

# Forklift Safety Facts

## Key Points

- Only operate a forklift if you have been trained and authorized.
- Never allow passengers on a forklift.
- Keep your arms, hands and legs inside the forklift.
- Inspect the forklift daily.

Reminder: Operating a forklift is not the same as driving your personal car or truck. Do you know why?

## Forklifts can be Dangerous

- Forklifts are designed to make your job easier, but more than 2,000 serious injuries occur each year due to improper forklift operation.
- Most of these accidents happen when a forklift driver hits another person.
- Other accidents occur when forklifts tip over, fall off a loading dock, or drop a load.

## Some Safe Forklift Driving Rules

1. Drive defensively. Be on the alert for low overhead clearances, slippery pavement, or other situations that could result in an accident.
2. Always keep a clear view of your path of travel.
3. Use your seat belt.
4. Wear personal protective equipment when required,
5. Keep your arms, hands and legs inside the forklift.
6. Keep the forks slightly tilted back when transporting a load.
7. Always give pedestrians the right of way.
8. Slow down, stop and sound your horn at intersections and blind spots.
9. Look behind you before you back up. Then sound the horn and drive slowly.
10. Always obey speed limits and avoid sudden stops.

## Safely Handling a Load

- Never place anyone between your load and an immovable object.
- Be sure you always know the position of the forks.
- Stop, and then check for possible obstructions before raising or lowering a load.
- When loading a trailer, be sure the trailer wheels are chocked before driving off and on the trailer.
- If the cab is disconnected from the trailer, use a jack stand.
- If the load blocks your vision, transport the load in reverse.
- Don't use the forks to push a load.



## Inspect the Forklift Daily

- Look for broken or damaged parts.
- Test the horn, brakes and steering.
- Be sure the forks are in place and properly secured.
- Check for water, oil or fuel leaks.
- Don't operate the forklift if you spot any problems or if it has been taken out of service for repairs. Report them to your supervisor.
- Check the manufacturer's manual for other instructions.

## How to Prevent Forklift Accidents

Here are some basic safety rules to help you:

1. Never operate a forklift unless you have been authorized and trained. Keep a written record of employees who received forklift safety training. Include the date of the training session. Operators must be certified every three years.
2. Know how a forklift operates and how to safely load and unload.
3. Never allow riders on a forklift.
4. Don't tamper with forklift safety equipment.
5. Don't engage in horseplay around a forklift.
6. Don't smoke, drink or eat near a forklift that is being refueled.
7. Don't touch or tamper with a forklift while it's charging.
8. Always lower the forks to ground level when the forklift is not in operation.
9. Be alert when operating or working around a forklift. Failure to do so could quickly result in an accident.
10. Immediately report any accidents or (incidents) near accidents to your supervisor.

