



The Forklift Operator's Handbook

SAFE OPERATION | BEST PRACTICE | PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Gary Hudson GH Training

AITT Accredited Instructor





Copyright

THE FORKLIFT OPERATOR'S HANDBOOK

Copyright © 2026 GH Training. All rights reserved.

USE OF THIS PUBLICATION

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form without prior written permission, except brief quotations used in reviews or education with appropriate acknowledgement.

ACCURACY

Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy at publication. Legislation and official guidance may change; always refer to current HSE publications and UK legislation.

PUBLISHED BY

GH Training
Professional Workplace Transport Training
United Kingdom
Edition 2026



Disclaimer

PURPOSE

This handbook provides practical guidance for forklift operators and those responsible for workplace transport safety. It complements professional operator training and is not a substitute for formal instruction, site induction, manufacturer instructions, or competent advice.

ALWAYS FOLLOW

Your employer's safe system of work. Site-specific rules. Manufacturer operating instructions. Current UK health and safety legislation.

IMPORTANT

References to legislation and HSE guidance support recognised duties and best practice. GH Training accepts no liability for loss or damage arising from reliance upon this publication alone.



About GH Training

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

GH Training delivers professional, workplace-based operator training tailored to the equipment, environment and tasks undertaken by each customer.

TRAINING SERVICES

Counterbalance and reach trucks. Powered pallet and specialist trucks. VNA trucks and order pickers. MEWPs and working at height. Familiarisation and refresher training. Experienced operator assessments.

OUR OBJECTIVE

To create confident, competent operators who work safely every day.

OUR BELIEF

Professional training is about more than obtaining a certificate. It is about protecting people.



Foreword

A MESSAGE FROM GARY HUDSON

Forklifts keep businesses moving, yet remain a significant workplace transport risk. Most incidents arise from poor judgement, unsafe behaviour, inadequate planning or lack of awareness - and the vast majority can be prevented.

COMPETENCE CONTINUES

Learning does not stop when you receive a certificate. Competence develops through experience, supervision, refresher training and a willingness to follow safe working practices.

PROFESSIONAL OPERATORS

They do not rely on luck. They rely on training, observation and good judgement. Above all, they never stop learning.

Stay safe.

Gary Hudson

Owner, GH Training

AITT Accredited Instructor



Contents

- 1 Becoming a Professional Operator
- 2 Daily Pre-use Inspections
- 3 Understanding Forklift Stability
- 4 Driving Safely and Controls
- 5 Safe Load Handling
- 6 Working Around Pedestrians
- 7 Loading and Unloading Vehicles
- 8 Working on Slopes and Gradients
- 9 Forklift Attachments
- 10 Electric & LPG Forklifts
- 11 Emergencies and Incidents
- 12 Maintaining Competence
- Appendix A Pre-use Inspection
- Appendix B Banksman Signals
- Appendix C Safety Signs
- Appendix D Knowledge Assessment
- Appendix E Glossary
- Appendix F References

Becoming a Professional Operator



Every safe shift starts with you. The moment you take control of a forklift, you are responsible for your own safety, colleagues, visitors, equipment, property and the safe movement of goods.

- Inspect before every shift
- Report defects immediately
- Wear required PPE
- Follow traffic routes and site rules
- Drive for the conditions
- Park safely when unattended

BEST PRACTICE

The best operators are not always the fastest - they are the people everyone trusts.



Professional Standards

PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE

Do not rush, take shortcuts or assume someone else has made the area safe. Plan each movement and stop when conditions change.

YOUR AUTHORITY TO STOP

Never operate a truck you believe is unsafe. Isolate it, report the defect and prevent unintended use.

SAFETY AND PRODUCTIVITY

Safe work reduces collisions, stock damage, downtime and disruption. Consistency is a mark of competence.

Daily Pre-use Inspections



A truck that worked yesterday may not be safe today. Complete a systematic check before use and whenever taking over an unfamiliar truck.

- Tyres, wheels and forks
- Mast, chains and hydraulics
- Seat belt and operator restraint
- Horn, lights and alarms
- Capacity plate and controls
- Battery, LPG or fuel system

BEST PRACTICE

Five careful minutes can prevent an accident that stops production for weeks.



