

Proper Forklift Operating Techniques

A forklift is the most useful tool on our docks. At the same time, a forklift is the most destructive tool on our docks if not operated properly.

Proper Operating Techniques

Some simple safety rules before operating the forklift

- Before getting on a forklift, check for leaks (transmission fluid, hydraulic fluid, etc.) Leaks can result in damage to freight, equipment and most important, injury to yourself or others because of the forklift not operating properly from lack of fluids or slipping on dock in a puddle of fluids.
- Forklifts without cages are not to be driven outside of the terminal
- Use three points of contact rule when getting on and off forklift. Same rule as getting in and out of a tractor.
- Do not hang legs or extend arms outside of forklift body and cage, to avoid serious injury.
- Travel SLOWLY over dock plates when moving IN and OUT of trailers

Operating the forklift

- **Number One rule is to ALWAYS know where the blades are**
- When Unloading a pallet – go ½ way into pallet, lift and pull back from other freight – then go all the way into pallet & lift to unload
- When Loading a pallet – drop pallet 1 to 2 feet away from other freight already loaded – back out of pallet ½ way, lift slightly and gently snug up to other freight loaded.
- Travel slowly over dock plates when moving IN and OUT of trailer
- Use Side shifter, if forklift is equipped, to position a pallet for unloading or loading to prevent rubbing against other freight and trailer walls.
- Be aware of your surroundings at ALL times to prevent damage and personal injury
- Travel across the dock BACKWARDS when handling a tall pallet of freight
- Do NOT spin wheels and keep speed down on dock. *AVOID INJURY and DAMAGE to freight
- When traveling across dock without load on fork blades, keep blades 2 to 3 inches off floor. Do Not travel with fork blades raised.

Common Courtesy: Keep forklifts CLEAN. Put away tools and straps when done using. Park forklifts in designated area.