

FACT SHEET 23

FORK LIFT TRUCK OPERATOR TRAINING

Under the [Health & Safety At Work Act](#), you, as an employer, have to ensure – as far as reasonably practical – the health and safety of yourself and others who may be affected by what you do (or don't do).

The Law requires that lift truck operators are trained. Regulation 9 of the [Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations \(PUWER 98\)](#) states:

“Every employer shall ensure that all persons who use work equipment have received adequate training.....”

Adequate training means that it is sufficient for the job which, for lift truck operators, will be measured in days rather than hours.

As well as being required by Law, there are sound safety and commercial reasons for ensuring operators are properly trained. There are financial implications of 'poor practice', including:

- Lost time due to injury
- Stock wastage due to damage
- Damage to buildings and equipment, such as racking
- Drops in productivity due to aisle closures, following accidents
- Unplanned downtime for repairs following damage to trucks

Employers should not allow anyone to operate lift trucks – even on a very occasional basis – if they have not satisfactorily completed basic training and testing – except for those training under adequate supervision.

Operator training should always include three stages:

Basic training: Carried out off-site and off-the job, this element of training provides a general and basic knowledge and understanding of how to work safely and efficiently with lift trucks.

Specific training: Delivered on-site, but off-the job, this element of training imparts knowledge and understanding of the operating principles and controls of the lift truck that will be used and, importantly, how it will be used in the workplace.

Familiarisation training: This element allows for operators to apply all of their learning – on the job and under normal working conditions – under the close supervision of an adequately trained supervisor.

Authorisation:

Once an operator has successfully completed all three elements of training, you should give them written authorisation to operate the lift trucks they've been trained to use. Authorisations can be issued on an individual basis. Alternatively, you can record them centrally – noting operator's name, date of authorisation, the types/categories of lift truck they relate to and any special conditions (eg operational limitations).

You should not allow anyone to operate lift trucks on any premises without authorisation (except a trainee under close supervision).

In addition, you will also need to ensure authorised operators continue to be competent through regular monitoring and assessment.

Further reading:

The legal requirements of operator refresher training – [Fact sheet 12](#).

Training provider certificates – [Fact sheet 02](#)

Details of recognised accrediting bodies for forklift operator training – [Fact sheet 06](#)

Detailed information on the selection and training of operators is contained in the following publications which are readily available from HSE Books or the [FLTA web shop](#):

[Counterbalance Trucks – Operator Safety Booklet](#)

£3.10 (printed)

[Warehouse Lifting Equipment – Operator Safety Booklet](#)

£3.10 (printed)

Rider-Operated Lift Trucks: Operator Training and Safe Use Approved Code of Practice and Guidance
HSE

Code L117 ISBN: 978 0 7176 6441 2

£16.00 (printed).

Lift truck training: Advice for employers HSE Code INDG462 Price £5.00 (pack of 10). Free to download from HSE Books.

The information in this Fact Sheet has been assembled and interpreted to give truck owners and users basic guidance on frequently asked questions. Further important information will be given in the quoted reference documents. Responsibility for meeting the safety obligations discussed rests with the employer, and the FLTA will not accept liability for any problem arising as a result of the content of this document. **Technical Bulletins, containing more detailed information and updated as appropriate, are made available free to members of the FLTA SAFE USER GROUP.**

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