Defects and Isolation

REPORT EVERY DEFECT

Record the truck identity, defect, time and person notified. Never conceal or postpone reporting.

SERIOUS DEFECTS

Brakes, steering, forks, mast, chains, hydraulic systems, seat belts or LPG systems normally require immediate removal from service.

SAFE ISOLATION

Park safely, lower forks, neutralise controls, apply the brake, switch off, remove the key and attach an Out of Service notice.

Understanding Forklift Stability



A forklift balances the truck and its load within a stability area. Raising, tilting, braking and turning continually move the combined centre of gravity.

- Keep loads low in travel
- Respect the capacity plate
- Consider the load centre
- Avoid sharp or fast turns
- Use smooth controls
- Never turn on a slope

BEST PRACTICE

Once the centre of gravity leaves the stability area, recovery is unlikely.



Capacity and Load Centres

RATED CAPACITY

Capacity applies only under the stated conditions: attachment, mast, lift height and load centre. Never guess.

LOAD CENTRE

Longer or uneven loads move weight farther forward and reduce available capacity.

IF TIPPING BEGINS

Stay seated, keep the belt fastened, brace your feet, hold firmly and lean away from the direction of tip. Do not jump.

Forklift Controls



Controls differ between trucks. Before use, identify every control and understand the indicators, interlocks and emergency functions.

- Direction and accelerator
- Service and parking brakes
- Lift, lower and tilt
- Attachment controls
- Horn and warning devices
- Emergency isolation

BEST PRACTICE

Never learn unfamiliar controls while carrying a load or working near people.



Starting and Parking

BEFORE STARTING

Adjust the seat, fasten the restraint, confirm neutral, apply the parking brake and check the route.

LEAVING THE TRUCK

Park in the designated area, lower forks fully, neutralise controls, apply the brake, switch off and remove the key.

NEVER OBSTRUCT

Do not block fire routes, exits, pedestrian paths, electrical equipment or emergency access.

Driving Safely



Safe driving depends on observation, speed control and space. Look in the direction of travel and adapt continuously.

- Travel with forks low
- Reduce speed before turns
- Sound the horn at blind points
- Maintain safe clearance
- Avoid harsh braking
- Follow one-way systems

BEST PRACTICE

A speed limit is a maximum, not a target. Conditions may require much less.



Observation and Reversing

LOOK BEFORE MOVING

Check mirrors and cameras, then physically look. Technology assists observation but never replaces it.

RESTRICTED VIEW

If the load blocks forward visibility, travel in reverse where safe or use a trained banksman.

REVERSING

Check behind and to both sides before moving. Stop immediately if a person enters the danger area.

Safe Load Handling



Every lift begins with an assessment of the load, pallet, route and destination. Insert the forks correctly and centre the load.

- Check weight and stability
- Inspect the pallet
- Space forks widely
- Insert forks fully
- Tilt only as required
- Keep people clear

BEST PRACTICE

If the load is damaged, unstable or unknown, stop and seek advice.



Stacking and De-stacking

APPROACH

Approach squarely, stop, raise to the required height and level the forks.

PLACE

Move slowly, place the load fully on the support and lower until the forks are free.

WITHDRAW

Look behind, withdraw straight, lower to travel height and tilt back only when clear.

Working Around Pedestrians



Pedestrians and forklifts should be separated wherever possible. Operators must still expect unexpected movement.

- Use segregated routes
- Slow at doors and corners
- Make eye contact
- Never assume you were seen
- Maintain an exclusion zone
- Stop if communication is unclear

BEST PRACTICE

The horn warns of presence; it does not give right of way.



Shared Work Areas

BLIND CORNERS

Approach slowly, sound the horn and be ready to stop.

BANKSMEN

Use agreed signals. Only one person should direct the movement. Stop if the banksman disappears from view.

VISITORS

Expect unfamiliar behaviour around loading bays and traffic routes. Create space and stop early.

Loading Vehicles



Vehicle loading introduces dock edges, trailer movement, floor strength and communication risks. Confirm the loading arrangement before entering the trailer.

- Vehicle secured
- Trailer floor suitable
- Dock plate positioned
- Driver location controlled
- Load sequence agreed
- Edge protection effective

BEST PRACTICE

Never enter a trailer until you know it is secured against movement.



