



053: Lift Trucks

Driving

If using a gas-powered truck indoors, ensure adequate ventilation.

Check the gas reserve before operating a gas-powered truck. You don't want to run out of gas in the middle of an operation.

Check the oil before using a gas-powered lift truck for the first time on a shift. If the oil is low, you will burn up the engine. Low oil could indicate a leak—which creates a slipping hazard.

Check the battery before using an electric lift for the first time on a shift, and monitor the gauge if it is so equipped. A low battery will burn up the motor, but a battery that fails during use can result in a truck stuck on a railroad track, traffic aisle, or ramp. It can also result in a dropped load.

Follow site speed limits and other traffic regulations.

Reduce speed for turns, especially if you are carrying a load.

Maintain safe following distances behind pedestrians and other vehicles. Keep in mind that a sudden stop could cause you dump a load.

Yield the right of way to pedestrians and motor vehicles.

Do not pass pedestrians or other vehicles unless you can see clearly ahead of them.

Slow down and sound your horn at cross aisles or when emerging from behind a wall or other visual obstacle.

If you cannot see over the load and the fork or other lifting accessory is in front, drive backwards.

Always look in the direction you are going, before moving the lift truck.

Cross railroad tracks diagonally to avoid getting the wheels stuck on the tracks.

Tilt the load back before tackling a grade. If the grade is more than 10%, you must drive with the load facing the grade.

If you are driving an electric lift truck, accelerate before getting to an upward grade. If the truck seems like it's not going to make it, slowly back down the ramp. Otherwise, you risk burning up the motor, depleting the battery, or dumping the load.

Before taking a load over bridge plates, ensure the plates can handle the combined weight of the truck, driver, and load.

When driving onto a tractor-trailer or other movable platform, ensure the trailer is locked in place. If it moves while you are crossing, you could dump the lift truck.

Lifting

Don't attempt to lift a load so heavy that it exceeds or may exceed the lifting capacity of the truck.

Ensure the load-engaging means matches the load. In most cases, the lift truck will have forks—but many other lifting attachments are available. Barrels, for example, can be lifted with special attachments and no pallet.

Discussion leader duties for this session:

At your option, obtain a lift truck and demonstrate its use during the discussion session.

What this Safety Talk covers:

Operating a lift truck safely.

Discussion notes :

