



How to Safely Operate a Forklift

Introduction:

According to OSHA, only trained and authorized operators are permitted to operate powered industrial trucks. Understanding how to operate a forklift (PIT) safely can help avoid injuries and property damage.

Complete the pre-operational inspection, and do not operate a forklift that requires repairs.

When operating a forklift, always fasten your seat belt, avoid quick maneuvers and sudden turns, and ensure you are in complete control of the truck.

Discussion Points:

- Operate a Forklift only if you have been trained and certified.
- Complete the pre-operational inspection, and if necessary the post- operational inspection.
- Always fasten your seat belt when operating a forklift.
- Drive at a safe speed, look toward the path of travel, keep a clear view, and watch for pedestrians.
- Follow the work-site rules and OSHA Regulations.

Discussion:

When operating a forklift, always follow the work-site rules and regulations. Never leave an operating forklift unattended. Never travel with forks raised more than 6 inches above the ground. Always look behind you before backing up or turning the forklift, and always watch for pedestrians. Sound the horn at cross aisles and other locations where vision is obstructed. When possible use a spotter, they can be very important to your safety. When more than one forklift is in use, keep at least 3 forklift lengths between trucks. When passing other forklifts, maintain at least 3 feet between the trucks, and keep your arms and legs inside of your own forklift. Be aware of overhead obstructions. Use only approved attachments, and when using the forklift to elevate personnel, secure the elevating platform to the lifting carriage or forks of the forklift. Never exceed the lifting capacity of the forklift. When the forklift is not in use, park it in a safe designated area.

As always, be safe out there!