Loading Bay Discipline

BEFORE ENTRY

Confirm brakes, restraints or chocks; inspect the trailer floor and dock equipment.

DURING LOADING

Travel slowly, watch edge clearance, distribute weight and follow the loading plan.

COMPLETION

Withdraw safely, account for people and equipment, remove restraints only through the agreed procedure.

Working on Slopes



Slopes reduce stability and braking performance. Avoid them where possible and follow the manufacturer and site procedure.

- Loaded: keep load uphill
- Unloaded: forks downhill
- Travel straight
- Never turn across a slope
- Maintain distance
- Avoid wet or damaged surfaces

BEST PRACTICE

If the route feels unsafe, stop before committing the truck to the slope.



Ramps and Gradients

APPROACH

Select a safe speed before the gradient and maintain controlled movement.

CLEARANCE

Allow for mast, fork and counterweight clearance at gradient changes.

PARKING

Do not park on a slope unless unavoidable and specifically controlled by the site procedure.

Attachments



Attachments change capacity, load centre, visibility and handling. Use only approved equipment shown on the truck capacity plate.

- Paper roll clamps
- Fork positioners
- Rotators and drum clamps
- Carpet booms
- Crane jibs
- Approved work platforms

BEST PRACTICE

Operators should receive appropriate familiarisation and, where necessary, additional training before using attachments.



Attachment Safety

BEFORE USE

Confirm compatibility, locking, hydraulic connections, capacity plate and condition.

DURING USE

Use smooth movements, keep the load secure and observe new clearance and visibility limits.

CRANE JIBS

Use suitable lifting accessories, an agreed lift plan and controlled communication. Never improvise slings or lifting points.

Electric & LPG Forklifts



Energy systems introduce electrical, chemical, fire and pressure hazards. Use designated areas and follow the site charging or cylinder procedure.

- Inspect connectors and cables
- Secure battery restraint
- Ventilate charging areas
- No smoking or ignition sources
- Check LPG hose and seal
- Wear required PPE

BEST PRACTICE

Never use a naked flame to look for an LPG leak.



Charging and Cylinder Changes

ELECTRIC TRUCKS

Park, isolate, connect correctly and report heat, damage, leaks or unusual smell. Keep metal objects away from battery tops.

LPG TRUCKS

Change cylinders in a ventilated area, close the valve, disconnect safely, secure the replacement and check for leaks using the approved method.

EMERGENCY

Do not touch leaking electrolyte or investigate gas leaks alone. Isolate the area and raise the alarm.

Emergencies



Stop work when conditions become unsafe. Know the site emergency arrangements before operating.

- Collision or near miss
- Mechanical failure
- Load collapse
- Fire or gas leak
- Person in danger
- Truck overturn

BEST PRACTICE

Protect life first. Equipment and production can wait.



Incident Response

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

Stop, secure the truck if safe, raise the alarm and prevent further exposure.

INJURY

Call trained first aid or emergency services. Do not move an injured person unless they face immediate danger.

PRESERVE EVIDENCE

Do not disturb the scene unnecessarily. Report honestly and cooperate with the investigation.

Maintaining Competence



Competence changes with experience, equipment, health, task and workplace conditions. Keep learning and accept constructive supervision.

- Refresher training
- New equipment familiarisation
- Attachment training
- Post-incident review
- Supervisor observation
- Report changed capability

BEST PRACTICE

A certificate records training; daily behaviour demonstrates competence.



Avoiding Complacency

WARNING SIGNS

Rushing, skipped checks, raised-load travel and ignoring near misses indicate standards are slipping.

SPEAK UP

Report unsafe pressure, poor routes, damaged equipment and unclear procedures.

PROFESSIONAL REVIEW

Use feedback to improve. Safe operators welcome observation because it protects everyone.



Appendix A: Daily Pre-use Inspection

Operator: _____ Date/Time: _____ Truck/Fleet No: _____

INSPECTION ITEM	YES	NO	N/A
Truck free from damage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No oil / hydraulic / fuel leaks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tyres and wheel nuts sound	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forks and locking pins sound	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mast, chains and hoses sound	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overhead guard secure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seat and seat belt operational	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mirrors, lights and beacon operational	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reversing alarm and horn operational	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Battery / LPG system secure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steering and service brake pass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parking brake and accelerator pass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lift, lower and tilt pass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Side shift and warning lights pass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

TRUCK SAFE TO USE?

