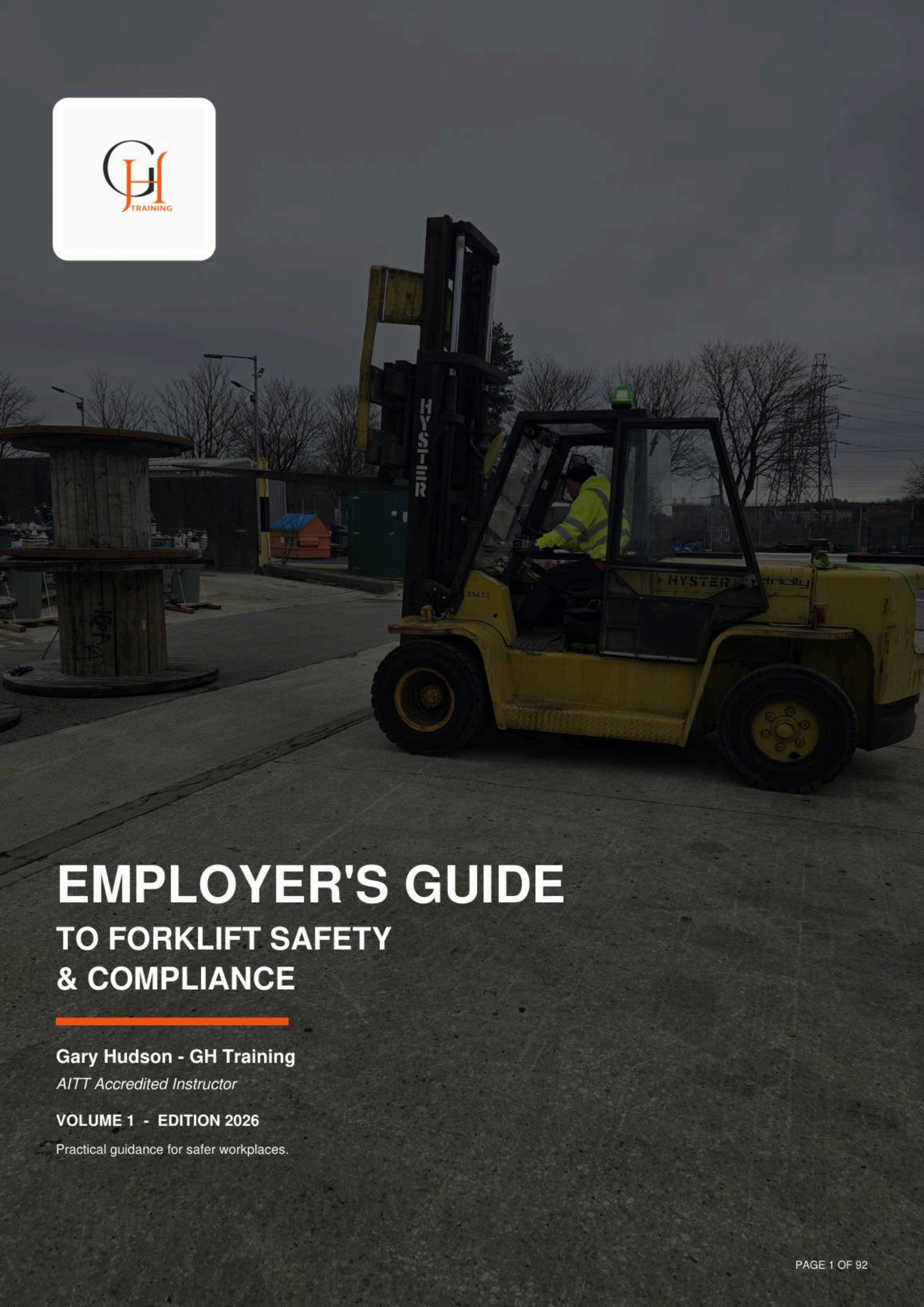


EMPLOYER'S GUIDE

TO FORKLIFT SAFETY & COMPLIANCE

Gary Hudson - GH Training

AITT Accredited Instructor

VOLUME 1 - EDITION 2026

Practical guidance for safer workplaces.

Welcome

Welcome to the GH Training Employer's Guide

Thank you for downloading the GH Training Employer's Guide to Forklift Safety & Compliance.

This handbook is for employers, warehouse and engineering managers, supervisors and health & safety professionals responsible for managing workplace transport safely.

Whether your business operates one forklift or a fleet across multiple sites, one thing remains the same:

Safe operators create safe workplaces.

Forklift trucks improve productivity, reduce manual handling and keep businesses moving. Operated incorrectly, they can also cause serious injury, property damage and costly disruption.

This guide explains not only how to work safely, but why safe working practices are essential.

Throughout this guide

- Practical advice and real workplace examples
- Legal guidance in plain English
- Best-practice recommendations
- Instructor tips and safety checklists

OUR AIM

Helping employers create safer workplaces through professional training and practical experience.

About the author

Gary Hudson is the owner of GH Training, an AITT Accredited Training Provider delivering professional workplace transport training throughout the UK. His experience spans engineering, manufacturing, warehousing, logistics and specialist industries - from electric warehouse trucks to heavy-capacity forklifts with specialist attachments. His approach combines recognised standards with practical, real-world experience.

About GH Training

Professional training
that makes a difference

GH Training was established with one simple objective: to provide practical, professional operator training that genuinely improves workplace safety.

Every course is tailored to the customer's workplace and equipment. Operators train using the trucks they use every day, producing better learning outcomes and greater confidence.

Our services

- Counterbalance and reach trucks
- Powered pallet trucks
- Multi-directional forklifts
- Order pickers and VNA trucks
- Scissor lifts and boom lifts
- Overhead gantry cranes
- Working at height
- Manual handling
- Supervisor awareness
- Familiarisation and refresher training
- Experienced operator assessments

PRACTICAL LEARNING

Training on customer equipment connects recognised standards to the tasks operators perform every day.

Why Forklift Safety Matters

Every day, thousands of forklift trucks operate safely throughout the UK - moving stock, unloading vehicles, supporting manufacturing and supplying warehouses. Yet forklifts remain a significant source of workplace transport incidents.

Common contributing factors

- Poor observation
- Excessive speed
- Inadequate training
- Unsafe reversing
- Poor pedestrian segregation
- Incorrect load handling
- Lack of supervision

WHY EMPLOYERS INVEST IN TRAINING

Reduce accidents • Improve productivity • Protect employees • Reduce damage • Support compliance • Improve morale and operator confidence

Training is an investment in people, safety and efficiency.

Understanding Competence

A forklift certificate does not mean an operator remains competent forever. Competence develops through knowledge, practical skill, experience, supervision, workplace familiarisation and continued assessment. Employers must ensure operators continue working safely throughout their employment.

The five stages of competence

1. **Basic training**
   Controls, stability, safe driving, load handling and daily checks.

2. **Specific job training**
   How the equipment is used for the operator's actual work.

3. **Familiarisation**
   Traffic routes, pedestrians, loading bays, site rules and hazards.

4. **Supervision**
   Building safe confidence under observation.

5. **Refresher training**
   Maintaining competence throughout employment.

INSTRUCTOR TIP

Learning begins before an operator enters the truck. Good theory, clear demonstration and patient coaching create safer practical habits.

Employer Responsibilities

UK employers have a legal duty to ensure forklift operators are competent. This responsibility is supported by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, PUWER 1998, LOLER 1998 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

Good employers provide

- Suitable equipment
- Professional training
- Regular supervision
- Safe systems of work
- Risk assessments
- Refresher training
- Maintenance
- Inspection records

LEGAL REQUIREMENT

Operators must receive adequate training before using work equipment. Training must be appropriate to the equipment, workplace, task and risks involved.

GH TRAINING TIP

Great operators are created through good supervision, continuous learning and a positive workplace culture - not simply by passing a test.

Why Choose GH Training?

More than a certificate.

Businesses choose GH Training because they want confident, competent operators. Courses are practical, professional, flexible, delivered on-site, AITT Accredited and designed around your business. Whether training a new operator or refreshing an experienced employee, the objective is the same: helping businesses operate more safely every day.

GH TRAINING IN ACTION

Practical training with a forklift-mounted crane jib develops safe lifting technique, load control, banksman communication and awareness of the additional risks created by specialist attachments.

End of chapter summary

- Why forklift safety matters
- Employer legal responsibilities
- What operator competence really means
- Why training is an ongoing process
- How GH Training supports safer workplaces

NEXT CHAPTER

Daily Forklift Inspections

Tyres - Forks - Mast - Chains - Hydraulics - Seat belts - Battery and LPG checks - Defect reporting - Printable daily checklist

Daily Forklift Inspections

Every Shift. Every Truck. Every Time.

A forklift may have operated perfectly yesterday, but that does not guarantee it is safe today. Tyres wear, hoses deteriorate, chains stretch, forks become damaged and safety devices can fail without warning. A defect missed during a busy shift can quickly develop into a serious incident.

A thorough pre-use inspection is one of the most effective ways to prevent equipment failure, protect operators and reduce costly downtime. Daily inspections are good practice, a legal requirement and an essential part of workplace safety management.

GH TRAINING TIP

Five minutes spent inspecting a forklift can prevent an accident that could stop production for weeks.

Employer Responsibilities

Under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998, employers must ensure work equipment is maintained in a safe condition and inspected where necessary. Operators should never be expected to use equipment they believe is unsafe.

Employers should ensure

- Inspections are completed before use
- Defects are reported immediately
- Unsafe trucks are removed from service
- Repairs are completed by competent engineers
- Inspection records are retained

EVIDENCE OF CONTROL

A completed daily inspection provides evidence that equipment was checked before being placed into service.

The daily inspection process

Inspect the forklift before starting work. Follow the same sequence every day to reduce the chance of missing defects. Begin externally, continue through the operating position, then finish with controlled functional tests.

1. Walk around

External condition and obvious damage.

2. Operator position

Controls, restraints and safety equipment.

3. Functional checks

Steering, braking, hydraulics and warnings.

1. Walk-Around Inspection

Inspect the truck externally before entering the operator's seat. Work methodically around the machine and look above, below and behind components rather than relying on a quick glance.

