



Forklift and Pedestrian Safety

Vehicle Safety Reference Guide

A medium-sized forklift weighs about the same as an average dump truck and can cause just as much damage. Pallet jacks and carts may weigh less, but they can still cause severe injuries if operated carelessly. Every employee, whether a driver or a pedestrian, has responsibilities that prevent serious incidents.

KEY RULES	
The 2-Foot Rule	Never get closer than 2 feet to any moving vehicle. Even if it is parked, wait for operator shutdown.
Pre-Op Checklist	Drivers must complete a pre-operational inspection before every shift. Do not operate with malfunctioning safety devices.
Seatbelt Required	Always wear a seatbelt when operating any vehicle equipped with one.
Blind Corners	Stop completely and sound your horn at all blind corners and stop signs. Assume someone is there.

FOR ALL PEDESTRIANS	
	Never get closer than 2 feet to a vehicle in operation, even if it appears parked.
	Look both ways before entering any vehicle aisle. Stay alert in aisles shared with vehicle traffic.
	Remind drivers to completely shut down the vehicle before engaging in any conversation.
	Keep all aisles clear. Objects in aisles create obstacles and pinch points.
	Do not operate any vehicle unless you are trained, authorized, and licensed to do so.
	Do not drive up to anyone standing in front of a bench or other fixed object.



FOR VEHICLE OPERATORS

Before Every Shift

- Complete your pre-operational checklist before operating the vehicle.
- Do not operate the vehicle if any safety device is malfunctioning or missing.
- Check horn, lights, brakes, steering, and forks or attachment before departure.

While Operating

- Drive slowly. Speed causes the majority of serious forklift incidents.
- Stop and sound your horn at all blind corners and posted stop signs.
- Watch your hands and feet. Keep them inside the safety envelope of the vehicle at all times.
- Always wear your seatbelt if the vehicle is equipped with one.
- Maintain 3 points of contact when entering and exiting the vehicle.
- Do not drive up to a person standing in front of a fixed object.

Assume the driver cannot see you. The 2-foot rule protects your life.

FORKLIFT AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY CHECKLIST

Review before every shift in vehicle-shared areas.

- ☐ I will maintain the 2-foot rule around all moving vehicles
- ☐ I will look both ways before entering any vehicle aisle
- ☐ All aisles in my area are clear of obstacles and debris
- ☐ I will not operate any vehicle without proper training and authorization
- ☐ Driver: pre-operational checklist completed before operating
- ☐ Driver: seatbelt fastened before moving the vehicle
- ☐ Driver: horn sounded at all blind corners and intersections
- ☐ Driver: vehicle fully shut down before any conversation or pedestrian approach

This document is part of the Meat Institute Worker Safety Series, supporting Reporting Metric A4: Supervisors lead safety huddles and toolbox chats regularly with hourly workers.

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