



# Material Handling – Forklift Safety

**The use of forklifts and other powered material handling equipment, such as pallet jacks and other motorized hand and hand/rider trucks, poses injury hazards for the operators and those working in the area where the equipment is in use, and it poses the risk of damage to the building and materials.**



Operating forklifts and other powered industrial material handling equipment requires training and employer authorization. The following guidelines are not a substitute for obtaining the required training and authorization.

## General Safe Operating Guidelines

1. NEVER attempt to operate a forklift or other powered industrial equipment until trained and authorized to do so.
2. Complete and document a pre-use inspection. If the vehicle is used over the course of multiple shifts, complete the documented inspection at the top of each shift.
3. Never operate a faulty vehicle. Tag it out of service, remove the keys, and report the problem to your supervisor.
4. Never engage in stunt driving or horseplay.
5. Always look in the direction of travel.
6. Never drive the vehicle up to anyone standing in front of a bench or other fixed object.
7. RAMPS:
  - a. For forklifts:
    - i. Keep the load up grade when ascending or descending ramps,
    - ii. Tilt the load back, and
    - iii. Raise the forks only as far as necessary to clear the traveling surface.
  - b. For motorized hand and hand/rider trucks, keep the load down grade at all times.
8. Only the driver may ride the vehicle, unless the manufacturer designed the vehicle to accommodate more than one rider.
9. Never ride on the forks of a lift truck.
10. Never ride on the load being moved.
11. Barricade the area and assign spotters to keep personnel out of the area when the forklift is in use.
12. Never permit anyone to stand, pass, or work under the elevated portion of any industrial truck, whether it is under load or empty.
13. Prior to **LOADING AND UNLOADING** trucks and trailers:
  - a. Ensure the vehicle to be loaded or unloaded has been turned off.

- b. Ensure the wheels of the truck or trailer have been properly secured with chock blocks or other device that prevents movement, such as a dock lock.
  - c. Ensure trailer nose stands are fully engaged if the tractor has been removed.
14. Park the forklifts and/or other motorized industrial trucks in designated parking areas when they are not in active use.
15. When parking the vehicle, set the brake, move the mast to a vertical position, lower the forks to their lowest position.

*Talk to your supervisor if you have any questions about this information.*