Check for

- Oil leaks
- Hydraulic leaks
- Damaged tyres
- Loose wheel nuts
- Cracked welds
- Bent overhead guard
- Broken lights
- Missing mirrors
- Damaged forks
- Damaged locking pins
- Chain condition
- Mast damage

INSPECTION HABIT

Use the same route around the truck every day. A consistent sequence makes omissions less likely.

2. Tyres and 3. Forks

Tyres

Tyres are critical to stability. Forklifts rely heavily on them to maintain rated lifting capacity. Solid tyres must never be used below the manufacturer's minimum wear line.

- Cuts
- Flat spots
- Chunking
- Excessive wear
- Embedded metal
- Incorrect pressure
- Loose wheel nuts

Forks

Forks carry every load. Damage or excessive wear can lead to sudden failure. Never attempt to straighten bent forks; fit only approved replacements.

- Cracks
- Bent blades
- Twisted forks
- Uneven heights
- Damaged heels
- Excessive wear
- Missing retaining pins

STOP AND REPORT

Cracked, bent, twisted or badly worn forks require immediate assessment. Do not continue operating.

4. Mast and Lift Chains

The mast and chains support the entire load during lifting. Inspect them from a safe position with the carriage lowered and the truck isolated where appropriate.

Inspect

- Chain lubrication
- Equal chain tension
- Damaged rollers
- Hydraulic cylinders
- Mast welds
- Broken hoses
- Leaking fittings

HIGH-PRESSURE HAZARD

Hydraulic oil escaping under pressure can penetrate skin and cause serious injury. Never use your hand to search for a leak.

What good condition looks like

Chains should appear evenly tensioned and correctly lubricated. Rollers should run cleanly, welds should show no cracking, and cylinders and hose connections should remain dry.

REPORT IMMEDIATELY

Any hydraulic leak, damaged chain, cracked mast component or abnormal movement must be reported before the truck is used.

5. Hydraulic Functions

Raise and lower the mast slowly in a clear area. Listen, watch and feel for abnormal operation. Keep people away from the truck and never stand beneath raised forks or attachments.

Check for

- Smooth lifting
- Smooth lowering
- No unusual noises
- No jerking movement
- No hydraulic leaks

Operate every fitted function

- Tilt forward
- Tilt backward
- Side shift
- Fork positioning
- Specialist attachments

ATTACHMENT AWARENESS

Attachments change truck capacity, handling characteristics and inspection needs. Confirm they are secure, compatible and shown on the capacity plate.

6. Safety Equipment

Safety devices must work correctly before the truck enters service. Test each device as part of the same daily routine and report missing, damaged or ineffective equipment.

Check

- Seat belt
- Horn
- Reversing alarm
- Beacon
- Working lights
- Mirrors
- Camera systems
- Windscreen
- Wipers
- Fire extinguisher if fitted

SEAT BELT RULE

If the seat belt is defective, the truck should not be used. The restraint is a primary protection in an overturn.

7. Battery or LPG Checks

Electric forklifts

- Battery connector
- Charging cable
- Battery restraint
- Electrolyte leaks
- Damage to casing

Never disconnect a battery while the truck is operating. Follow the site charging procedure and use the correct personal protective equipment.

LPG forklifts

- Cylinder securely fitted
- Hose condition
- Regulator condition
- Signs or smell of leaks
- Cylinder damage

Never use a naked flame to detect an LPG leak. Isolate the truck, keep ignition sources away and follow the emergency procedure.

ENERGY ISOLATION

Damaged connectors, leaking batteries or suspected LPG leaks require immediate action and competent assessment.

8. Operator Compartment

Before starting the truck, make sure the operating position is clean, secure and correctly adjusted. The operator must be able to reach every control comfortably without stretching.

Before starting

- Seat adjustment
- Steering wheel
- Pedals
- Parking brake
- Hydraulic controls
- Instrument panel
- Floor and access steps
- Loose items removed

THREE POINTS OF CONTACT

Use the handholds and steps provided. Face the truck when mounting or dismounting and never jump from the cab.

9. Functional Checks

Start the truck in a suitable clear area. Test each function at low speed before beginning normal work. Do not assume a warning light or unusual noise will correct itself.

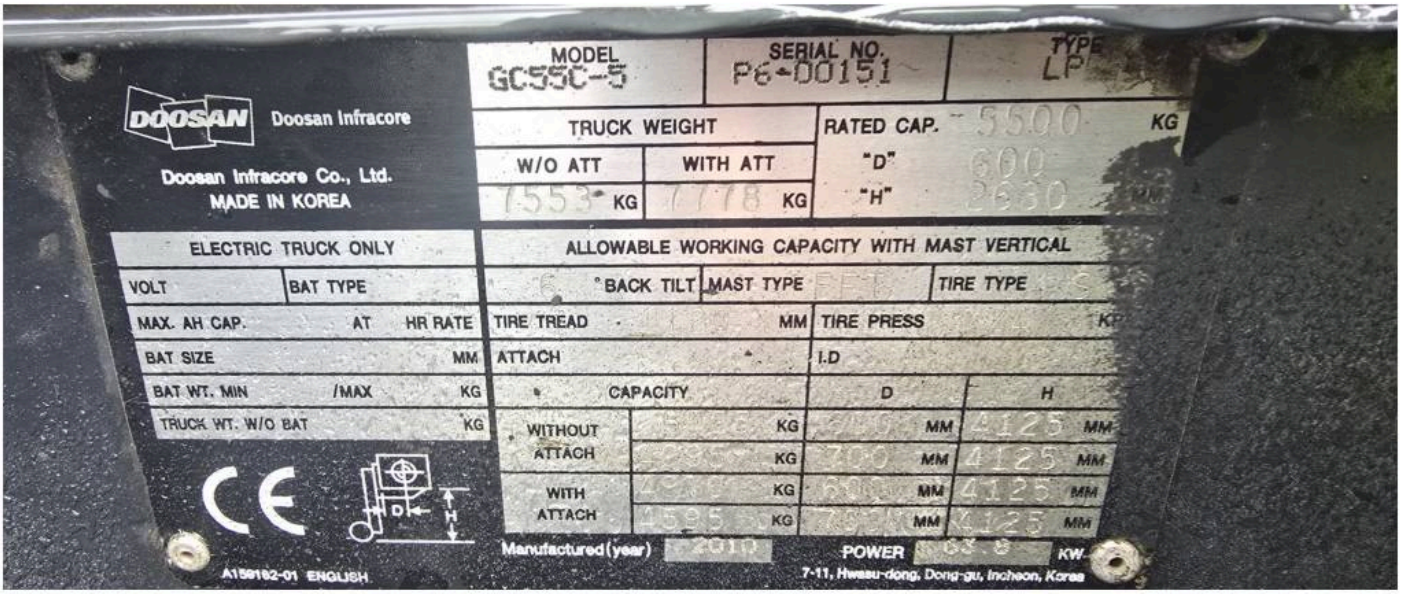
Test

- Steering
- Service brake
- Parking brake
- Horn
- Hydraulic controls
- Direction selector
- Accelerator
- Warning lights

NO SHORTCUTS

Do not begin work until every required system has been tested and any defect has been reported.

Reporting Defects



All defects must be reported. The action required depends on the risk, but an operator must never continue where a defect could affect safe operation.

Serious defects - remove from service

- Hydraulic leaks
- Damaged forks
- Cracked mast
- Seat belt failure
- Brake defects
- Steering faults
- LPG leaks
- Excessive chain wear

Minor defects - still report

- Torn seat cover
- Missing decals
- Cosmetic scratches

OUT-OF-SERVICE SEQUENCE

Park safely - lower the forks - apply the parking brake - remove the key - report the defect - attach an OUT OF SERVICE tag - inform the supervisor.

Professional Inspection Habits

Common inspection mistakes

- Rushing the inspection
- Assuming the previous operator checked
- Ignoring small hydraulic leaks
- Missing fork locking pins
- Overlooking overhead guard damage
- Missing tyre damage
- Not testing the parking brake

INSTRUCTOR'S ADVICE

Daily inspections must never become a tick-box exercise. The objective is to confirm that the forklift is safe to operate. Finding a defect before an incident is a sign of competence, not inconvenience.

End of chapter summary

A systematic inspection before every shift helps to:

- Prevent equipment failures
- Reduce workplace accidents
- Protect colleagues and pedestrians
- Comply with legal duties
- Reduce maintenance costs
- Extend forklift service life
- Promote a positive safety culture

NEXT CHAPTER

Forklift Stability

The stability triangle - Centre of gravity - Rated capacity - Load centres - Dynamic forces - Why forklifts tip over - Safe operating techniques

Forklift Stability

Understanding Why Forklifts Tip Over

KEY PRINCIPLE

Most forklift accidents are not caused by mechanical failure - they are caused by operators unknowingly exceeding the truck's stability limits.

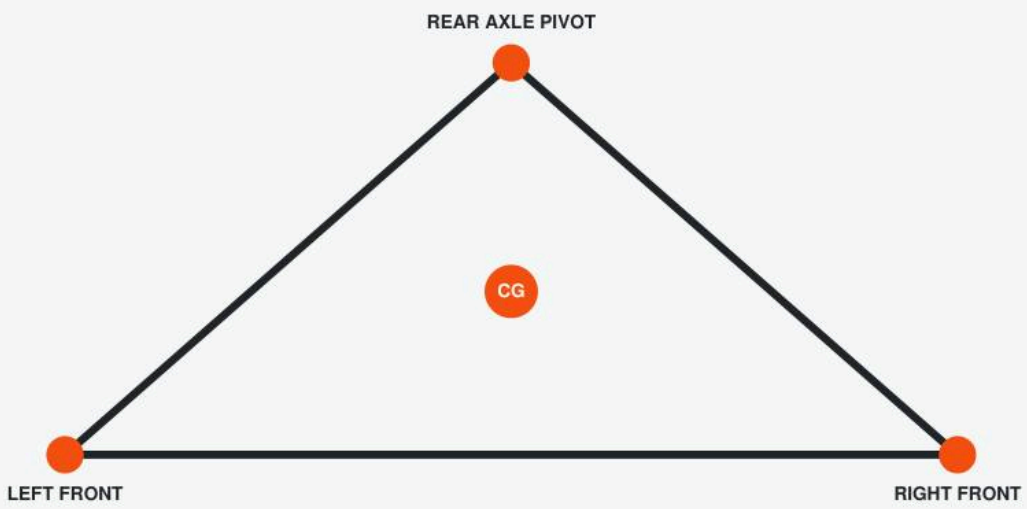
A forklift is designed to lift heavy loads high into the air while remaining manoeuvrable in confined spaces. Every lift changes the combined centre of gravity. If that movement exceeds the truck's stability limits, the forklift can overturn in seconds. Understanding stability enables operators to recognise hazards before they become incidents.

