



Why Multipurpose Ships?

Breakbulk cargo refers to cargo that can only be transported on multipurpose ships and is generally not carried on other ship types. Container shipping, despite its ubiquity around the world is not suitable for certain types of cargoes.

Similarly, bulk carriers are not a good alternative. Bulk carriers are often chartered to a shipper / consignee whose facilities are dedicated to bulk operations and are not to handle any other type of cargo. If the bulk carrier is gearless, then shore side facilities are unlikely to be available for the handling of an extraneous cargo unit. If geared, the weight lifting capacity may be limited and insufficient to lift heavy lift and project cargoes.

The solution lies in multipurpose ships, which are better suited and convenient for the carriage of breakbulk cargo.

Examples:

- (1) Which of the following ship can be classified as a multipurpose ship?
- A ship designed to carry a variety of breakbulk cargoes
 - A ship designed to carry oil in tanks and containers on deck
 - A ship designed to carry dry bulk cargo and liquid bulk cargo
 - A ship designed to carry containers on deck and dry bulk cargo in holds

Answer: a. A ship designed to carry a variety of breakbulk cargoes

- (2) Identify the most important feature of a multi-purpose ship.
- Large undivided cargo holds with strengthened flat bottom
 - Container securing points on deck as well as inside cargo holds
 - Heavy cranes for loading and offloading heavy lift cargo
 - Capability of achieving high sea speeds and faster port turnaround time

Answer: c. Heavy cranes for loading and offloading heavy lift cargo

- (3) What is the benefit of locating the heavy lifting cranes on the sides of the ship rather than in the center?
- To improve ship stability
 - Longer crane reach
 - Better lifting capacity of the crane
 - Clear and open deck area to stow cargo

Answer: b. Longer crane reach