

1. Train the operator

Each operator must be trained and evaluated as required by 29 CFR 1910.178(1). *[Note: All employers were supposed to comply with this training requirement by Dec. 1, 1999—Ed.]* The certification must include the name of the operator, the date of the training, the date of the evaluation, and the identity of the person(s) who did the training and evaluation.

2. Load and Unload Correctly

Set the brakes and put wheel blocks on trucks, trailers or railroad cars to keep them from moving. Before driving onto trucks, trailers or railroad cars, check the floors for breaks or weaknesses.

Secure dockboards or bridgeplates before you drive over them, and never exceed their rated capacity. Handle only those loads that are within the rated capacity of the truck.

When stacking or tiering, use only enough backward tilt to stabilize the load.

Ten Steps to **FORKLIFT** Safety



3. Learn the Rules for Batteries and Fuel Tanks

Always turn off the engine when filling fuel tanks. If you spill any fuel, immediately clean it up.

Disconnect the battery before doing any electrical repairs.

4. Make Routine Checks

Complete a daily operator's checklist prior to operation. If any truck has mechanical problems, don't use it. *[Note: There is one at the end of this article—Ed.]*

Immediately report and correct any defects found.

5. Drive Safely

If the truck is equipped with seatbelts, use them. *[Note: Although OSHA does not have a specific standard requiring the use and installation of forklift seatbelts, Section 5(a)(1) of the OSH Act requires employers to protect employees from serious and recognized hazards. Forklift rollovers are a recognized hazard, and the need for using operator restraint systems is evidenced at ASME B56.1-1993. Furthermore, ASME B56.1-1993 requires that forklifts manufactured after 1992 must have a restraint-device system or enclosure to reduce the risk of operator entrapment in the event of a rollover. Additionally, if an employer has been notified by the manufacturer of the hazard of forklift rollovers and made*

aware of an operator-restraint system retrofit program, a passenger-restraint system must be installed. Specialists at the Naval Safety Center want Navy installations to be proactive about this. Don't wait for the manufacturer to contact you. Check with them about their restraint systems—Ed.]

Obey all traffic rules, including speed

limits. Keep at least three truck lengths between you and the truck ahead. Keep the truck under control at all times.

If your load makes it hard for you to see ahead, drive with the load trailing.

Look in the direction of your path of travel and keep a clear view.

Use a spotter or safety observer.

Don't run over loose objects on the road.

6. Don't Leave a Truck Unattended

A powered industrial truck is considered unattended when the operator is 25 feet or more away from the vehicle, and it is still in view, or when it is not in the operator's view, no matter how far away he is.

If you leave a truck, make sure the load-engaging means is fully lowered, controls are neutralized, power shut off, and the brakes set.

7. Keep up With Repairs and Maintenance

If a powered industrial truck needs repair, is defective or is in any way unsafe, immediately take the truck out of service until it is fixed. Only authorized personnel should make repairs. Do not make any modifications to the forklift without prior written approval from the manufacturer.

8. Watch for Pedestrians

Never drive a truck up to a person standing in front of a bench or other fixed object. Don't let anyone stand or pass under the elevated portion of a truck, whether it is loaded or empty. Don't let unauthorized persons ride on powered industrial trucks.

9. Watch Those Ramps, Too

When ascending or descending grades in excess of 10 percent, drive with the load facing upgrade. On all grades, tilt back the load. Raise the forks only as far as necessary to clear the road surface.

10. Keep It Clean

Keep industrial trucks clean and free of dirt, excess oil and grease. Use only noncombustible agents to clean trucks. Don't use solvents with flashpoints above 100 degrees Fahrenheit.



Daily Inspection Checklist.

Check these things before each shift:

- Overhead guard:** Are there broken welds, missing bolts or damaged areas?
- Hydraulic cylinders:** Is there leakage or damage on the lift, tilt, and attachment functions of the cylinders.
- Mast assembly:** Are there broken welds, cracked or bent areas, and worn or missing stops?
- Lift chains and rollers:** Is there wear or damage or kink, signs of rust, or any sign that lubrication is required? Is there squeaking?
- Forks:** Are they cracked or bent, worn or mismatched? Is there excessive oil or water on the forks?
- Tires:** What do the tires look like? Are there large cuts that go around the circumference? Are there large pieces of rubber missing or separated from the rim? Are lugs missing? Is there bond separation that may cause slippage?
- Battery check:** Are the cell caps and terminal covers in place? Are the cables missing insulation?
- Hydraulic fluid:** Check level.
- Gauges:** Are they all working?
- Steering:** Is there excessive free play? Is the power-steering pump working?
- Brakes:** If pedal goes all the way to the floor when you apply the service brake, that is the first indicator that the brakes are bad. Brakes should work in reverse, also. Does the parking brake work? The truck should not be capable of movement when the parking brake is engaged.
- Lights:** If equipped with lights, are they working?
- Horn:** Does it work?
- Safety seat:** Is it working?
- Load-handling attachments:** Is there hesitation when hoisting or lowering the forks, when using the forward or backward tilt, or the lateral travel on the side shift? Is there excessive oil on the cylinders?
- Propane tank:** If you smell propane gas, turn off the tank valve and report the problem.
- Propane hose:** Is it damaged? It should not be frayed, pinched, kinked, or bound in any way. Is the connector threaded on squarely and tightly?
- Engine oil:** Check level.
- Engine coolant:** Visually check the level. *[Note: Never remove the radiator cap to check the coolant level when the engine is running or while the engine is hot. Stand to the side and turn your face away. Always use a glove or rag to protect your hand—Ed.]*
- Transmission fluid:** Check level.
- Windshield wipers:** Do they work?
- Seat Belts:** Are they in good condition?
- Safety door (found on stand-up rider models):** Is it in place?
- Safety switch (found on stand-up riding tow tractors):** Is it working?
- Hand guards (found on stand-up riding tow tractors, walking pallet trucks, walking transtackers):** Are they in place?
- Tow hook:** Does it engage and release smoothly? Does the safety catch work?
- Control lever:** Does the lever work?
- Safety interlock (found on order pickers):** If the gate is open, does the vehicle run?
- Gripper jaws (found on order pickers):** Do the jaws open and close quickly and smoothly?
- Work platform (found on order pickers):** Does the platform raise and lower smoothly? 