Learning objectives

- What keeps a forklift stable
- The Stability Triangle
- How centre of gravity moves
- Why forklifts overturn
- Load centres and rated capacity
- Safe travel and stacking
- The danger of raised-load turns

What Makes a Forklift Stable?

A forklift balances two opposing weights: the truck and its counterweight at the rear, and the load supported at the front. If the load is too heavy or positioned too far from the mast, the balance is lost.



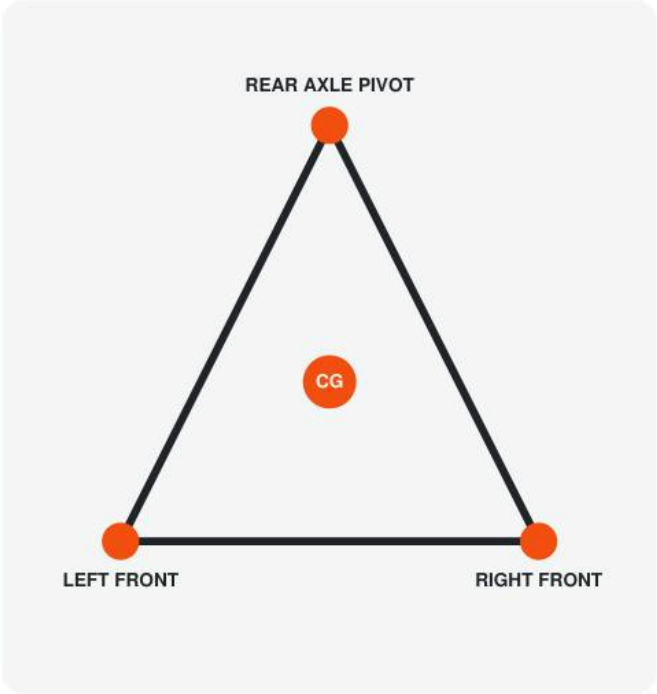
The Stability Triangle

Imagine lines joining the left front wheel, right front wheel and centre pivot of the rear axle. These points form the Stability Triangle. The forklift remains stable while its combined centre of gravity stays inside the triangle. If it moves outside, the truck overturns.

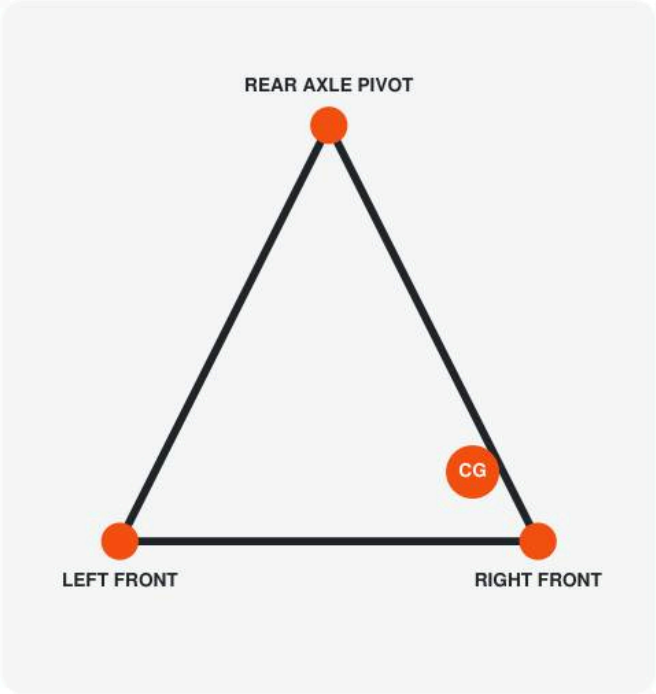
GH TRAINING TIP

Forklifts may give little warning before tipping. Once the centre of gravity leaves the stability triangle, recovery is unlikely.

The Triangle Changes With Movement



CENTRE OF GRAVITY INSIDE



CENTRE OF GRAVITY NEAR THE EDGE

The triangle is a teaching model for the truck's support area. The centre of gravity moves whenever the operator lifts, lowers, tilts, accelerates, brakes or turns. Loads, attachments, slopes and uneven surfaces can move it closer to an edge.

Think before every movement

- Where is the load weight concentrated?
- How high is the load?
- Is the mast tilted?
- Is the surface level?
- Will the truck turn or brake?
- Is an attachment fitted?

PRACTICAL RULE

Smooth, planned movements keep the combined centre of gravity under control. Sudden inputs move it quickly and unpredictably.

Understanding Centre of Gravity

Every object has a centre of gravity. When a counterbalance truck is unloaded, its centre of gravity is influenced strongly by the rear counterweight. Adding a load moves the combined centre forward.

When a load is lifted

- The centre of gravity moves forward
- Raising moves it upward
- Forward tilt moves it farther forward
- Turns move force sideways

HIGH LIFT - LOWER MARGIN

The higher the load, the smaller the margin for error. Steering, braking and surface defects have a greater effect.

Combined centre of gravity

Once a load is lifted, truck and load act as one combined unit. The combined centre of gravity changes with load weight, height and size, mast angle, attachment, surface and turning speed. Professional operators continually anticipate where it is moving.

Attachments Change Stability

Specialist attachments add weight, alter the truck's effective load centre and may move the load farther from the mast. This can reduce the capacity available at the forks or attachment face.

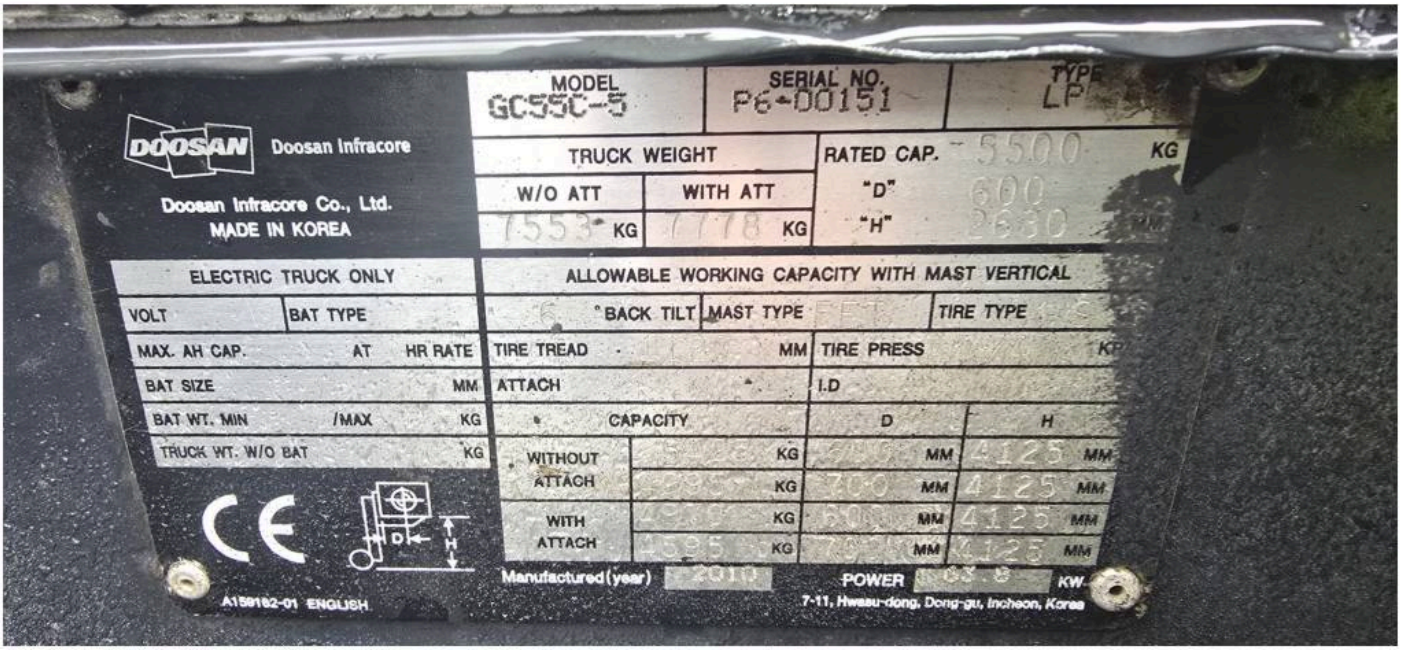
Before using an attachment

- Confirm compatibility
- Check secure mounting
- Read the amended capacity plate
- Inspect hydraulic connections
- Understand the changed load centre
- Complete specific and familiarisation training

PAPER ROLL CLAMP EXAMPLE

The clamp, the roll diameter and the position of the roll all influence the combined centre of gravity. Capacity must come from the truck and attachment data plate - never from guesswork.

Rated Capacity



Every forklift has a rated capacity shown on its capacity plate. A statement such as '2500 kg at 500 mm load centre' applies only under the conditions stated on that plate.

