

## Forklift Safety

Forklifts are powerful machines, and while they don't go as fast as cars and trucks, they require even more attention to safety. Forklifts are taller and narrower than cars and can tip over more easily. Most forklift accidents result from operator error, so even the most experienced forklift drivers need to review and follow the basic rules of forklift safety.

### Before You Drive

- Check safety devices each day before you drive. Your horn, lights, brakes and backup alarm help you avoid accidents and must be working properly before you start the engine.
- Check all fluid and gas levels and make sure you have enough before you start your job.
- Look around for any hazards you may encounter on your route, such as pedestrians, unstable loads or obstacles, and figure out how to correct them. Some hazards are difficult to spot once you're driving the forklift.
- Use your employer's checklist to track the condition of your forklift.

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## Driving Basics

- Avoid sharp turns and fast speeds. A sharp, fast turn can shift your load and cause you to tip over.
- Never engage in horseplay or stunt driving maneuvers when driving a forklift.
- When you move a high load, drive backward and look in the direction of travel.
- Drive backward down slopes with more than a 10% incline.
- Keep loads low whenever possible. Too-tall or top-heavy loads can obstruct your vision or cause you to tip over.
- If you have to park on a slope, always block your wheels, lower your forks and set the parking brake.
- Never lift people on the forklift unless you are using an approved personnel-lifting platform.
- Never move forward or backward with people on the lift.
- Keep loads within your forklift's rated capacity.
- Raise or lower loads only when stopped.
- Start and stop the forklift gradually to avoid shifting the load.
- Use your horn and lights at corners, crossings, and before reversing.
- Back out slowly after unloading, looking over your shoulder to make sure it's clear.
- Always wear your safety belt.

## Watch For Pedestrians

Prevent accidents by always keeping others' safety in mind when you drive. Don't assume pedestrians can hear you coming.



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### SafetyConnection: Forklift Safety

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