YES [] NO [] If NO: remove from service, inform the supervisor and attach an Out of Service tag.



Out of Service Tag

**DO NOT USE
OUT OF SERVICE**

TRUCK NUMBER

DATE / TIME

REPORTED BY

REASON

SUPERVISOR

REPAIR COMPLETED: YES / NO

REMOVE ONLY WHEN AUTHORISED
AUTHORISED RETURN TO SERVICE

Appendix B: Banksman Hand Signals

Agree signals before work starts. Follow one trained banksman. If signals are unclear or the banksman disappears from view, stop immediately.

STOP

One arm vertical, palm facing operator.

EMERGENCY STOP

Both arms raised vertically.

MOVE FORWARD

Bent arms; sweep hands toward body.

REVERSE

Extend arms; sweep hands away.

TURN LEFT / RIGHT

Indicate direction clearly and slowly.

RAISE FORKS

Finger upward, circular movement.

LOWER FORKS

Finger downward, circular movement.

SLOW DOWN

Hand moving slowly up and down.

HOLD POSITION

Arms crossed in front of body.

NO SIGNAL MEANS STOP

The banksman must remain visible, stay outside the operating area, keep an escape route and never stand between the truck and a fixed object.

Appendix C: Workplace Safety Signs

RED - PROHIBITION

Do not: no smoking, no pedestrians, no entry.

BLUE - MANDATORY

You must: wear safety footwear, hi-vis, head or eye protection.

YELLOW - WARNING

Be aware: forklift traffic, overhead loads, slippery or uneven surfaces.

GREEN - SAFE CONDITION

Emergency exits, first aid, assembly points and eye wash.

RED - FIRE EQUIPMENT

Fire extinguisher, alarm call point and hose reel.

OPERATOR ACTION

Follow internal one-way, give-way, speed, crossing, maximum-height and maximum-weight signs. Temporary signs carry the same importance as permanent signs.