Capacity depends on

- Correct attachment
- Specified load centre
- Lift height shown
- Mast position
- Approved forks
- Truck configuration

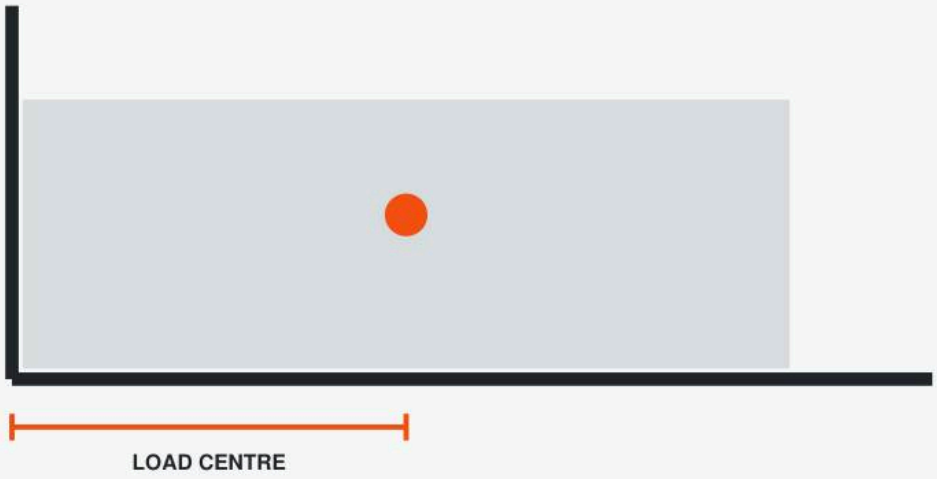
IMPORTANT

A 2500 kg rating does not mean the truck can lift 2500 kg in every situation. Read the actual plate fitted to the truck and seek advice if the load or configuration differs.

OPERATOR CHECK

The plate must be present, legible and understood. Never estimate capacity from truck size or appearance.

Understanding Load Centres



The load centre is the horizontal distance from the fork face to the load's centre of gravity. A common nominal load centre is 500 mm, but the correct value is the one shown on the truck's capacity plate.

As load centre increases

- Stability decreases
- Available capacity may decrease
- Forward-overturn risk increases
- The load applies greater leverage

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE ONLY

A truck rated at 2500 kg at 500 mm may have a lower capacity at 700 mm. The exact reduced capacity must be obtained from the manufacturer-approved capacity information; it must not be calculated or guessed by the operator.

Why Forklifts Overturn

Forward overturns

- Load too heavy
- Load centre too large
- Mast tilted forward
- Sudden braking
- Raised-load travel
- Incorrect ramp travel

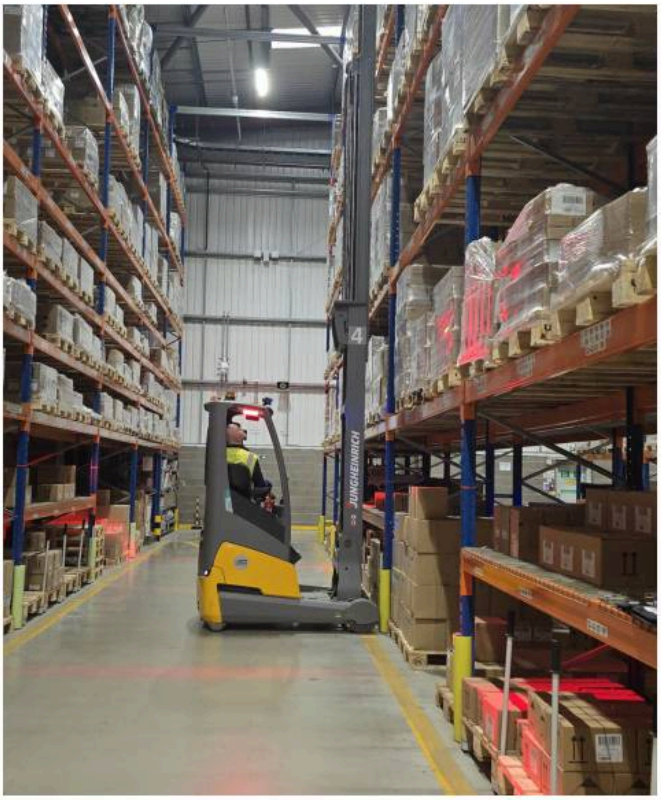
Sideways overturns

- Turning too quickly
- Driving across slopes
- Uneven ground
- Kerbs and potholes
- Elevated forks
- Sudden steering

LONG AND AWKWARD LOADS

Long loads and specialist lifting arrangements can extend beyond normal truck dimensions and alter capacity, visibility and manoeuvring space. Plan the route and use trained assistance where required.

Speed and Dynamic Forces



When a truck turns, the load tends to continue in its original direction. The faster or sharper the turn, the greater the sideways force acting on the combined unit.

Reduce speed before the turn

Braking, accelerating, steering, tilting, lifting and lowering all create dynamic forces. Smooth operators keep those forces controlled; sudden movements create sudden changes in stability.

SMOOTH OPERATORS ARE SAFE OPERATORS

Plan early, look ahead and make one controlled movement at a time. Never accelerate through a turn or steer sharply with an elevated load.

Ground conditions matter

- Wet or contaminated surfaces
- Uneven floors
- Potholes and kerbs
- Loose materials
- Dock edges
- Changes in level

Travelling Safely

Travelling with a load

- Carry the load low
- Use slight rearward mast tilt where appropriate
- Keep the load just clear of the floor
- Travel smoothly
- Reduce speed before turning
- Maintain a clear view

A typical training reference is approximately 150-200 mm above the surface, subject to the truck, load and site conditions. Never travel with a load raised unnecessarily.

Travelling without a load

Keep forks low, use the appropriate mast position and avoid excessive speed. An unloaded forklift can overturn: the rear counterweight still creates a high, concentrated mass and the truck remains sensitive to turns, slopes and surface defects.

Stacking and Slopes

Safe stacking sequence

- Approach squarely
- Stop
- Raise the load
- Position accurately
- Level the forks
- Move forward slowly
- Lower carefully
- Withdraw slowly
- Tilt back once clear

ACCURACY BEFORE SPEED

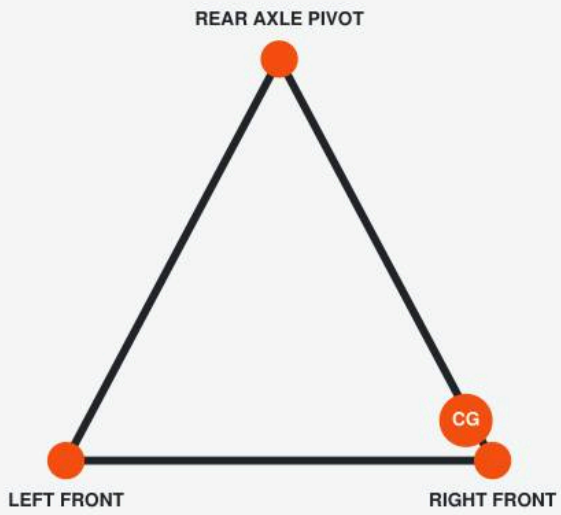
Never rush a stacking operation. Confirm clearance, pallet condition, racking location and load stability before placing or retrieving.

Working on slopes

Avoid slopes wherever possible. If travel is necessary, follow the truck manufacturer's instructions and the site's safe system of work.

- Loaded truck: keep the load facing uphill
- Unloaded truck: forks generally face downhill
- Never turn on a slope
- Never stack on an incline
- Maintain extra stopping distance

If a Forklift Begins to Tip



Never attempt to jump clear

Remain inside the protective structure. Many fatal and serious injuries occur when operators try to jump and are trapped by the overhead guard or truck.

- Keep the seat belt fastened
- Stay seated
- Hold the steering wheel firmly
- Brace your feet
- Lean away from the direction of tip

REAL WORKPLACE LESSON

An operator turned while carrying a raised load of approximately 1.8 tonnes. The load shifted, the combined centre of gravity moved outside the triangle and the truck overturned. Lowering the load before travel would likely have prevented the incident.

Prevent the event - do not rely on recovery

The protective response is a last resort. Safe speed, low travel position, correct capacity assessment and smooth control are the measures that prevent an overturn.

Common Stability Mistakes

Operators must avoid

- Travelling with raised loads
- Turning too sharply
- Carrying oversized loads without assessment
- Ignoring load centres
- Exceeding rated capacity
- Driving across slopes
- Harsh braking
- Accelerating while turning

INSTRUCTOR'S ADVICE

The safest operators are rarely the fastest. They understand that every lift, turn and movement changes the truck balance. Professional operators drive smoothly, think ahead and never ask the forklift to do more than it was designed to do.

A professional operator

- Reads the capacity plate
- Plans the route
- Controls speed before turning
- Keeps loads low in travel
- Uses trained assistance
- Stops when conditions are uncertain

Chapter Summary and Knowledge Check

You should now understand

- Stability Triangle
- Centre of gravity
- Combined centre of gravity
- Load centres
- Rated capacity
- Causes of overturns
- Safe travel techniques
- Safe stacking practices
- Safe operation on slopes

TEST YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What is the Stability Triangle?
2. Why does raising a load reduce stability?
3. What is meant by a 500 mm load centre?
4. Why should loads travel low?
5. What should an operator do if the truck begins to overturn?

NEXT CHAPTER

Safe Load Handling

Assessing loads - Damaged pallets - Off-centre and long loads - Restricted visibility - Travelling - Stacking - Unsafe practices

Safe Load Handling

Moving a load safely is far more than lifting it from one location to another. Professional operators assess the load condition and stability, surrounding hazards, pedestrians, route, ground conditions and destination. Every lift should be planned before the forks enter the pallet.

Before lifting, ask

- Is it stable?
- Is it damaged?
- Is it wrapped correctly?
- Is it within capacity?
- Is weight evenly distributed?
- Will it remain stable during travel?

STOP AND SEEK ADVICE

If any answer is no - or if you are uncertain - do not attempt the lift until the risk has been assessed.

Damaged and Off-Centre Loads

Damaged pallets

Never ignore broken boards, loose nails, missing blocks or split runners. A damaged pallet may collapse when raised. Isolate or rebuild the load using the site's approved method.

Off-centre loads

Loads must be centred between the forks. An off-centre load reduces stability, increases tipping risk and places unequal stress on the forks and carriage.

FORK SPACING

Spread forks as widely as the pallet and load allow, while ensuring both forks are fully supported and equally engaged.

Do not improvise

Do not use packing, straps or makeshift supports unless they are part of an approved handling method. Where a load is damaged or unstable, use competent assistance and suitable equipment.

