



ORYX
INSURANCE BROKERAGE INCORPORATED

Basics of Forklift Safety

Your forklift drivers operate valuable machines that move valuable material. Unsafe operation can injure drivers, injure coworkers, damage forklifts, and damage material, which can lead to expenses, missed deadlines, delayed shipments, dissatisfied customers, and canceled orders. To reduce the chance of such mishaps, you should ensure your drivers are trained in safe forklift practices. This sheet shows some basic ideas of forklift safety; it is not an all encompassing document. The National Safety Council, OSHA, or perhaps a local forklift seller or vocational school can provide full or refresher training for your workers.

Examples of safe forklift practices include:

- Slow down and sound horn more than once when approaching an intersecting aisle or doorway to warn coworkers and other forklift drivers of your approach (people in noisy area and/or wearing hearing protection may need the extra warning)
- Warn coworkers to beware of forklift traffic, walk in designated aisles, and look both ways at aisle intersections and doorways
- Equip forklifts with flashing lights and audible backup alarms
- Drive with forks as low as possible whether or not you have a load
- Instruct drivers to be mindful of surroundings so they do not strike objects
- Require drivers to wear safety belts
- Equip forklifts with overhead protection to protect drivers in case load or stock falls
- Make sure coworkers are clear as you place forks under a load, lift, drive, and place a load (coworkers who are in the way may be crushed)
- Do not attempt to lift loads that exceed the forklift's capacity
- Do not raise or lower loads enroute
- Drive backwards if load is so large that it obstructs your view
- Secure dockplates and chock trailer wheels before driving from dock into trailer
- Do not place extra weight on the back of forklift in attempt to counterbalance an overload
- Tilt back the load-engaging mechanism when driving on grades
- When climbing or going down steep grades, (i.e. >10%) keep load toward the upgrade
- Do not turn when driving on a ramp
- Do not transport passengers
- Do not lift coworkers unless forklift has an approved platform, equipped with guardrails, toeboards, a barrier between the platform and any potential pinch points and a positive means of securing the platform to the forklift.
- Equip diesel, gasoline, or LP-gas fueled forklifts with fire extinguishers; refuel outdoors
- Forbid smoking at electric forklift battery charging stations (charging batteries generate hydrogen which can ignite and explode and splash employees with sulfuric acid)
- Provide eye and face protection at battery charging stations to protect against battery explosion; provide eyewash in case battery explodes

FORKLIFT SAFETY RULES

- 1. Only certified operators may operate forklifts or electric pallet jacks.**
- 2. A Pre-Operational Inspection Checklist must be filled out by the first person on each shift that uses the lift or jack.**
- 3. NO riders.**
- 4. Honk horn at ALL intersections.**
- 5. Only raise a co-worker by using the Safety Cage and secure the cage using the chain.**
- 6. Whenever not in use, park the lift so it doesn't block an aisle. Put the forks on the floor.**
- 7. Check to verify that truck drivers have chocked their wheels BEFORE loading or unloading a truck.**
- 8. Never move the forklift while your view is obstructed.**

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