Appendix D: Knowledge Assessment

Operator: _____ Company: _____ Date: _____ Pass mark: 80%

1. When should a forklift inspection be completed?

Answer: _____

2. What should you do with a safety-critical hydraulic leak?

Answer: _____

3. What action is required for a defective seat belt?

Answer: _____

4. Why inspect daily?

Answer: _____

5. What is the Stability Triangle?

Answer: _____

6. What is the effect of raised forks?

Answer: _____

7. What does an increased load centre do?

Answer: _____

8. What does the capacity plate show?

Answer: _____

9. How should you approach a corner?

Answer: _____

10. What if a load blocks forward vision?

Answer: _____



Appendix D: Knowledge Assessment

Operator: _____ Company: _____ Date: _____ Pass mark: 80%

11. How should pedestrians be treated?

Answer: _____

12. What is rear-end swing?

Answer: _____

13. What should be checked before lifting?

Answer: _____

14. What if a pallet is damaged?

Answer: _____

15. How should forks be positioned?

Answer: _____

16. How can a long load affect capacity?

Answer: _____

17. What if you lose sight of the banksman?

Answer: _____

18. Why make eye contact?

Answer: _____

19. When should the horn be used?

Answer: _____

20. What if a pedestrian enters your route?

Answer: _____



Appendix D: Knowledge Assessment

Operator: _____ Company: _____ Date: _____ Pass mark: 80%

21. What if the truck starts to overturn?

Answer: _____

22. What if a load starts to fall?

Answer: _____

23. What should happen to a near miss?

Answer: _____

24. What follows a serious defect?

Answer: _____

25. What is competence?

Answer: _____

26. Why undertake refresher training?

Answer: _____

27. What do professionals keep doing?

Answer: _____

28. What is the first operator priority?

Answer: _____

29. Which regulations cover work equipment?

Answer: _____

30. What defines a professional operator?

Answer: _____



Assessment Answer Key

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Before every shift | 16. It may increase the load centre |
| 2. Report it and isolate the truck | 17. Stop immediately |
| 3. Report and repair before safe use | 18. Confirm awareness |
| 4. Identify defects before use | 19. As site rules require |
| 5. The normal stability area | 20. Stop and allow safe clearance |
| 6. Reduced stability | 21. Stay seated, belted and brace |
| 7. Reduces lifting capacity | 22. Move clear; never catch it |
| 8. Capacity under stated conditions | 23. Report it |
| 9. Reduce speed before turning | 24. Report and isolate |
| 10. Reverse where safe or use a banksman | 25. Knowledge, skill, experience and behaviour |
| 11. As vulnerable road users | 26. Correct habits and maintain competence |
| 12. Rear movement during a turn | 27. Learning |
| 13. Load, pallet and capacity | 28. Protecting people |
| 14. Assess and report if unsafe | 29. PUWER 1998 |
| 15. To support the load | 30. Respects limits and follows procedures |

SCORE

Total: ____ / 30 Percentage: _____ % PASS [] FURTHER TRAINING RECOMMENDED []

Appendix E: Operator's Glossary

Attachment	Specialist equipment fitted to a forklift.
Authorised operator	A trained, assessed and employer-authorised person.
Banksman	A trained person guiding movement using agreed signals.
Capacity plate	Rated lifting capacity under stated conditions.
Centre of gravity	Point through which weight is considered to act.
Combined centre of gravity	Single point for the truck and load together.
Counterbalance forklift	Truck using a rear counterweight.
Defect	Fault or damage affecting safe operation.
Dock leveller	Platform bridging warehouse and vehicle.
Familiarisation	Training for the actual workplace, equipment and task.
Fork heel	Curve where fork blade meets the shank.



Appendix E: Operator's Glossary

Load centre Distance from fork face to the load centre of gravity.

LOLER Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations.

Near miss Event that could have caused injury or damage.

Out of Service Equipment prohibited from use pending safe release.

PUWER Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations.

Rated capacity Maximum load under the stated conditions.

Rear-end swing Sideways movement of the truck rear while turning.

Stability Triangle Normal stability area beneath a counterbalance truck.

Thorough examination Detailed LOLER examination by a competent person.

VNA truck Very Narrow Aisle specialist truck.

Workplace transport Movement of vehicles, people and materials at work.

Appendix G: Understanding Load Centres



The load centre is the horizontal distance from the fork face to the load centre of gravity. Weight alone never determines whether a lift is safe.

EXAMPLE

A 1,000 mm deep, evenly distributed pallet has an approximate 500 mm load centre. A 1,400 mm load has an approximate 700 mm load centre and may substantially reduce available capacity.

- Long loads move weight forward
- Attachments commonly increase load centre
- Uneven loads may have an offset centre
- Never guess: check capacity information

