



TOOLBOX TALK – Forklift Safety

Objective

To educate forklift operators and pedestrians on safe operating practices to prevent collisions, tip-overs, falling loads, and workplace injuries.

What is a Forklift?

A forklift, also known as a powered industrial truck (PIT), is used to lift, transport, stack, and unload materials safely within warehouses, factories, and construction sites. Because forklifts are heavy, powerful machines, improper operation can result in serious injuries or fatalities.

Why is Forklift Safety Important?

Forklift accidents can lead to:

- Tip-over incidents
- Pedestrian collisions
- Falling loads
- Crushing injuries
- Property damage
- Loading dock accidents
- Serious injuries and fatalities

Most forklift accidents can be prevented through proper training, inspections, and safe driving practices.

Common Forklift Hazards

- Overloading the forklift
- Driving at excessive speed
- Sharp turns causing tip-overs
- Carrying unstable loads
- Poor visibility
- Uneven or slippery surfaces
- Operating with damaged equipment
- Working near pedestrians
- Unsafe loading or unloading
- Operating on ramps incorrectly

Pre-Operation Inspection



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Before operating a forklift, inspect:

- Tyres and wheels
- Forks
- Mast and chains
- Hydraulic system
- Brakes
- Steering
- Horn
- Lights
- Seat belt
- Reverse alarm
- Battery or fuel level
- Fluid leaks

Do not operate a forklift if any safety defect is found.

Safe Forklift Operating Procedure

1. Perform Pre-Use Inspection

Inspect the forklift and report any defects immediately.

2. Wear the Seat Belt

Always fasten the seat belt before operating the forklift.

3. Drive at Safe Speed

Operate at a controlled speed and obey all workplace traffic rules.

4. Keep the Load Low

Carry loads approximately 10–15 cm (4–6 inches) above the ground while travelling.

5. Secure the Load

Ensure the load is stable, balanced, and within the forklift's rated capacity.

6. Watch for Pedestrians

Sound the horn at blind corners and always give pedestrians the right of way.

7. Travel Safely on Slopes



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- Loaded forklift: Drive uphill with the load facing uphill.
- Empty forklift: Travel downhill with the forks facing downhill.

8. Park Safely

When parking:

- Lower the forks completely.
- Apply the parking brake.
- Switch off the engine.
- Remove the key if required.

Forklift Do's

- Operate only if trained and authorized.
- Conduct a daily pre-use inspection.
- Wear the seat belt at all times.
- Keep forks low while travelling.
- Maintain safe speed.
- Sound the horn at intersections.
- Keep a safe distance from pedestrians.
- Follow designated forklift routes.
- Keep both hands on the steering wheel.
- Park only in designated areas.

Forklift Don'ts

- Never exceed the rated load capacity.
- Never allow passengers on the forklift.
- Never drive with an elevated load.
- Never make sharp turns at high speed.
- Never operate a damaged forklift.
- Never use mobile phones while driving.
- Never stand or walk under raised forks.
- Never block emergency exits or fire equipment.
- Never leave the forklift unattended with the engine running.
- Never carry unstable or unsecured loads.

Required PPE



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Operators and nearby workers should wear:

- Safety Helmet (where required)
- High-Visibility Vest
- Safety Shoes
- Safety Gloves (if handling materials)
- Eye Protection (where required)
- Hearing Protection (in high-noise areas)

Before Operating a Forklift

Confirm the following:

- Operator is trained and authorized.
- Daily inspection completed.
- Forklift is in safe condition.
- Seat belt is functional.
- Load weight is within capacity.
- Travel route is clear.
- Pedestrians are aware.
- Warning devices are working.
- PPE is being worn.

If any answer is **No**, do not operate the forklift.

Key Safety Message

**INSPECT → BUCKLE UP → DRIVE SLOW → KEEP LOAD LOW → WATCH
PEDESTRIANS → PARK SAFELY**

Safe forklift operation protects both the operator and everyone working nearby.

Toolbox Talk Takeaway

"A Safe Forklift Driver Protects Lives."

Always inspect your forklift before use, wear your seat belt, keep loads secure, drive at a safe speed, and stay alert to pedestrians. Safe driving is everyone's responsibility.