

Forklifts and People on Foot

About 10 minutes to deliver

A loaded forklift does not stop, does not steer like a car, and tips before it warns you — for operators and for everyone walking near one.

A forklift weighs more empty than a car does loaded, steers from the back wheels, and carries its weight high. It behaves like nothing else you have driven.

ONLY TRAINED, EVALUATED OPERATORS

1910.178(l) is specific: formal instruction, practical training, and an evaluation of the operator in the workplace — then re-evaluated at least every three years, and sooner after an accident, a near miss or a change of equipment. Training on a sit-down counter-balance is not training on a reach truck. "I've driven one for years" is not a certification.

THE LOAD

- Tilt back and travel low. Forks four to six inches off the ground, mast tilted back.
- Load centre matters more than weight. The capacity plate assumes the load sits at a standard distance from the heels of the forks. Long or awkward loads shift that centre out and the real capacity drops fast.
- Travel in reverse when the load blocks your view — except going up a ramp, where the load stays uphill.
- Never lift people on the forks. A pallet with someone standing on it is not an aerial lift.

TIPPING

Most forklift deaths are tip-overs, and most of those kill the operator by crushing them between the overhead guard and the ground as they try to jump clear.

- Wear the belt. It exists to keep you inside the guard.
- If it goes over: stay in, hold on, brace your feet, lean away from the fall. Do not jump.
- Turns are where they go — slow down before the turn, not in it.

IF YOU ARE ON FOOT

- Assume the operator cannot see you. Loads block the view straight ahead.
- Never walk under raised forks, loaded or empty.
- Stay out of the aisle when a truck is working it. Wait, or go round.
- Watch the rear end: a forklift's back swings wide, and it swings into whatever is standing next to it.

EVERY SHIFT

Inspect before use. Forks, chains, tyres, horn, brakes, lights, leaks, data plate. A truck with a fault comes out of service, not "gets used carefully."

ASK THE CREW

- Where do forklifts and people on foot cross paths here, and could we separate them?
- Is every operator on this site evaluated on the truck they are actually driving?
- Are the pre-use checks getting done, or getting signed?

29 CFR 1910.178

This is a toolbox talk, not a course. It is general awareness on one topic — not site-specific, not a hazard assessment, and not a substitute for assessment of your workplace by a competent person, your written programs, or manufacturers' instructions. It does not by itself satisfy any OSHA training requirement. Regulations change; verify against the current standard. Whoever delivers it is responsible for deciding it is suitable and sufficient for the work. Where a talk covers first aid, resuscitation, or mental health it is general safety information, not medical advice, not a substitute for professional medical care or certified emergency-response training, and it confers no certification — in an emergency, call 911. Free to print and use, as is, with no warranty of any kind. Migna Safety Solutions · training.mignasafetysolutions.com

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ATTENDANCE RECORD

Forklifts and People on Foot

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Date

Job / site

Delivered by

Company

#	Print name	Signature	Date
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I delivered this talk and determined it was suitable for this crew and this work.

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