

Choosing the Right Anchor

jandesupply.com/guide-anchors.php

The anchor aisle is bewildering until you know the trick: start with what you're drilling into. Match the base material first, then the load — the rest narrows down fast.

There's no single "best" anchor — only the right one for **where it's going** and **how hard it'll be pulled**. Answer three things and we're most of the way there:

1. Base material

Solid concrete, brick, hollow block, or drywall / hollow wall? This narrows the field more than anything.

2. Load

A picture frame or a handrail? Light, medium, or heavy changes the whole answer.

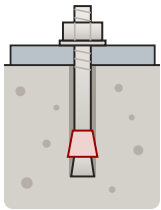
3. Permanent or removable?

Set-and-forget, or might you take it back out? Some anchors come out clean; some don't.

Each drawing below is a cut-away of the anchor set in the wall or floor, holding a steel bracket (blue-grey). The anchor body is shown in red.

Solid concrete

Drilled with a carbide bit in a hammer drill. Clean the dust out of the hole — it's the most common reason an anchor underperforms.

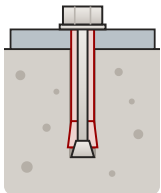


Wedge anchor

stud-style, permanent

A threaded stud that flares a clip at the bottom of the hole as you tighten. The go-to for **heavy, permanent** holds — sill plates, racking, machinery. Sticks up above the surface and doesn't come back out.

HEAVY

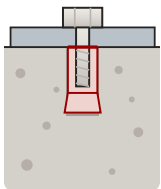


Sleeve anchor

versatile

A bolt inside an expanding sleeve. A solid **medium-duty** all-rounder that also works in brick and block. More forgiving of a slightly oversized hole than a wedge.

MEDIUM

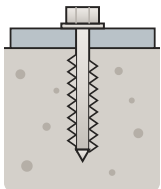


Drop-in anchor

flush, internally threaded

Set flush into the concrete and expanded with a setting tool, leaving an internal thread. Lets you bolt something down and unbolt it later while the anchor stays put. **Medium-heavy**, common overhead.

MEDIUM



Concrete screw

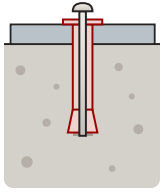
e.g. Tapcon-style

Screws straight into a pre-drilled hole — no expansion. Fast, removable, great for **light-to-medium** work like furring, brackets, and electrical. Match the special bit to the screw.

LIGHT-MED



Scan for this page online — plus free guides, charts & calculators at jandesupply.com
J & E Supply & Fastener Co. · Oklahoma City **405-670-1234** · Duncan **580-255-2582**



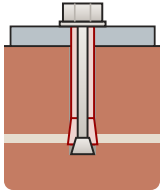
Hammer-set pin
quick light fix

A nail-in anchor you tap home. **Light-duty** only — fastening furring or signage to concrete or block where loads are small.

LIGHT

Brick & hollow block

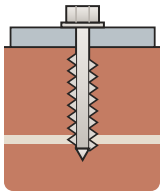
Block has hollow cells and brick has soft mortar joints — so where in the wall you land matters. Anchoring into solid brick beats the mortar joint for most loads.



Sleeve anchor
brick & block

Expands along its length, so it grips well in brick and the solid webs of block. A dependable **medium-duty** pick for masonry.

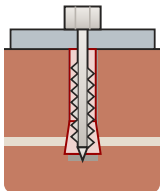
MEDIUM



Concrete / masonry screw
removable

Threads into brick and the solid parts of block. Easy and removable for **light-to-medium** brackets and fixtures.

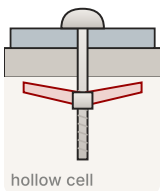
LIGHT-MED



Lag shield
for a lag screw

A soft sleeve that expands as a lag screw draws in. Good in brick and block for **medium** loads; pick the short or long shield to match the material's hardness.

MEDIUM



Toggle / wall anchor
hollow cells

When you're into the hollow part of block, a toggle spreads the load behind the face shell — far better than an expansion anchor that has nothing solid to grip.

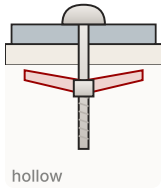
LIGHT-MED

Drywall & hollow wall

There's nothing solid behind drywall, so the anchor has to grab the back of the panel. Always hit a stud if you can — a screw into framing beats any drywall anchor.



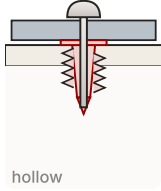
Scan for this page online — plus free guides, charts & calculators at jandesupply.com
J & E Supply & Fastener Co. · Oklahoma City **405-670-1234** · Duncan **580-255-2582**



Toggle bolt
spring-wing or strap

Wings open behind the panel and spread the load wide. The **strongest** drywall option — for shelves, TV mounts, grab bars (with proper backing).

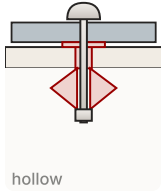
HEAVY FOR DRYWALL



Self-drilling anchor
threaded, no pre-drill

A coarse-threaded anchor you drive straight in. Quick and tidy for **light-to-medium** items — small shelves, frames, hooks.

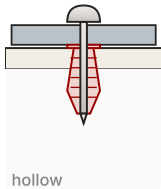
LIGHT-MED



Molly (expansion) bolt
sleeve type

A metal sleeve that bunches up against the back of the panel as you tighten. **Medium** hold and it stays put if you remove the bolt.

LIGHT-MED



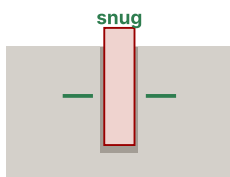
Plastic expansion
conical sleeve

The basic ribbed plug. **Light-duty** only — fine for small fixtures, not for anything you'd hate to see fall.

LIGHT

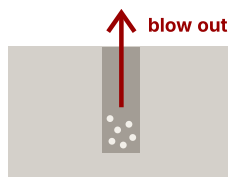
One honest caution on load ratings. An anchor's real holding power depends on the anchor, the base material's strength, the embedment depth, and the spacing from edges — so a generic "holds X pounds" number can mislead. For anything structural, overhead, or safety-related (railings, mounts over people, lifting points), follow the **anchor manufacturer's published rating for your exact base material**, and ask if you're unsure. The light/medium/heavy labels here are for narrowing choices, not for sizing a critical connection.

A few things that make or break the hold



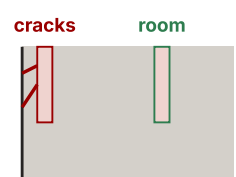
Drill the right hole

Anchors are sized to a specific bit — too big and it won't grip, too small and it won't seat. In concrete and masonry, use a carbide bit in a hammer drill.



Clean it out

Blow or vacuum the dust out before setting.



Mind the edge and spacing

Too close to an edge can crack out concrete or brick. Give it room, and keep multiple anchors a few diameters apart.

Match the anchor's metal to the environment. Outdoors or damp? Use a galvanized or stainless anchor so it doesn't rust away — see the finish guide.



Scan for this page online — plus free guides, charts & calculators at jandesupply.com
J & E Supply & Fastener Co. · Oklahoma City 405-670-1234 · Duncan 580-255-2582