

# Forklift Safety Is Up To You

Editor's note: Our Tailgate Training Tip Sheets are available in Spanish at [gemplers.com](http://gemplers.com).

## **Key Points:**

- Only operate a forklift if you have been trained and authorized.
- Never allow passengers on a forklift.
- Keep your arms, hands and legs inside the forklift.
- Inspect the forklift daily.

**Note to trainer:** Follow this script or use it to help guide you through a 10- to 15-minute tailgate training session for your ag/hort workers. You may photocopy this sheet for your employees' personal use. However, it may not be published or sold.

## **Forklifts can be dangerous**

- Forklifts are designed to make your job easier.
- But more than 2,000 serious injuries occur each year due to improper forklift operation.
- Most of these accidents happen when a forklift driver hits another person.
- Other accidents occur when forklifts tip over, fall off a loading dock, or drop a load.

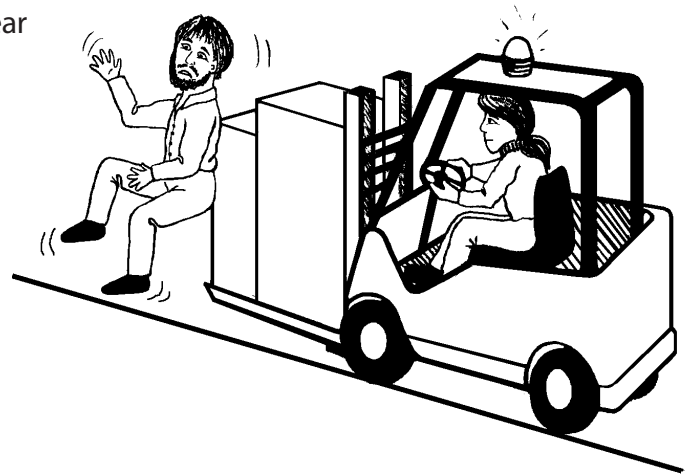
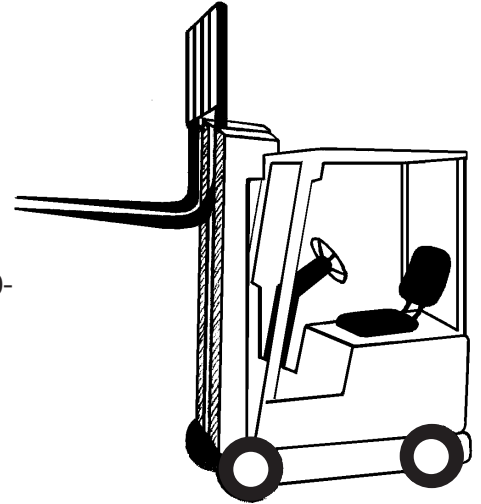
Reminder: Operating a forklift is not the same as driving your personal car or truck.

## **How to prevent forklift accidents**

- Here are some basic safety rules to help you:
  1. Never operate a forklift unless you have been authorized and trained.

**Note to trainer:** Keep a written record of employees who receive forklift safety training. Include the date of the training session.

2. Know how a forklift operates and how to safely load and unload.
3. Never allow riders on a forklift.
4. Don't tamper with forklift safety equipment.
5. Don't engage in horseplay around a forklift.
6. Don't smoke near a forklift that is being refueled.
7. Don't touch or tamper with a forklift while it's charging.
8. Always lower the forks to ground level when the forklift is not in operation.
9. Be alert when operating or working around a forklift. Failure to do so could quickly result in an accident.
10. Immediately report any accidents or near accidents to your supervisor.



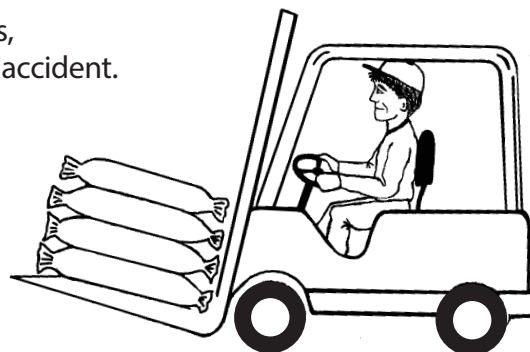
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See our full line of safety supplies, including respirators, eye and ear protection, coveralls, first aid and more.

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## Some safe forklift driving rules

1. Drive defensively. Be on the alert for low overhead clearances, slippery pavement, or other situations that could result in an accident.
2. Always keep a clear view of your path of travel.
3. Use your seat belt.
4. Wear personal protective equipment when required, including head, eye, hand, foot and respiratory protection.
5. Keep your arms, hands and legs inside the forklift.
6. Keep the forks slightly tilted back when transporting a load.
7. Always give pedestrians the right of way.
8. Slow down, stop and sound your horn at intersections and blind spots.
9. Look behind you before you back up. Then sound the horn and drive slowly.
10. Always obey speed limits and avoid sudden stops.



## Safely handling a load

- Never place anyone between your load and an immovable object.
- Be sure you always know the position of the forks.
- Stop, then check for possible obstructions before raising or lowering a load.
- When loading a trailer, be sure the trailer wheels are chocked before driving off and on the trailer.
- If the load blocks your vision, transport the load in reverse.
- Don't use the forks to push a load.

## Inspect the forklift daily

- Look for broken or damaged parts.
- Test the horn, brakes and steering.
- Be sure the forks are in place and properly secured.
- Check for water, oil or fuel leaks.
- Don't operate the forklift if you spot any problems or if it has been taken out of service for repairs. Report them to your supervisor.
- Check the manufacturer's manual for other instructions.



## Are there any questions?

**Note to trainer:** Take time to answer trainees' questions. Then review the Forklift Safety Do's and Don'ts.

<b>FORKLIFT SAFETY DO'S AND DON'TS</b>	
<p><b>DO:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep your arms, hands and legs inside the forklift.</li> <li>• Stop and sound your horn at intersections.</li> <li>• Drive defensively when operating a forklift.</li> </ul>	<p><b>DON'T:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operate a forklift unless you have been authorized and trained.</li> <li>• Allow riders on a forklift.</li> <li>• Operate a forklift if it is not in good condition.</li> </ul>

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