Long and Awkward Loads

Steel, timber, pipes and structural beams extend beyond normal truck dimensions. They require wide, appropriate fork spacing, slow travel, a planned route and trained assistance where necessary.

Plan for

- Load weight and centre
- Turning radius and tail swing
- Doorways and aisle width
- Pedestrians and exclusion zones
- Banksman communication
- Wind and outdoor conditions

SPECIALIST LIFTING

Crane jibs and other attachments alter rated capacity and stability. Use only where approved, correctly plated and covered by training and a suitable lifting plan.

High Loads and Visibility

High or bulky loads can block forward visibility. The operator must always maintain a clear view of the direction of travel.

When visibility is restricted

- Travel in reverse where safe and permitted
- Use a trained banksman where required
- Keep the route clear
- Use horn at designated hazards
- Maintain safe pedestrian separation
- Stop if communication is lost

LOOK IN THE DIRECTION OF TRAVEL

Reversing is not automatically safe. Check the rear path, maintain observation and account for truck tail swing and nearby pedestrians.

Travelling With Loads

Always

- Carry low
- Use appropriate rearward mast tilt
- Travel smoothly
- Reduce speed before turning
- Maintain a clear view
- Allow safe stopping distance

Never

- Travel with unnecessarily raised forks
- Turn sharply
- Brake harshly
- Carry an unstable load
- Allow riders
- Use a phone while operating

ROUTE ASSESSMENT

Check floor condition, gradients, overhead clearance, doorways, blind corners, loading areas and pedestrian activity before moving.

Safe Stacking

Controlled sequence

- Approach squarely
- Stop
- Raise to the required height
- Level the forks
- Position accurately
- Move forward slowly
- Lower carefully
- Withdraw slowly
- Tilt back when clear

NEVER RUSH STACKING

Accuracy matters more than speed. Confirm the pallet is correctly supported and the load remains stable before withdrawing the forks.

Before placing the load

- Confirm racking location
- Check beam and pallet condition
- Verify load weight and height
- Ensure no person is in the danger area

Chapter Summary

Professional load handling protects

- Operators
- Pedestrians
- Equipment
- Stock
- Buildings and infrastructure

Unsafe practices to prevent

- Lifting unstable loads
- Dragging pallets
- Pushing loads with the forks
- Lifting with one fork
- Lifting people on unapproved equipment
- Travelling with elevated loads

INSTRUCTOR'S ADVICE

Every lift begins with assessment. If the load, route, destination or method is uncertain, stop and seek advice before the forks enter the pallet.

NEXT CHAPTER

Pedestrian Safety

Segregation - Walkways - Blind corners - Horn use - Eye contact - Loading bays - Visitors - Speed limits - Lighting - Warehouse traffic systems

Pedestrian Safety

People and vehicles must not compete for space

Workplace transport incidents can be fatal because pedestrians have little protection against moving forklifts. The most effective control is to keep people and vehicles apart through good site design, clear rules and active supervision.

This chapter covers

- Physical segregation
- Pedestrian walkways
- Crossing points
- Blind corners
- Horn use and eye contact
- Loading bays and reversing
- Visitors and contractors
- Speed and lighting
- Traffic management systems

GH TRAINING TIP

High-visibility clothing helps an operator see a pedestrian, but it does not replace separation, barriers, safe routes or controlled access.

Segregation and Walkways

Wherever reasonably practicable, provide separate pedestrian and vehicle routes. Clearly identify walkways and protect them with barriers, guardrails, kerbs or suitable separation where risk is higher.

A safe walkway should be

- Clearly marked
- Wide enough for expected use
- Free from stored goods and waste
- Protected near loading and reversing areas
- Maintained in good condition
- Supported by safe crossing points

ENTRANCES AND EXITS

Provide additional protection where pedestrians emerge from doors into vehicle areas. Vision panels, barriers and set-back crossing points can prevent people stepping directly into traffic.

Blind Corners and Communication

Restricted visibility increases risk at racking ends, doorways, intersections, stockpiles and around long loads. Operators must slow down, maintain observation and be prepared to stop.

Controls may include

- Convex mirrors
- Stop lines and warning signs
- Physical barriers
- Designated crossing points
- Audible warnings
- Flashing beacons
- Cameras and detection systems
- Trained banksmen

HORN USE

Use the horn at designated hazards and where site rules require it. A horn warns of presence; it does not give the operator right of way.

EYE CONTACT

Do not assume a pedestrian has seen the truck. Where interaction is necessary, obtain clear acknowledgement and stop if communication is uncertain.

Loading Bays and Reversing

Loading and unloading areas bring forklifts, delivery vehicles and pedestrians into a confined space. Site arrangements should minimise reversing and prevent unauthorised access to the operating zone.

Essential controls

- Marked exclusion zones
- Driver waiting areas
- Wheel stops or barriers where suitable
- Clear dock-edge protection
- Agreed loading procedure
- Vehicle immobilisation where required
- Trained signallers where justified
- Stop if the signaller is lost from view

REVERSING RISK

HSE reports that nearly a quarter of workplace-transport deaths involve reversing. Eliminate reversing where possible; where unavoidable, minimise and control it.

Visitors, Contractors and Drivers

Visitors may not understand the site layout, vehicle types, warning systems or local rules. Delivery drivers can be particularly vulnerable when they leave their cab or move around loading areas.

Site induction should explain

- Where to report
- Safe parking
- Pedestrian routes
- Restricted areas
- Crossing points
- Loading and waiting procedure
- Required PPE
- Emergency arrangements

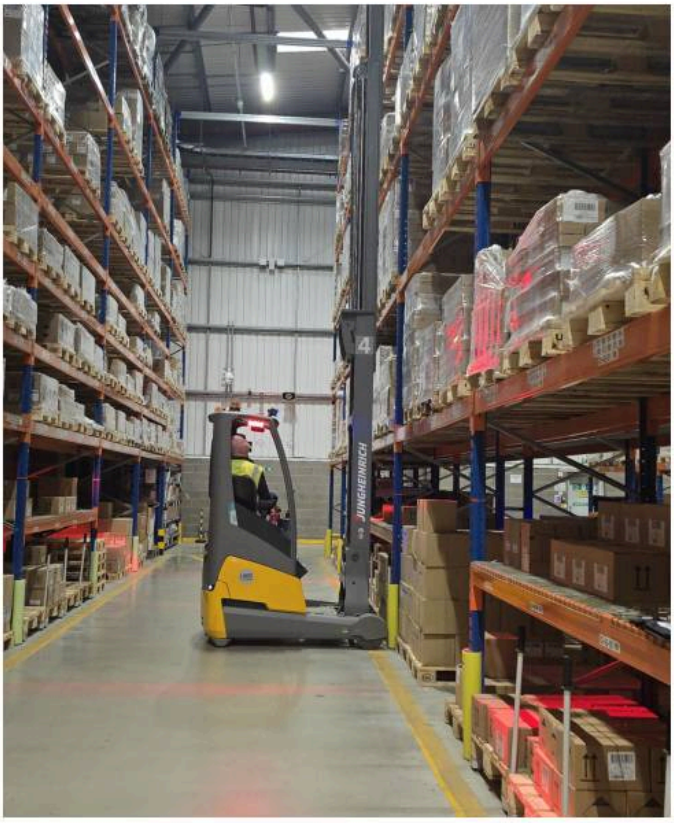
CONTROL ACCESS

Use reception points, signs, barriers and supervision so visitors do not need to guess where they may walk or wait.

DELIVERY COORDINATION

Agree who is responsible for the vehicle, trailer, keys, restraints and communication before loading or unloading begins.

Speed, Lighting and Traffic Systems



Speed control

Set speeds appropriate to the vehicle, visibility, route width, surface, pedestrian activity and stopping distance. Signs alone may be insufficient; supervision and suitable physical or vehicle controls may be needed.

Lighting

Provide adequate lighting at routes, junctions, entrances, pedestrian areas and loading locations. Manage glare, shadows and sudden changes between indoor and outdoor light.

TRAFFIC SYSTEM

One-way routes, separate entrances, protected crossings, signs, markings and controlled parking reduce conflict and the need for reversing.

Review when conditions change

- New racking or machinery
- New vehicles
- Changed shift patterns
- Temporary obstructions
- Seasonal darkness
- New delivery arrangements

Workplace Case Studies

CASE STUDY 1 - SHORTCUT ACROSS A VEHICLE ROUTE

A pedestrian left the marked walkway to save time and entered a reversing area. The driver could not see them. Prevention: barriers at the decision point, maintained walkway access, controlled reversing and active supervision.

CASE STUDY 2 - BLIND RACKING CORNER

A forklift and pedestrian reached a racking-end intersection together. Stored material obscured the mirror and crossing. Prevention: keep sight lines clear, reposition the mirror, slow vehicles, protect the crossing and remove storage from the visibility zone.

CASE STUDY 3 - VISITING DRIVER IN LOADING ZONE

A delivery driver walked behind a forklift to check the trailer while loading continued. Prevention: driver waiting area, agreed key-control procedure, clear handover and suspension of loading whenever the driver leaves the safe zone.

Design the system so one mistake does not become an injury.

Chapter Summary and Site Check

Supervisors should be able to confirm

- Pedestrian and vehicle routes are separated where possible
- Walkways and crossings are clear
- Barriers are secure and correctly positioned
- Blind corners have effective controls
- Speed rules are understood and enforced
- Loading and reversing areas exclude pedestrians
- Visitors receive clear instructions
- Lighting is adequate
- Near misses are reported and reviewed

GUIDANCE BASIS

This chapter reflects HSE workplace-transport guidance, including HSG136, INDG199, pedestrian segregation, reversing and lighting guidance. Site controls must be based on a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

NEXT CHAPTER

Safe Use of Attachments

Paper roll clamps - Drum clamps - Rotators - Fork positioners - Crane jibs - Carpet booms - Personnel cages - Capacity and centre-of-gravity changes

Official guidance: hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport | HSG136 | INDG199

Safe Use of Attachments

An attachment changes the whole lifting system

Attachments allow forklifts to handle rolls, drums, long loads and specialist materials safely. They also change the truck's weight distribution, effective load centre, visibility and available capacity. An approved attachment must be treated as part of the truck - not as an accessory.