Load Centre Exercises

LOAD A

Weight: 2,000 kg | Load centre: 500 mm

LOAD B

Weight: 2,000 kg | Load centre: 700 mm

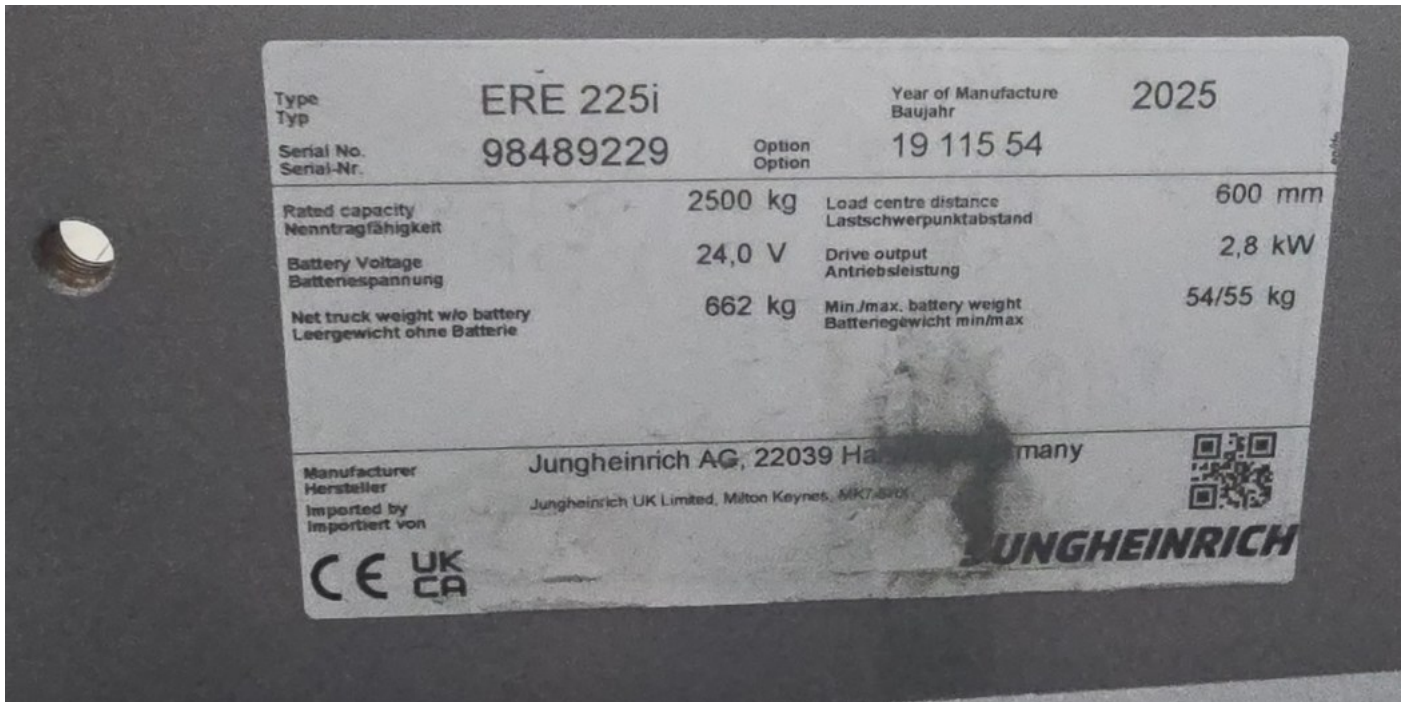
Load B creates the greater overturning force even though both loads weigh the same. Only the manufacturer's capacity information can confirm whether the lift is safe.

- Identify where the weight is concentrated
- Position forks for suitable support
- Lift slowly and observe behaviour
- Lower immediately if the load shifts
- Consider wind and visibility with bulky loads
- Use a larger or more suitable truck when required

GOLDEN RULE

Weight + distance + lift height + attachment must all be considered before lifting.

Appendix H: The Capacity Plate



The capacity plate is the manufacturer's statement of the truck's safe operating limits. It is not a general promise that every load below one weight is safe.

- Manufacturer, model and serial number
- Rated capacity and load centre
- Maximum lift height and mast type
- Truck or battery weight
- Approved attachment information
- Capacity chart where fitted

DO NOT USE

If the plate is missing, damaged, unreadable or does not reflect the fitted attachment, report it and follow the employer's procedure before using the truck.



Reading Capacity Information

EXAMPLE RATING

2,500 kg at 500 mm load centre and stated lift height.

Capacity may reduce as lift height or load centre increases. Attachments add weight and often move the load forward. Electric truck battery weight may form part of the counterbalance and must remain within the approved range.

- Read the plate on the truck you are using
- Use the correct lift-height line
- Confirm attachment compatibility
- Consider the actual load centre
- Never transfer a rating from another truck
- Stop and ask when information is unclear

DECISION SEQUENCE

LOAD WEIGHT > LOAD CENTRE > LIFT HEIGHT > ATTACHMENT > CAPACITY PLATE > SAFE TO LIFT?

Appendix I: Workplace Hazard Awareness



Hazard awareness is continuous. Conditions, people, lighting, surfaces and storage arrangements can change throughout a shift.

- Poor housekeeping and spills
- Damaged pallets or racking
- Blind corners and poor lighting
- Overhead and dock-edge hazards
- Unpredictable pedestrians
- Fatigue, pressure and distraction

BEST PRACTICE

Do not just look where you are driving - look for what could happen next.



Appendix J: Toolbox Talks

- Daily pre-use checks
- Seat belts and overturns
- Stability Triangle
- Raised-fork travel
- Pedestrian safety
- Speed and stopping distance
- Blind corners
- Damaged pallets
- Capacity plates
- Housekeeping
- Loading vehicles
- Near-miss reporting
- Outdoor conditions
- Attachments
- Hazard spotting
- Reversing safely
- Safe parking
- Professional behaviour
- Learning from accidents
- Going home safely

SUPERVISOR GUIDANCE

Keep talks to 5-10 minutes, make them site-specific, encourage discussion, record attendance and follow up actions.



