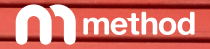


Forklift Safety





Know your vehicle.

You might assume that operating a forklift is no different than driving a car, but you would be wrong. Operating a forklift requires additional skills and experience because its design makes it less stable and much heavier to maneuver than a traditional vehicle. Forklifts can easily tip over, are more difficult to steer, and take longer to stop. They also have rear-wheel steering, enabling forklifts to make sharp turns. However, this feature also causes the forklift to wing out during a turn. While it's exceedingly beneficial for high-precision maneuvering in the tight spaces where they're often used, this operation is dangerous for someone who isn't trained to drive a forklift. Workers must undergo proper training and pass a driving test for the specific model of forklift used in their workplace.

According to OSHA, 1 in 10 forklifts are involved in an accident every year. Of those accidents, there's an average of 75-100 occupational fatalities yearly and 95 serious injuries every day. These accidents are far more common than people think, and it's often due to a lack of proper training. Here are some of the most important safety tips to follow when operating a forklift.

WORKING WITH TRAILERS

- Set the vehicle's brakes.
- Check the vehicle's wheels.
- Install fixed jacks to support a semi-trailer that is not coupled to a tractor to prevent it from unending.
- Ensure that docks and dock plates are clear of obstructions and are not oily or wet.
- Protect gaps and drop-offs at loading docks.
- Use dock plates.



PEDESTRIANS

- Be aware of pedestrians and give them the right of way.
- Don't let anyone walk to stand under raised forks.
- Keep a clear view to help avoid pedestrians or obstacles.
- Never let a person get between the forklift and a hard surface, such as a wall, table, or bench.
- Never let anyone ride on the forks for any reason.
- Use the vehicle's horn, mirrors, and lights to let others know when the forklift is operating.
- When possible, make eye contact with pedestrians and other forklift operators.



DRIVING

- Always use your seat belt.
- Always look before backing up.
- Use a spotter when visibility is limited.
- Always make sure the dock plate is secure before driving over it.
- Avoid sharp turns; you could tip the forklift.
- Cross railroad tracks on a diagonal to prevent wheel damage and keep the load from slipping.
- Drive in reverse (except upon slopes) if the load blocks your view.
- Keep to the right when driving unless layout or conditions require doing otherwise.
- Keep your arms, legs, head, and feet inside the forklift when driving.
- Never drive with the forks up and use the forklift to push other vehicles.
- Never pass a forklift going in the same direction, especially at blind spots, intersections, or other dangerous areas.
- Obey floor markings, speed limits, and road signs.
- Remember that it takes a forklift traveling at 10 mph about 22 feet to come to a full stop on a dry surface.
- Slow down when driving on slippery or wet surfaces.
- Report all crashes to a supervisor.
- Stay at least three lengths behind other vehicles.
- When driving with a load on an incline, always travel with the load pointing uphill.
- When driving without a load on an incline, always travel with the forks pointing downhill.
- Use wall and ceiling mirrors to help see around corners.
- Slow down, stop, and sound the horn at intersections, corners, and wherever vision is obstructed.

PARKING

- Secure the lift truck when it is unattended.
- Don't Park on an incline.
- Park in an approved location.
- Set the brakes.
- Lower the forks or load to the floor.
- Put the controls in neutral.
- Turn off the motor switch.