This chapter covers

- Approval and compatibility
- Capacity plates
- Inspection and secure mounting
- Hydraulic connections
- Paper roll clamps
- Drum clamps and rotators
- Fork positioners
- Crane jibs
- Carpet booms
- Personnel platforms

GH TRAINING TIP

If the attachment is not shown on approved capacity information for that truck, do not use it until the manufacturer or competent supplier confirms the correct configuration.

Before an Attachment Is Used

The employer must ensure that the truck and attachment are suitable for the intended load, environment and task. Compatibility should be confirmed before the attachment is fitted or work begins.

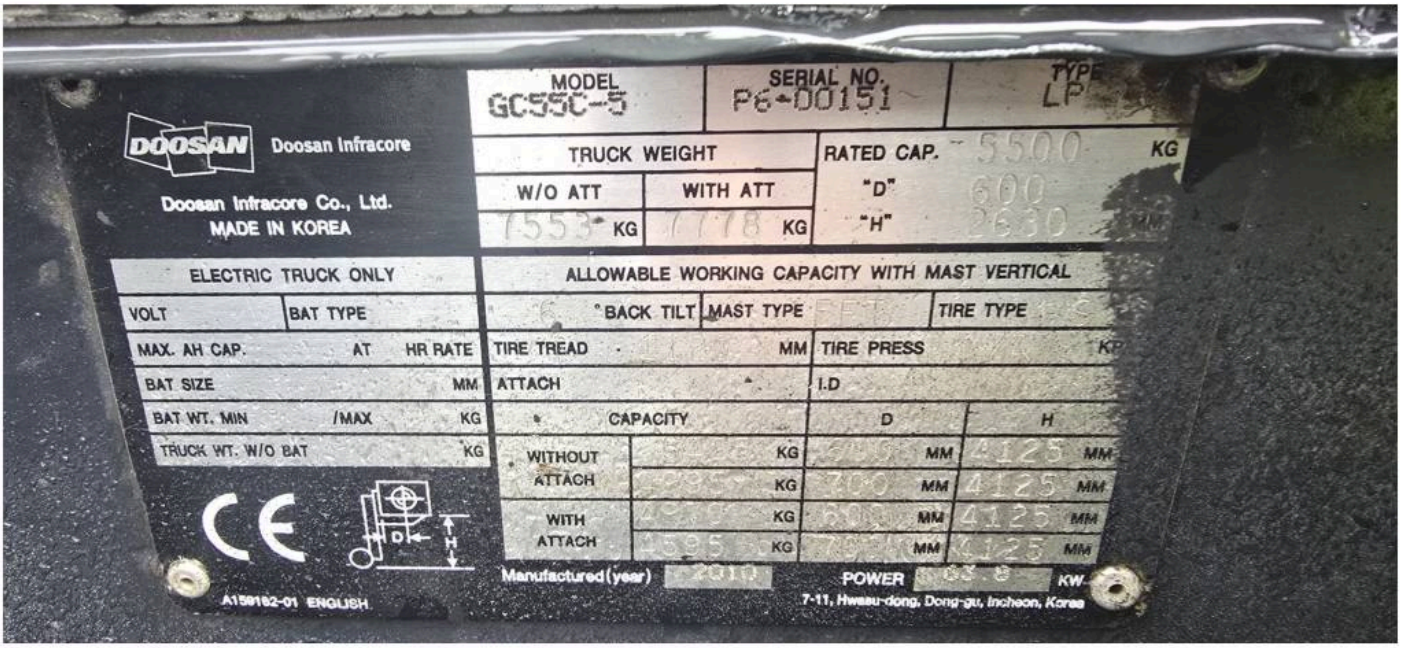
Confirm

- Truck and attachment are compatible
- Mounting class and locking method are correct
- Hydraulic flow and pressure are suitable
- Attachment is within inspection requirements
- Capacity information covers the configuration
- Operator has received specific training
- Load type is suitable for the attachment
- A safe system of work is in place

LEGAL REQUIREMENT

Under PUWER, work equipment must be suitable, maintained and used only by people who have received adequate information, instruction and training. Lifting equipment may also be subject to LOLER.

Capacity and Load Centre



An attachment adds its own weight and often moves the load farther forward. Both effects can reduce the capacity available to lift the load.

Read the amended capacity information

- Truck model and serial details
- Attachment type
- Maximum load
- Specified load centre
- Permitted lift height
- Mast configuration
- Any operating restrictions

NEVER CALCULATE BY GUESSWORK

The original truck rating may no longer apply after an attachment is fitted. Use only the manufacturer-approved plate or capacity information for the actual truck, mast and attachment combination.

LOAD POSITION MATTERS

A correctly weighted load can still overload the truck if its centre of gravity is farther forward than the value stated on the capacity plate.

Pre-Use Attachment Inspection

Inspect the attachment at the start of the shift and whenever it is changed. Follow the manufacturer's instructions and the site's defect-reporting procedure.

Check for

- Secure mounting and locking pins
- Cracks, distortion and damaged welds
- Wear pads, rollers and bearings
- Hoses, fittings and hydraulic leaks
- Damaged clamps, arms, hooks or booms
- Correct guards and load backrest
- Legible markings and capacity data
- Smooth, controlled operation

AFTER FITTING

Cycle every function in a clear area. Confirm correct direction, full movement, hose clearance and secure locking before approaching a load.

STOP FOR DEFECTS

Do not use an attachment with damaged locks, structural cracks, uncontrolled movement or a hydraulic leak. Isolate the equipment and report it.

Hydraulic Connections and Controls

Hydraulically operated attachments can clamp, rotate, position or release a load. Incorrect connections or unintended control movement can cause a sudden release.

Safe practice

- Depressurise before connection where required
- Keep couplings clean
- Check hoses are routed clear of the mast
- Confirm control direction before use
- Use deliberate, progressive movements
- Never place hands near a moving attachment
- Keep people outside the danger area
- Stop if pressure or movement is abnormal

INJECTION INJURY

Never search for a hydraulic leak with your hand. Fluid under pressure can penetrate the skin and requires urgent medical treatment.

Paper Roll Clamps

Paper roll clamps handle large cylindrical loads without pallets. The clamp must be suitable for the roll diameter, weight, surface and orientation.

Operators must consider

- Correct clamp pressure
- Roll diameter and weight
- Arm position and pad contact
- Damage to the roll surface
- Clearance from nearby rolls
- Rotation and mast height
- Visibility around the load
- Manufacturer-approved capacity

CLAMP PRESSURE

Too little pressure can allow the roll to slip. Too much can crush or damage it. Use the approved pressure and handling method for the product.

RELEASE ONLY WHEN SECURE

Do not open the clamp until the roll is fully supported and stable at its destination.

Roll Handling in Practice

High lift operations

Raising a roll moves the combined centre of gravity upward. Keep the mast vertical, use smooth controls and avoid unnecessary travel or steering with the load elevated.

Confined storage areas

Plan the approach and exit. Account for clamp-arm width, rear-end swing and clearance to adjacent rolls. Stop if sight lines or spacing become uncertain.

INSTRUCTOR'S ADVICE

Large rolls can appear slow and predictable, but their mass creates severe consequences if grip is lost. Correct positioning and controlled pressure matter on every lift.

Never

- Clamp a visibly damaged roll without assessment
- Carry the roll unnecessarily high
- Rotate while travelling
- Allow pedestrians inside the operating zone
- Use the clamp as a pushing device

Drum Clamps, Rotators and Fork Positioners

DRUM CLAMPS

Confirm the clamp matches the drum type, material, diameter and weight. Inspect the drum for damage or leakage and establish an exclusion zone before lifting.

ROTATORS

Rotation changes load position and may release loose material. Rotate only at the planned location, with sufficient clearance and nobody exposed below or beside the load.

FORK POSITIONERS

Use the hydraulic control to set fork spacing without leaving the seat. Positioners do not necessarily permit side-loading or clamping; follow the approved use and plate.

SIDE SHIFT

Side shift helps final positioning but moves the load away from the truck centreline. Centre the carriage before travel and observe any capacity restrictions.

Common principles

- Use the correct attachment for the load
- Confirm secure engagement
- Keep movement smooth
- Maintain clear visibility
- Never exceed approved capacity
- Report abnormal movement or damage

Crane Jibs and Suspended Loads

A crane jib converts the forklift into a lifting arrangement with a suspended load. The load can swing, increasing dynamic forces and changing the effective load centre.

The lifting plan should address

- Approved jib position and capacity
- Hook, latch and lifting accessories
- Load weight and centre of gravity
- Competent slinging
- Exclusion zone
- Banksman or signaller communication
- Travel route and ground condition
- Control of swing and tag lines

NEVER SIDE PULL

Keep the lift vertical. Do not drag, tow or pull a suspended load sideways with the jib. Never allow anyone beneath the load.

Carpet Booms and Long Cylindrical Loads

Carpet booms and similar attachments carry long hollow rolls on a single projecting pole. The load centre may be much farther forward than with a standard pallet.

