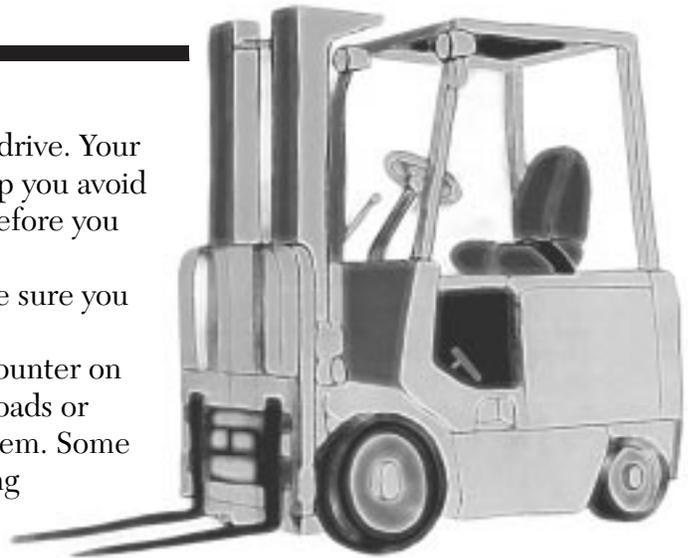


Know the Rules of Forklift Safety

Forklifts are powerful machines, and while they don't go as fast as cars or trucks, they require even more attention to safety. Forklifts are taller and narrower than cars and can tip over more easily. Most forklift accidents result from operator error, so even the most experienced forklift drivers need to review and follow the basic rules of forklift safety.

Before You Drive

- ▲ Check safety devices each day before you drive. Your horn, lights, brakes and back-up alarm help you avoid accidents and must be working properly before you start the engine.
- ▲ Check all the fluid and gas levels and make sure you have enough before you start your job.
- ▲ Look around for any hazards you may encounter on your route, such as pedestrians, unstable loads or obstacles, and figure out how to correct them. Some hazards are hard to spot once you're driving the forklift.
- ▲ Develop a checklist to track the condition of your forklift.



Driving Basics

- Avoid sharp turns and fast speeds. Forklifts aren't built to handle them. A sharp, fast turn can shift your load and cause you to tip over.
- Never engage in horseplay or stunt driving maneuvers when driving a forklift.
- When you move a high load, drive backward and look in the direction of travel.
- Drive backward down slopes with more than a 10 percent incline.
- Keep loads low whenever possible. Too-tall or top-heavy loads can obstruct your vision or cause you to tip over.
- If you have to park on a slope, always block your wheels, lower your forks and set the parking brake.
- Never lift people on the forklift unless it has an approved personnel-lifting platform.
- Never move forward or backward with people on the lift.
- Keep loads within your forklift's rated capacity.
- Raise or lower loads only when stopped.
- Start and stop the forklift gradually to avoid shifting the load.
- Use your horn and lights at corners, crossings and before reversing.
- Back out slowly after unloading, looking over your shoulder to make sure it's clear.
- Always wear your safety belt if the forklift is equipped with one.

WATCH FOR PEDESTRIANS



Pedestrians are involved in the majority of forklift accidents. Prevent these accidents by always keeping others' safety in mind when you drive. Don't assume pedestrians can hear you coming.

Preventing Forklift Accidents

Working safely with and around forklifts is a two-way street: Operators need to take precautions and pedestrians need to be alert and stay out of the way in order to prevent accidents.

Forklift Dangers

- ✓ injuries to pedestrians
- ✓ collisions
- ✓ falling loads
- ✓ tipping over



SAFETY RULES FOR OPERATORS

- Get training on how to operate the forklift.
- Always wear your safety belt and hard hat.
- Keep your hands and feet inside the cab.
- Always check for pedestrians.
- Inspect the forklift daily and report any problems.
- Make sure pallets are well-stacked and secured.
- Keep loads centered to avoid losing balance.
- Keep loads low to the ground when moving—no more than 10 inches high.
- Make extra trips instead of overloading.
- Know your forklift's capacity and stay within the load limit.
- Use a forklift only for its intended purpose—it's not a means of transportation.
- Make sure the forklift you're unloading has been secured to prevent its movement during unloading.
- Make sure loads don't obstruct your view.
- Use extreme caution when turning.
- Move slowly when on wet surfaces.
- Keep your forklift in good working order.
- Always park on a flat surface away from traffic and set the parking brake.
- Never give people a ride on the forklift.
- Sound your horn at intersections.
- Always lower forks to the ground when parking.

SAFETY RULES FOR PEDESTRIANS

- Work in designated areas only.
- Avoid shortcuts through traffic areas.
- Never walk under the raised load of a forklift.
- Stop and look both ways at intersections.
- Stay clear when a forklift is backing up or turning.
- Watch that you don't trip on the lowered forks of a stopped forklift.
- Pay attention to what's going on around you at all times.
- Listen for horns and look for flashing lights.
- Let the forklift operator know when and where you're working in an area.
- Never hitch a ride on a forklift.
- Never engage in horseplay around a forklift.

Loading and Unloading Forklifts Safely

Forklifts make loading and unloading materials faster and easier, but they can be dangerous if not operated properly. Because so many steps are involved, loading and unloading forklifts have special risks. Follow these basic rules to stay safe.

Loading Forklifts

- Plan your load. Think in advance about how to make each load stable and centered.
- If the load consists of loose items, stack and secure them carefully.
- Before driving into a truck or trailer, make sure it has been secured, either with chocks under the rear wheels or with another type of restraint system. Trailer movement is the leading cause of loading accidents.
- Always inspect the floor of a trailer or truck floor for weak spots before driving your forklift into it.
- Never cut corners by overloading. Overloads remove weight from the rear wheels, causing steering loss. Keep loads well within your forklift's rated capacity.
- Never stack a load higher than the height of the forklift's backrest and never carry anything on the overhead guard.
- Raising and lowering the forks should never be done while driving. When driving, forks should be 6 to 10 inches off the ground—high enough so they don't hit bumps or curbs.
- Plan your route. Know where to expect obstructions, intersections, pedestrians and ramps.

Unloading Forklifts

- Always take the time to position the load accurately.
- Finish lowering the forks before you back out of a vehicle or trailer.
- Always back out slowly and carefully, looking over your shoulder, after unloading.
- Never place a load in an aisle or fire access or in front of a stairway or fire equipment.

Forklifts and Pedestrians

- Keep pedestrians a safe distance away from your vehicle while loading and unloading.
- Only lift coworkers if you have special people-lifting equipment, and be alert for overhead obstructions.
- Never travel with anyone riding on the forklift.

