

Today's Topic/Issue

A significant number of people are killed and injured by forklift trucks each year but these accidents could have been avoided if safety procedures were complied with and forklift truck operations better supervised.

The way to avoid accidents with forklift trucks is keep everyone up to date on training and assessment; keep vehicles well maintained and let your supervisor know if you believe a machine to be faulty; look out for one another so everyone is aware of when forklift trucks are in your area and act safely around them.

QUICK QUIZ

What risks do you think Forklift Trucks (FLT's) pose in your workplace?



Collision with a pedestrian



Struck by falling material



Crushed between forklift and a surface



Fall from platform on the forks



Accident with an injured person on or in a moving forklift



Crushed by forklift tipping over due to heavy load



What should I do when operating a forklift?

DO -

- Sound the horn when required
- travel with the forks low but off the ground
- wear a seatbelt
- follow signs and segregation rules
- report near misses
- keep working areas clean
- and be vigilant when refuelling.

What should I NOT do when operating a forklift?

DON'T -

- carry passengers
- travel with arms or legs outside the cab
- travel with the forks raised
- lift people on forks or unstable platforms
- operate without training
- or travel at excessive speeds.



Defect Reporting

All FLT Drivers must complete the Defect Reporting form before and during their use of a FLT. These checks cover all areas of the FLT. Where a defect is likely to affect the safe operation of the FLT and cannot be immediately safely rectified, the machine needs to be isolated and must not be operated.

The manager or supervisor needs to confirm that the vehicle is safe for use again and update the defect form so that it can be used. If you are in any doubt as to how to use and complete this defect form, please ask your manager or supervisor for further details.



Toolbox Talk – SUPERVISORS NOTES

Forklift Truck Safety for Drivers

2026/27

HSE identifies workplace transport as a significant source of serious injury, with common causes including people being struck by vehicles, falling from vehicles, objects falling from vehicles and vehicles overturning.

QUICK QUIZ

What risks do you think Forklift Trucks (FLT's) pose in your workplace?

For FLTs specifically, the main hazards include:

- **Colliding with pedestrians**
- **Being crushed or trapped**
- **Loads falling**
- **The truck overturning**
- **People falling from forks or platforms**
- **Poor visibility**
- **Unstable, overloaded or incorrectly positioned loads**
- **Unsafe surfaces, slopes or routes**

These injuries can range from serious near misses to fatalities and the HSE continues to report and prosecute businesses for fatalities involving forklift trucks every year.

Forklift trucks are powerful pieces of equipment capable of moving heavy loads, but they can cause serious injury if they are poorly maintained, incorrectly operated or used in an unsafe environment. Safe operation depends on the truck, the load, the workplace and the people using it all being properly managed.



Toolbox Talk – SUPERVISORS NOTES

Forklift Truck Safety for Drivers

2026/27

Do's:

- Sound the horn when required - the horn is there to warn others of the potential risk
- Travel with the forks just clear of the ground (100mm or so)
- Wear a Seatbelt - this needs to be worn 100% of the time that you are operating a forklift truck
- Follow the signs and segregation rules - written and verbal signs are equally as important and are there to keep you and your colleagues safe
- Report Near Misses - near misses help us to understand where the highest risk factors are so we can avoid future incidents
- Keep working areas clean and clear - good housekeeping with make it easier for those using forklift trucks to stay safe
- Be vigilant when refuelling - forklift truck safety covers all areas of the vehicle including refuelling so make sure you are wearing the correct PPE and being mindful of possible fuel hazards.

Don'ts:

- Carry passengers - forklift trucks are built for a single driver and never anyone else
- Travel with arms or legs outside of the truck
- Lift people either on forks, pallets or unstable platforms. This creates a major falling from height risk and can lead to serious injury
- Operate a forklift truck if you have not been fully trained. It is a legal requirement for employers to provide adequate training for those who need to use a forklift truck in their day-to-day role so if you aren't trained or do not feel adequately trained do not operate this vehicle but do speak with your supervisor about additional training
- Travel at excessive speeds or swing round corners - there may be pedestrians working in the same areas as you who can easily be injured by a forklift truck. Reduce these accidents by being a sensible driver and looking out for your colleagues.



Toolbox Talk – SUPERVISORS NOTES

Forklift Truck Safety for Drivers

2026/27

The FLT operator is responsible for carrying out the required checks, using the truck safely and reporting any defects or Concerns but they are not legally responsible for maintaining or managing the vehicle as a whole.

The employer retains the main duties for providing safe work equipment, maintenance, training and supervision.



The employer is responsible for:

- Providing a suitable and safe FLT
- Ensuring it is properly maintained and thoroughly examined
- Providing adequate training and supervision
- Having suitable systems for reporting and dealing with defects
- Managing the risks associated with its use

The operator is responsible for:

- Being trained and competent to operate the FLT
- Carrying out the required pre-use checks
- Using the FLT in accordance with their training, instructions and site rules
- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others
- Reporting defects, damage or other safety concerns
- Not using equipment that they reasonably believe is unsafe.



Toolbox Talk - Attendance Sheet

Site/Department Name:

Trainer Name:

Signature:

Toolbox Talk Topic:

Date:

Name	Signature

Any further feedback or questions from attendees regarding this toolbox talk topic?