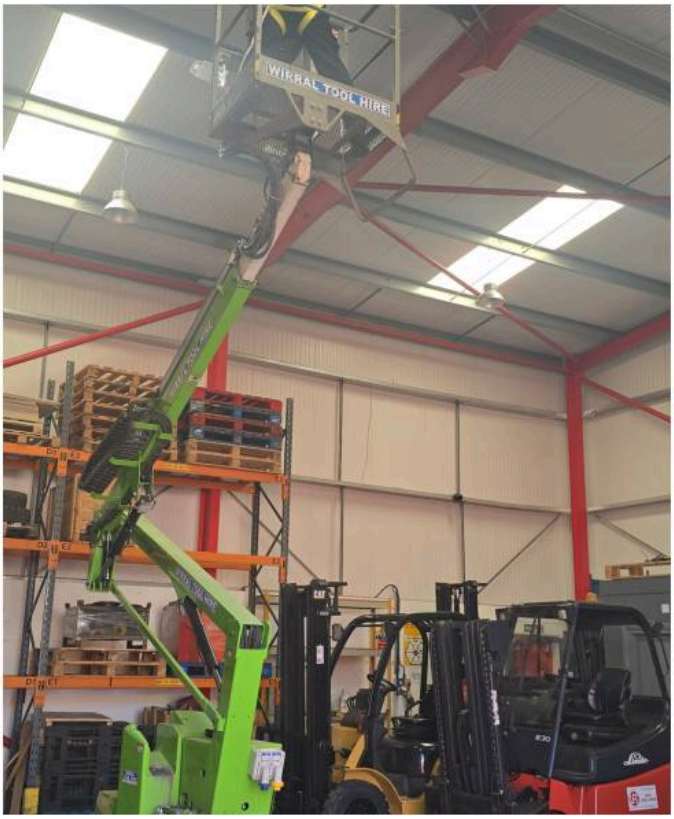
Plan for

- Approved boom and capacity
- Full and central engagement
- Roll condition and internal diameter
- Extended turning envelope
- Door and aisle clearance
- Reduced forward visibility
- Pedestrian exclusion
- Slow, smooth travel

LONG LOAD WARNING

The boom or load can strike people, racking or structures well beyond the normal truck profile. Use a planned route and trained assistance where necessary.

Personnel Platforms



A forklift is not a MEWP

People should normally be raised using purpose-designed access equipment. A forklift-mounted platform may be considered only for exceptional, non-routine tasks where a risk assessment demonstrates that safer purpose-built equipment is not reasonably practicable and the arrangement complies with relevant guidance.

STRICT CONTROLS

Use only a purpose-designed, compatible and securely attached platform under an approved safe system. Never lift a person on bare forks, a pallet or an improvised cage.

Where an approved platform is used

- Follow manufacturer instructions
- Confirm capacity and secure attachment
- Provide effective communication
- Keep the truck stationary and controlled
- Protect against trapping and falls
- Establish emergency lowering arrangements
- Exclude other traffic
- Use competent operators and occupants

Chapter Summary and Attachment Check

Before every attachment task, confirm

- The attachment is approved for the truck
- Capacity information matches the configuration
- Mounting and locking devices are secure
- Hoses and controls are serviceable
- The operator is trained and familiarised
- The load suits the attachment
- The route and destination are suitable
- Pedestrians are excluded
- The lifting method is planned
- Defects have been reported and resolved

KEY MESSAGE

An attachment expands what a forklift can do, but it also changes what the forklift can safely lift. Compatibility, capacity, inspection, training and planning must all be confirmed before use.

NEXT CHAPTER

Working at Height

MEWPs - Scissor lifts - Boom lifts - Harnesses - Emergency lowering - Ground conditions - Pre-use inspections - Rescue planning

Guidance basis: PUWER 1998 | LOLER 1998 | HSE PM28 | Manufacturer instructions

Working at Height

Falls from height can cause life-changing or fatal injury. Work must be avoided where possible and, where it cannot be avoided, properly planned, risk assessed, supervised and completed by competent people using suitable equipment.

The control hierarchy

- Avoid work at height where possible
- Prevent falls using suitable collective protection
- Minimise distance and consequences if a fall occurs
- Choose equipment for the task and environment
- Plan emergencies and rescue
- Inspect and maintain equipment

INSTRUCTOR TIP

Choose the safest access method before choosing the person who will operate it. A MEWP is not automatically suitable for every surface, location or task.

MEWPs and Pre-Use Checks

Mobile elevating work platforms include scissor lifts and boom lifts. The operator must understand the machine type, controls, operating envelope, ground requirements and emergency systems.

Before use

- Read the manufacturer instructions
- Complete a documented pre-use check
- Inspect tyres, wheels and structure
- Test controls and emergency lowering
- Check guardrails and entry gate
- Confirm safe working load
- Assess overhead and trapping hazards
- Establish an exclusion zone

INSTRUCTOR TIP

Never use a MEWP with a defective gate, damaged guardrail, uncontrolled movement or failed emergency-lowering system.

Boom Lifts, Harnesses and Rescue

Boom-type MEWPs can create catapult and trapping risks. Harness and restraint requirements must follow the risk assessment, manufacturer instructions and recognised industry guidance.

Plan for

- Correct anchor point and lanyard
- Harness inspection and adjustment
- Entrapment prevention
- Overhead obstructions
- Wind and weather limits
- Ground and outrigger condition
- Emergency lowering from ground controls
- A practised rescue procedure

INSTRUCTOR TIP

Calling the emergency services is not, by itself, a rescue plan. People on site must know how to lower the platform and summon assistance safely.

Working at Height Summary

Employer assurance check

- Task can not reasonably be completed from ground level
- Correct access equipment has been selected
- Operators are trained and authorised
- Ground and environmental conditions are suitable
- Pre-use checks are complete
- Fall protection is correct
- Exclusion zones are controlled
- Emergency and rescue arrangements are understood

KEY MESSAGE

Plan the task, select the right equipment, prevent falls and make sure rescue arrangements work before anyone leaves the ground.

NEXT CHAPTER

Refresher Training

Monitoring - Reassessment - Bad habits - New equipment - Incidents and near misses - Risk-based training intervals

Refresher Training

Experience does not guarantee continued competence. Repetition can strengthen good habits, but it can also normalise shortcuts, complacency and unsafe local practices.

Refresher training helps operators

- Maintain safe driving habits
- Correct unsafe techniques
- Reassess knowledge and skill
- Learn new equipment or attachments
- Adapt to changed layouts and loads
- Rebuild confidence after absence

INSTRUCTOR TIP

A certificate date is only one trigger. Day-to-day observation is the employer's earliest warning that an operator needs support.

When Refresher Training Is Needed

HSE does not prescribe one fixed refresher interval. Employers should use monitoring and assessment, and may choose a planned cycle such as three to five years while still acting sooner when risk indicates.

Arrange reassessment when an operator

- Has not used the truck for some time
- Uses equipment only occasionally
- Develops unsafe working practices
- Has an accident or near miss
- Changes truck type or attachment
- Moves to a different environment
- Receives repeated safety observations
- Requests further support

INSTRUCTOR TIP

Refresher training should address identified weaknesses and include enough practical time to demonstrate restored competence. Very short tick-box sessions are unlikely to be effective.

Refresher Training Record

OPERATOR

DEPARTMENT / SITE

TRUCK CATEGORIES AND ATTACHMENTS

REASON FOR REFRESHER

ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

TRAINING COMPLETED

FURTHER ACTION AND SUPERVISION

INSTRUCTOR / ASSESSOR

REVIEW DATE

RECORD THE DECISION

Keep the assessment, training content, result, authorisation and any follow-up action with the operator training record.

Familiarisation Training

Basic training teaches core skills. Specific job and familiarisation training connect those skills to the actual truck, loads, routes and risks in the workplace. Familiarisation must take place on the job under close supervision.

The operator must learn

- Site traffic rules
- Truck controls and safety systems
- Normal loads and pallets
- Racking and stacking locations
- Pedestrian routes
- Slopes, doors and loading bays
- Battery or fuel arrangements
- Local emergency procedures

INSTRUCTOR TIP

Do not authorise independent operation simply because a new employee presents a certificate. Verify competence and complete site familiarisation first.

Truck and Task Familiarisation

Controls, dimensions, steering, braking, visibility and capacity can differ between apparently similar trucks. Attachments and unusual loads require additional training.

Practical familiarisation should include

- Pre-use inspection
- Starting and shutdown
- Control layout and warning systems
- Capacity plate interpretation
- Typical load handling
- Parking and charging or refuelling
- Restricted areas and clearances
- Defect and incident reporting

INSTRUCTOR TIP

Conversion training is required where the differences in truck or attachment introduce new operating risks. Familiarity must never be assumed.

Routes, Racking and Pedestrians

Walk the workplace before driving it. Identify one-way systems, crossings, blind corners, exclusion zones, speed controls and locations where pedestrians or other vehicles may appear.

The supervised route should cover

- Normal operating aisles
- Pedestrian crossings
- Loading and unloading points
- Racking heights and clearances
- Slopes and surface changes
- Doors and overhead restrictions
- Battery charging or LPG areas
- Emergency exits and fire routes

INSTRUCTOR TIP

Repeat the route during the conditions the operator will actually encounter, including low light, busy shifts or outdoor work where relevant.

Familiarisation Checklist

OPERATOR AND EMPLOYEE NUMBER

TRUCK MAKE / MODEL / CATEGORY

ATTACHMENTS AUTHORISED

PRE-USE CHECK DEMONSTRATED

SITE ROUTES AND PEDESTRIAN CONTROLS

LOADS AND STACKING TASKS DEMONSTRATED

CHARGING / REFUELLING PROCEDURE

EMERGENCY AND DEFECT PROCEDURE

SUPERVISED PRACTICE COMPLETED

AUTHORISED BY / DATE

AUTHORISATION

The employer should clearly define which trucks, attachments, tasks and areas the operator is authorised to use.

Supervising Forklift Operators

Supervisors create the conditions in which safe behaviour either succeeds or fails. They need enough knowledge to recognise unsafe practice, intervene effectively and maintain workplace standards.

Supervisors should monitor

- Pre-use inspections
- Seat-belt use
- Speed and observation
- Load height during travel
- Pedestrian separation
- Stacking and racking contact
- Parking and key control
- Use of phones and distractions

INSTRUCTOR TIP

Correct unsafe behaviour immediately, then identify why it occurred. Pressure, layout, equipment condition and unclear procedures can all influence operator decisions.

Observation, Coaching and Near Misses

Routine observation should be planned, fair and recorded. Coaching is most effective when it explains the risk, confirms the correct method and checks that the operator can apply it.

A good intervention

- Stops immediate danger
- States the behaviour observed
- Explains the potential consequence
- Asks for the operator perspective
- Agrees the correct method
- Checks equipment and system factors
- Records action where appropriate
- Follows up

INSTRUCTOR TIP

Near misses are free warnings. Review them promptly and share the learning without creating a culture that discourages reporting.

