



# Forklift - Loads

## Operator Load Handling

Only trained and certified operators should run a forklift (powered industrial truck). All workers should understand the hazards involved for the driver to maintain a safe work environment.

### Handling a Load

- Off-center loads, overloading, and loading damaged or loose loads, and driving at excess speeds are the primary causes of unsafe, unstable loads that lead to accidents. Here are the steps you need to take to ensure a stable load and safe forklift load capacity for any forklift task.
- Secure the load so it is stable and can't move around. Don't try to pick up damaged loads unless it has been secured by wrapping or banding.
- Ensure the load is as centered as possible on the forklift. When it is impossible to avoid carrying an off-center load, arrange it so the heaviest part is nearest to the front of the wheels.
- Do not exceed the capacity of your forklift.

- Use the load extension backrest when needed.

### Approaching a Load

- Approach the load carefully and slowly. Tip-overs often occur when the driver is moving too fast.
- Ensure the forklift is directly in front of the load and is centered to it, so the forks are at the correct height.
- Set the direction control to neutral.
- Only raise the forks if the forklift is stopped and the brake is set.
- Before picking up the load, ensure your overhead is clear.



*The load center is the distance from the face of the forks to the load's center of gravity. Many forklifts are rated using a 24-inch load center, which means that the load's center of gravity must be 24 inches or less from the face of the forks. (In this illustration, the red arrow represents the fulcrum and the black and white circle under the operator's seat represents the vehicle's center of gravity.)*

### Adjust and Lift

- Level the forks before lifting a load.
- Place the forks as far under the load as possible.
- Center the weight of the load between the forks. You can adjust the forks manually or with a fork positioner.
- Tilt the mast back to stabilize the load.
- Ensure there is adequate overhead clearance before lifting the load.
- Slowly lift the load and tilt the mast backward slightly to stabilize it.
- Slowly return the lift control to the neutral position.

### Ensure a Stable Load

- Do not tilt forward with a load with the forks elevated except when picking up a load. When stacking a load, tilt the mast backward just enough to stabilize it.
- When working with a maximum capacity load, tilt the mast backward and position the load so the heaviest part is against the carriage.
- Move the forklift with the mast tilted back.





On all grades the load and load engaging means must be tilted back and raised only as far as necessary to clear the road surface.

- When you are ready to stack the load, tilt the mast forward very slowly, and never travel with the mast tilted forward.

### Moving a Load

- If the load being carried obstructs forward view, you must travel with the load trailing.
- Ascend and descend grades slowly. When ascending or descending grades in excess of 10 percent, drive the loaded forklift with the load up grade.
- On all grades the load and load engaging means must be tilted back and raised only as necessary to clear the road surface.



OSHA states the pedestrian has the right of way; therefore, operators must be on constant alert. The forklift operator is required to slow down and sound their horn at doorways, intersections, blind spots and when entering or exiting a building. Approaching a pedestrian requires the operator to slow down and sound the horn. If the attention of the pedestrian is not achieved, the operator should stop the forklift.

### Lowering the Load

- Ensure the load is secure.
- Tilt the mast back carefully to stabilize the load.
- Slowly move the forklift away from the stack.
- Stop the truck and return the mast to the vertical position before lowering the load.
- Lower the load so that the lowest point is 15 to 20 cm from the floor.

### General Operating Requirements

- When traveling behind another truck, maintain a safe distance of about three truck lengths from the truck ahead.
- Slow down and sound the horn at cross aisles and other locations where vision is obstructed.
- Look in the direction of travel and keep a clear view of the path of travel.

- Operate the forklift at a speed that will permit it to be brought to a stop in a safe manner.
- Slow down for wet and slippery floors.
- Make sure dockboards or bridgeplates are properly secured; drive over them carefully and slowly and make sure their rated capacity is never exceeded.



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## SAFETY TRAINING SIGN-IN

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: Forklift - Loads

The following employees participated in this training.

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