

DOUBLE HEADED RAIL



Railroad Terminology: Double Heading and Multi-Heading

Double Heading refers to the operation of a train with two locomotives positioned at the front. Each locomotive is operated by its own crew, allowing for increased power and control. This practice is typically employed to manage long or heavy trains that require additional traction beyond what a single locomotive can provide.

- **Double Heading:** In this setup, both locomotives work in tandem at the front of the train, enhancing the train's ability to handle steep gradients, heavy loads, or long distances. Each locomotive is operated independently, and the coordination between the two crews is crucial for smooth operation.

Multi-Heading extends this concept by using multiple locomotives in a similar fashion. This practice involves:

- **Multiple Locomotives:** More than two locomotives are used, either at the front, rear, or distributed throughout the train, to provide even greater pulling power. This approach is beneficial for exceptionally long or heavy trains, allowing for efficient handling of increased load requirements and challenging track conditions.

Double-Headed Rail is a specific term used to describe a rail type with flanges that are duplicates or mirror images of each other. This design is generally used for:

- **Double-Headed Rail:** The rail features symmetrical flanges, allowing it to be used in either direction of travel. This type of rail is advantageous for extending the life of the rail by enabling



it to be reversed when one side becomes worn, thus providing a cost-effective solution for rail maintenance.

In summary, double heading and multi-heading are practices used to enhance the operational efficiency and power of trains, while double-headed rail refers to a specific rail design with symmetrical flanges for extended usability.