

Forklift Safety

What is a Forklift?

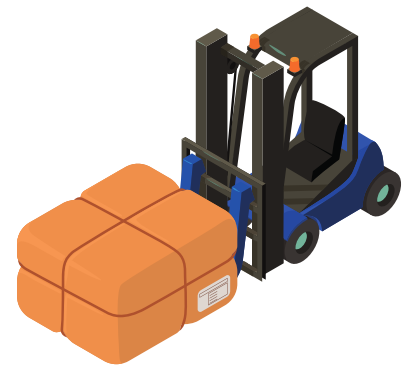
A forklift is a motorized industrial truck used to lift, move, and stack material. Forklifts are essential in warehouses, distribution centers, manufacturing facilities, and construction sites for handling heavy loads efficiently and safely. They are equipped with forks or prongs that can be raised and lowered hydraulically to lift and transport pallets, crates, and other materials.

What to do Before Using a Forklift

- Only operators authorized by the employer and trained in the safe operations of forklifts are allowed to operate forklifts.
- Ensure that all controls, gauges, and safety devices are in working order. Forklift inspection must be performed before each shift. Tires, horns, lights, battery, controller, brakes, steering mechanism, cooling system, fuel system, and forklift lift system (forks, chains, cable, and limit switches) must all function properly.
- Verify that the forklift is equipped with all necessary attachments and accessories for the intended task.
- Notify your supervisor and remove the forklift from service by attaching a red tag that says "DANGER" or "DO NOT USE" and removing the key if a forklift fails the pre-shift inspection.

Forklift Operating Precautions

- Check the work area for hazards such as pedestrians, weather, obstructions, vehicles, terrain types, and loads to be transported before operating a forklift.
- The load must not exceed the forklift's rated capacity and must be secured to prevent tipping and falling.
- Stunt driving and horseplay are prohibited, and no riders are permitted on the lift truck's forks.
- No forklifts may be operated if there is a fuel leak in the fuel system.
- Fork extensions and other attachments must be secured and used according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Employees must not stand, pass, or work beneath the elevated portion of any forklift, loaded or empty.
- Always wear the seatbelt while operating the forklift to prevent ejection during a tip-over or collision.
- Watch out for pedestrians and other workers in the vicinity.
- Maintain a safe distance from edges, ramps, docks, and other potential hazards to prevent accidental falls or collisions.
- The operator shall slow down and sound the horn at locations where vision is obstructed. If the load obstructs forward view, the operator shall travel with the load trailing.
- Grades shall be ascended or descended slowly and forks always be carried as low as possible, consistent with safe operations.
- When parked, the forks must be resting flat on the surface and turn off the engine.



References

- Regulation: Standard Number 1910.78: Powered Industrial Trucks
- OSHA: [Forklift eTool](#)
- OSHA: [Safe Forklift Operation Quick Card](#)