Appendix K: Operator CPD Record

Operator: _____ Employer: _____ Department: _____

DATE	ACTIVITY	TRUCK TYPE	HOURS	INSTRUCTOR / COMMENTS

- Refresher training
- Familiarisation
- Toolbox talk
- New attachment training
- Workplace assessment
- Near-miss review
- Supervisor observation
- Manufacturer familiarisation

ANNUAL REVIEW

Review date: _____ Authorisation confirmed: YES / NO Further training required: YES / NO



Appendix L: Operator Observation

OPERATOR / OBSERVER / DATE / TRUCK / LOCATION

Daily inspection completed	YES []	NO []
Defects reported correctly	YES []	NO []
PPE and seat belt used	YES []	NO []
Safe speed and smooth steering	YES []	NO []
Continuous observation	YES []	NO []
Rear-end swing controlled	YES []	NO []
Junctions approached safely	YES []	NO []
Pedestrians protected	YES []	NO []
Correct fork spacing	YES []	NO []
Load and capacity assessed	YES []	NO []
Load carried low	YES []	NO []
Smooth stacking	YES []	NO []
Correct parking procedure	YES []	NO []

OVERALL ASSESSMENT

EXCELLENT [] SATISFACTORY [] IMPROVEMENT REQUIRED []
Positive observations / development points / actions agreed:

PRACTICAL EXERCISES

Discuss: standard pallet; long timber pack; uneven machine; HGV loading; restricted visibility; wet yard.

Appendix N: Real Workplace Case Studies

THE HIDDEN PEDESTRIAN

A load restricted forward vision. The operator approached a junction slowly and stopped when a pedestrian stepped out. Lesson: expect the unexpected.

THE LONG LOAD

Steel sections were below the nominal truck rating but extended beyond the forks. The operator recognised light rear wheels and stopped. Lesson: load centre matters.

THE DAMAGED PALLET

A broken deck board failed while stacking. Nobody was beneath it. Lesson: inspect the pallet, not only the goods.

Learning From Experience

THE WET YARD

Standing water reduced traction. A normal-speed turn caused rear-wheel slide. Lesson: conditions change, so speed, route and technique must change.

THE REPORTED NEAR MISS

A contractor walked behind a reversing truck. The operator stopped and reported it. Barriers and induction were improved. Lesson: reporting prevents recurrence.

- What happened?
- Why did it happen?
- Which controls failed?
- Could this happen here?
- What should change?
- Who owns the action?

BEST PRACTICE

Good operators learn from other people's mistakes - not just their own.



Appendix O: The Professional Operator

A certificate confirms training. Professionalism is demonstrated every shift through inspections, planning, patience, observation, communication and good judgement.

- Inspect before operating
- Report defects and near misses
- Wear the seat belt every time
- Use approved attachments only
- Keep loads low in travel
- Plan every lift
- Respect rated capacity
- Never take shortcuts
- Slow before corners
- Continue learning
- Look in the direction of travel
- Help others work safely
- Protect pedestrians
- Go home safely

THE PROFESSIONAL OPERATOR'S PROMISE

I will operate within the truck's limits, protect pedestrians, report hazards and defects, continue learning and help create a safer workplace.

Every forklift moves materials. Every professional operator protects people.

Appendix F: References & Further Reading

[1] Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37/contents>

[2] PUWER 1998

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1998/2306/contents/made>

[3] LOLER 1998

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1998/2307/contents/made>

[4] Management Regulations 1999

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3242/contents/made>

[5] Rider-operated Lift Trucks: Operator Training (L117)

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/l117.htm>

[6] HSE: Lift Trucks

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport/lift-trucks/>

[7] Safe Use of Lift Trucks (INDG457)

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg457.htm>

[8] HSE: Workplace Transport Safety

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport/>

[9] Workplace Transport Safety (HSG136)

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg136.htm>

CONTACT GH TRAINING

01925 500796 | gary@gh-training.co.uk | www.gh-training.co.uk