Supervisor Observation Sheet

OPERATOR / TRUCK / LOCATION

TASK OBSERVED

SAFE BEHAVIOURS SEEN

UNSAFE BEHAVIOURS OR CONDITIONS

IMMEDIATE ACTION TAKEN

OPERATOR COMMENTS

COACHING OR RETRAINING REQUIRED

EQUIPMENT / SITE ACTION

SUPERVISOR / DATE

FOLLOW-UP DATE

Common Forklift Accidents

Most workplace transport incidents have more than one cause. Training, supervision, layout, maintenance, workload and local culture often combine. Investigations should look beyond the operator's final action.

Recurring accident types

- Pedestrian struck by truck
- Forklift overturn
- Falling or collapsed load
- Racking impact
- Dock-edge fall
- Crushed operator or pedestrian
- Attachment or suspended-load failure
- Collision at a blind corner

INSTRUCTOR TIP

Ask what allowed the event to happen and what barrier should have stopped it. Blame alone does not prevent recurrence.

Case Studies: Load and Stability

FALLING LOAD

A damaged pallet was lifted without assessment. A board failed and cartons fell into a pedestrian route. Prevent with load inspection, exclusion, correct fork spacing and a clear damaged-load procedure.

FORKLIFT OVERTURN

An operator turned sharply with an elevated load. The combined centre of gravity moved outside the stability triangle. Prevent with low travel position, controlled speed, supervision and enforced site rules.

PAPER ROLL COLLAPSE

A roll was released before it was fully supported. It moved into the operating area. Prevent with correct clamp pressure, stable placement, exclusion and attachment-specific training.

Case Studies: People and Infrastructure

PEDESTRIAN STRIKE

A pedestrian crossed behind a reversing truck outside the marked walkway. Prevent by reducing reversing, controlling access, providing protected crossings and supervising both driver and pedestrian behaviour.

DOCK EDGE

A truck entered a trailer before it was secured and the vehicle moved. Prevent through an agreed loading procedure, restraint or key control, communication and dock protection.

RACKING IMPACT

A truck clipped an upright while turning with a bulky load. The damage was not reported. Prevent through route assessment, clearance, speed control, impact reporting and competent racking inspection.

Accident Investigation

Secure, learn and improve

- Make the area safe and provide first aid
- Preserve evidence where possible
- Identify witnesses
- Record truck, load and site conditions
- Check training and authorisation
- Review inspection and maintenance records
- Identify immediate and underlying causes
- Assign corrective actions and owners
- Share relevant learning
- Verify actions are effective

DO NOT DISTURB EVIDENCE UNNECESSARILY

Photographs, CCTV, capacity plates, control settings, floor marks and damaged components may help establish what occurred.

Legislation Made Simple

The practical meaning

UK health and safety law is based on managing risk. Employers must provide safe equipment, safe systems, competent people, information, training and supervision. The following summary is general guidance, not legal advice.

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK ETC. ACT 1974

The foundation of workplace health and safety duties. Employers must protect employees and others affected by the undertaking, so far as is reasonably practicable.

MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS 1999

Require suitable and sufficient risk assessment, effective arrangements, cooperation, coordination and appropriate information and training.

PRACTICAL TEST

Can the employer show that the risk was identified, suitable controls were selected, people understood them and the controls were maintained?

PUWER and LOLER

PUWER 1998

Work equipment must be suitable, maintained, inspected where necessary and used by people who have received adequate information, instruction and training. Risks from dangerous parts, controls and stability must be managed.

LOLER 1998

Lifting equipment must be strong and stable, suitably marked and thoroughly examined where required. Lifting operations must be properly planned by a competent person, appropriately supervised and carried out safely.

MAINTENANCE IS NOT EXAMINATION

Routine servicing under PUWER and thorough examination under LOLER serve different purposes. One should not be assumed to replace the other.

Work at Height, PPE and COSHH

WORK AT HEIGHT REGULATIONS 2005

Avoid work at height where possible. Where it is necessary, properly plan and supervise it, use competent people and suitable inspected equipment, and manage emergencies and rescue.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AT WORK REGULATIONS

Where risk remains after other controls, provide suitable PPE, ensure compatibility, maintain it, give information and training, and make sure it is used correctly.

COSHH 2002

Assess and control exposure to hazardous substances such as battery electrolyte, LPG, fuels, cleaning products, fumes and hydraulic fluids. Provide suitable procedures and emergency arrangements.

Legal Compliance Checklist

- Current risk assessments
- Written traffic management arrangements
- Operator training and authorisation
- Supervisor competence
- Pre-use inspections
- Planned maintenance
- LOLER thorough-examination reports
- Defect and repair records
- Attachment capacity information
- Work-at-height planning
- PPE assessment and issue
- Emergency procedures

KEEP GUIDANCE CURRENT

Legislation and official guidance can change. Check current HSE and GOV.UK sources and obtain competent advice for unusual or high-risk operations.

OFFICIAL SOURCES

hse.gov.uk

Lift-truck training: INDG462 and L117 | Workplace transport: HSG136 | PUWER | LOLER | Work at Height guidance

Record Keeping

Good records demonstrate control, support maintenance and training decisions, and help identify recurring defects or unsafe trends. Records should be accurate, accessible and retained according to legal and organisational requirements.

Core records

- Daily inspection sheets
- Defect and repair reports
- Maintenance history
- LOLER reports
- Training and assessment records
- Operator authorisations
- Risk assessments and lift plans
- Near misses and investigations

INSTRUCTOR TIP

A signature is useful only when the underlying check, assessment or action genuinely occurred. Audit the quality of records, not just their presence.

Training and Equipment Records

OPERATOR FILE

Identity, basic training, specific job training, familiarisation, truck categories, attachments, assessments, refresher activity, restrictions and current authorisation.

TRUCK FILE

Identification, manuals, capacity plates, daily checks, defects, repairs, servicing, inspections, thorough examinations, attachment compatibility and modifications.

MANAGEMENT RECORDS

Risk assessments, traffic plans, toolbox talks, supervisor observations, near misses, accident investigations, action logs and audit results.

Training Matrix

OPERATOR	TRUCK / ATTACHMENT	BASIC	FAMILIARISATION	REVIEW	STATUS

MATRIX CONTROL

Use the matrix to identify expired reviews, missing familiarisation, unauthorised attachments and competence gaps before allocating work.

Daily Inspection and Defect Report

TRUCK ID / MAKE / MODEL _____

DATE / SHIFT / OPERATOR _____

- Tyres and wheels
- Forks and locking pins
- Mast, chains and rollers
- Hydraulic hoses and leaks
- Overhead guard and body
- Seat and seat belt
- Horn, lights and alarms
- Brakes and steering
- Battery / LPG / fuel
- Capacity plate and decals

DEFECT DETAILS

ACTION TAKEN / OUT OF SERVICE TAG NUMBER

OPERATOR SIGNATURE

SUPERVISOR / ENGINEER

RETURN-TO-SERVICE AUTHORISATION

Near Miss and Accident Report

DATE / TIME / LOCATION

PEOPLE AND EQUIPMENT INVOLVED

WHAT HAPPENED

IMMEDIATE ACTION

INJURY OR DAMAGE

WITNESSES / CCTV / PHOTOGRAPHS

IMMEDIATE CAUSES

UNDERLYING CAUSES

CORRECTIVE ACTIONS / OWNERS

REVIEW AND CLOSE-OUT

Forklift Safety Audit

- Traffic routes segregated
- Walkways and crossings clear
- Speed controls effective
- Blind corners controlled
- Loading bays managed
- Truck inspections completed
- Defects closed promptly
- Training records current
- Familiarisation complete
- Supervisor observations recorded
- Attachments approved and plated
- LOLER reports current
- Charging / fuel areas controlled
- Emergency arrangements tested

FINDINGS AND EVIDENCE

ACTION PLAN

AUDITOR / DATE

REVIEW DATE

Operator Declaration and Authorisation

I confirm that I have received the training and familiarisation recorded below, understand the site rules and operating restrictions, and will report defects, incidents and changes affecting safe operation.

OPERATOR NAME / EMPLOYEE NUMBER

TRUCK CATEGORIES

ATTACHMENTS

SITES / DEPARTMENTS

RESTRICTIONS

BASIC TRAINING REFERENCE

FAMILIARISATION COMPLETED BY

OPERATOR SIGNATURE / DATE

MANAGER AUTHORISATION / REVIEW DATE

EMPLOYER CONTROL

Authorisation should be reviewed after changes in equipment, task, health, performance or workplace conditions.

About GH Training

AITT ACCREDITED COURSES

GH Training was established to deliver practical workplace-transport training that makes a genuine difference. Courses are tailored to the customer's equipment, loads, site and operating risks, combining recognised standards with real industrial experience.

Training includes

- Counterbalance and reach trucks
- Warehouse and specialist trucks
- MEWPs and working at height
- Attachments and familiarisation
- Refresher and experienced operators
- Supervisor awareness

BUILD A SAFER WORKPLACE

For professional on-site training, operator assessment, familiarisation and practical safety support, contact GH Training.

GH TRAINING

Professional training that makes a difference

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Publication Notice

This handbook has been produced by GH Training to provide practical guidance on forklift safety, operator competence and employer responsibilities.

GUIDANCE, NOT LEGAL ADVICE

Every effort has been made to ensure the information contained within this publication is accurate at the time of publication. However, it is intended as guidance only and should not be regarded as legal advice.

Employer responsibility

Employers remain responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable health and safety legislation, including:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 [1]
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 [2]
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 [3]
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 [4]

USE CURRENT OFFICIAL GUIDANCE

Readers should consult the latest legislation and official guidance published by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), as laws and guidance may change over time.

The practical advice contained within this handbook is based on recognised industry best practice and the professional experience of GH Training. It is intended to complement—not replace—site-specific risk assessments, manufacturer guidance and competent health and safety advice.

References & Further Reading

UK LEGISLATION AND HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE GUIDANCE

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

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

[2] Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)

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

[3] Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER)

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

[4] Management of Health and Safety at Work 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

[10] Work at Height Regulations 2005

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/735/contents/made

CITATION NOTE

Bracketed reference numbers throughout this guide correspond to the numbered sources above. Always consult the current online version of legislation and HSE guidance.

Official sources accessed for Edition 2026. Web addresses were checked before publication.