — the challenge for Design Engineers is choosing the best solution at the lowest cost.

The most common, and often most expensive, Alignment Dowels are manufactured per ISO 8734. These precision ground “parallel” pins provide excellent positional tolerance at a cost. Ground Dowels require extremely tight hole tolerances. In addition, this solution is typically through hardened for strength or case hardened for wear resistance. If the pin’s sole purpose is for alignment, the heat treating process adds cost without any functional benefit.

SPIROL’s GD100 Ground Hollow Dowel is designed to be a direct replacement for Solid Ground Dowels in alignment applications. This lightweight solution will provide the same positional accuracy as Solid Ground Dowels at a fraction of the cost. Like their solid counterparts, GD100 Hollow Dowels are precision ground and require the same hole tolerances for proper installation and retention. The GD100 is approximately 50% lighter than a Solid Dowel; an important consideration for cost conscious Design Engineers seeking weight reduction without sacrificing performance. The lower weight will also translate into significant savings in freight charges.

Although Spring Alignment Dowels, Dowel Bushings, and Coiled Spring Pins are not precision ground, they are still capable of accurately projecting hole position for the purpose of alignment. Each of these options is designed to be larger than the hole in which it is retained. The mechanism of retention is compression rather than interference so hole tolerances can be relaxed and secondary reaming operations can be eliminated to reduce manufacturing costs. The flexibility of these parts also provides much lower insertion force than is required for Ground Solid or Ground Hollow Dowels. The spring characteristics of these parts absorb wide hole tolerances, reduce manufacturing costs, and dramatically reduce component cost when compared to Solid Dowels.

Spring Alignment Dowels and Coiled Pins are often used to accurately position one component to another. Spring Dowels are generally recommended for applications requiring a “dowel” with a length to diameter ratio of 1.5:1 to 4:1. Coiled Pins are generally recommended in applications with greater length to diameter ratios between 4:1 to 10:1. In applications requiring bolts for axial retention, further savings can be achieved by passing the bolt through the inside diameter of a Dowel Bushing. This eliminates the cost associated with drilling a separate hole for the bolt. Dowel Bushings are also hardened to protect the bolt from shear loads, and isolate the forces on the bolt to tension loading to ensure joint integrity.



Ground Hollow Dowels locate an automotive transmission case to the back of the engine.

To select the most cost-effective alignment component Design Engineers must focus on required positional tolerances, cost of secondary operations (reaming/honing holes), overall assembly weight, associated freight charges, and the Dowel or Pin price. Given the variety of alignment components available, Engineers should partner with industry experts to ensure their assembly is equipped with the most cost-effective components providing the performance they demand over the life of the product.

Why use Solid Dowels?



Hollow Alignment Dowels simplify assembly, reduce weight and lower cost. Hollow Dowels are 50% lighter and 30% less expensive than Solid Dowels.

Hollow Dowels can:

- Maintain precision alignment
- Ease insertion
- Absorb hole tolerance and prevent interlocking
- Protect bolts from shear loads

SPIROL®

Innovative fastening solutions.
Lower assembly costs.



Coiled Spring Pins



Slotted Spring Pins



Solid Pins & Drive Studs



Ground Hollow Dowels



Dowel Bushings / Spring Dowels



Rolled Tubular Components



Compression Limiters



Inserts for Plastics



Spacers



Precision Washers



Precision Shims & Thin Metal Stampings



Precision Machined Nuts



Disc Springs



Pin Installation Technology



Insert Installation Technology



Parts Feeding Technology

Challenge Us!

SPIROL Application Engineers will review your application needs and work with your design team to recommend the best solution. One way to start the process is to visit our **Optimal Application Engineering** portal at www.SPIROL.com.

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Technical Centers

Americas

Spirol International Corporation
30 Rock Avenue
Danielson, Connecticut 06239 U.S.A.
Tel. +1 860 774 8571
Fax. +1 860 774 2048

Spirol Shim Division
321 Remington Road
Stow, Ohio 44224 U.S.A.
Tel. +1 330 920 3655
Fax. +1 330 920 3659

Spirol West
1950 Compton Avenue, Unit 111
Corona, California 92881 U.S.A.
Tel. +1 951 273 5900
Fax. +1 951 273 5907

Spirol Canada
3103 St. Etienne Boulevard
Windsor, Ontario N8W 5B1 Canada
Tel. +1 519 974 3334
Fax. +1 519 974 6550

Spirol Mexico
Carretera a Laredo KM 16.5 Interior E
Col. Moisés Saenz
Apodaca, N.L. 66613 Mexico
Tel. +52 81 8385 4390
Fax. +52 81 8385 4391

Spirol Brazil
Av. Vitória Rossi Martini
1441, SL 1 - Distrito Industrial
CEP 13347-650 Indaiatuba, SP, Brazil
Tel. +55 19 3936 2701
Fax. +55 19 3936 7121

Europe

Spirol France
Cité de l'Automobile ZAC Croix Blandin
18 Rue Léna Bernstein
51100 Reims, France
Tel. +33 3 26 36 31 42
Fax. +33 3 26 09 19 76

Spirol United Kingdom
17 Princewood Road
Corby, Northants
NN17 4ET United Kingdom
Tel. +44 1536 444800
Fax. +44 1536 203415

Spirol Germany
Brienner Strasse 9
80333 Munich, Germany
Tel. +49 931 454 670 74
Fax. +49 931 454 670 75

Spirol Spain
08940 Cornellà de Llobregat
Barcelona, Spain
Tel. +34 93 193 05 32
Fax. +34 93 193 25 43

Spirol Czech Republic
Sokola Tůmy 743/16
Ostrava-Mariánské Hory 70900
Czech Republic
Tel/Fax. +420 417 537 979

Asia Pacific

Spirol Asia Headquarters
1st Floor, Building 22, Plot D9, District D
No. 122 HeDan Road
Wai Gao Qiao Free Trade Zone
Shanghai, China 200131
Tel. +86 21 5046 1451/1452
Fax. +86 21 5046 1540

e-mail: info@spirol.com

SPIROL.com