



## Safety Bulletin

### Forklift Safety Rules

#### What are the keys to forklift safety?

Safety and health need to be top of mind when it comes to operating a forklift, and it's vital to make sure your operators are safely utilizing the forklifts in your fleet. The information provided below should be treated as "general" guidance. Always refer to the forklift operator's manual for specific safe operating instructions.

#### BEFORE YOU START

**Certification.** Forklift safety begins with qualified operators. Everyone who drives a forklift needs to be licensed to operate the equipment. Qualified drivers will make better decisions which keeps them, and others, safe.

**Dress appropriately.** Operating a forklift requires protective gear to maintain driver safety. Make sure all drivers are aware of the requirements, such as protective clothing like hard hats, steel-toed shoes and a safety vest. Always check hands and feet for grease or oil before entering.

**Use a checklist.** Before beginning a shift, drivers should ensure that equipment is fully functional by running through a pre-shift checklist. A good option is to install the [MLA FleetControl](#) forklift fleet management system that allows the checklist to be completed and recorded online.

#### STARTUP

**Use available safety features.** When entering a forklift, operators should always make use of the available steps and hand grabs to properly situate themselves. Use the three-point method: grab the assist grip with your left hand, the hip restraint with your right hand and step up into the truck. Once inside the forklift, the operator should ensure all controls are comfortably within reach and make any necessary adjustments to the mirrors, so they have a full range of view before starting the truck. Operators must always use the forklift's operator seat belt or restraint system.

#### WHEN YOU'RE UP AND RUNNING

**Stay within the compartment.** Drivers should always stay inside the operator compartment, and never reach into moving parts of the truck.

**Pay attention to surroundings.** Operators need to pay close attention to all work site rules and guidelines, and be highly aware of all posted signs, particularly for speed, maximum permitted loads and clearance heights and pay close attention for wet or uneven terrain.

**Move cautiously.** Drivers should always pay close attention to posted speed limits and obey them. Stopping or changing direction should be done in slow, controlled movements. When traveling, keep the forks in a low position and sound the horn and slow down when approaching pedestrian walkways, intersections, blind corners, door and ramp openings, other vehicles and when backing up.

**Manage the load correctly.** Operators should ensure that each load is stable and secure, with the load tilted back against the forks before moving. Drivers need to be aware of their forklift's capacity to ensure that they never overload it, which may tip the truck over or cause the operator to lose control.

**Keep others clear of the mast.** When the mast is elevated operators must make certain that no one walks under the mast or stands near the truck.

**Refuel and recharge smartly.** When a forklift is recharging or refuelling, make sure that the forklift is turned off and in the designated recharging or refuelling location where no open flames or sparks are permitted.

Have a question about forklift safety rules? Please contact MLA on 1300 000 652 or [www.mlaholdings.com.au](http://www.mlaholdings.com.au). Information for this article was sourced from [www.mcfa.com](http://www.mcfa.com).



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