

Working platforms (non-integrated) on forklift trucks



Guidance Note

Fork-mounted platforms

Truck/platform compatibility

It is essential that the working platform is compatible with the truck on which it is used. Before any combination is used for the first time the working platform and truck manufacturer/supplier must be consulted. It is particularly important to ensure that:

- the truck/working platform combination has adequate stability under all circumstances in which it is intended to be used;
- the platform can be securely attached to the truck;
- people on the platform cannot reach hazardous moving parts or controls on the truck.

The weight of the platform together with its load of people, tools, materials etc should be not more than half of the actual capacity of the truck (ie actual capacity for materials handling) with which it is intended to be used at the rated load centre distance, maximum lift height and maximum outreach in the case of telehandlers and reach trucks. The actual capacity is the capacity of the truck

when equipped with any specified attachments, such as side shift and, when carrying

out maintenance work, any items or parts placed in the platform add to the overall weight on it. For very narrow aisle (VNA) trucks with elevated operator position and secondary load elevating mechanism, the maximum lift height should be the maximum lift height of the truck with the auxiliary mast fully raised.

Method of securing

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1. Truck operator

The truck operator must remain at the controls of the truck while the platform is in an elevated position.

Truck operation

The truck/working platform combination should only be used on firm, well-maintained and level surfaces. Gradients and uneven or inconsistent ground conditions can affect truck stability.

Platforms for use on the fork arms of a truck must have fork pockets on their underside that will accommodate the fork arms spaced at the widest practicable distance apart without excessive clearance between the pockets and forks.

A positive locking device, eg behind the heels of the fork arms, must be included on the platform to retain it on the truck when in use. Any loose components associated with the locking device should be secured to the platform so that they cannot be mislaid when the platform is not in use.

The fork pockets must fully enclose the fork arm along the full length of the platform, and they should be fully enclosed along their underside.

The working platform manufacturer/supplier must provide instructions to allow the platform to be fitted and properly secured.

Carriage-mounted platforms

Information should be supplied with the platform to adequately identify the types of carriages to which it can be fitted.

If quick-release bottom hooks are used, they must be designed so they cannot become detached during operation and are retained by the platform to prevent them from becoming mislaid when it is not in use.

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Locating points

The locating (ie pickup) points on carriage mounted and fork arm mounted working platforms must be symmetrical about the centre line of the working platform.

Safety harness anchorage

An anchor point, or points, to attach a personal work restraint system, should be included on the working platform. BS 8437⁷ recommends for a single person, that the minimum breaking strength of the anchor should be equivalent to at least three times the users' body mass in the direction load will be applied in use. The anchor point should be marked as a work restraint anchor to deter its use for fall arrest purposes.

Dimensions

The platform dimensions should be as small as possible, compatible with the number of people that it is intended to carry and the work they are likely to undertake.

The platform dimension parallel to the fork arms, ie forward length of the platform, must not exceed two times the rated load centre distance of the truck. The width of the platform must not exceed the outside width over the truck load wheels by more than 250 mm either side.

Floor

The platform floor must be of adequate strength, horizontal when attached to the truck in its elevated position, slip resistant and designed to prevent the accumulation of liquid. Any openings in mesh floors or between the floor and toe- guards or access gates must be dimensioned to prevent a sphere of 15 mm diameter passing through.

Gate

Any gate provided must open inwards, upwards, or sideways and return automatically to the closed position. It is strongly recommended that a device is provided that locks the gate automatically and ensures it cannot be opened once the platform is raised. If such a device is not fitted, then the gate must be self-locking in the closed position.

Handholds

Suitably sized and positioned handholds must be fitted within the confines of the working platform. To allow for safe use, eg to allow use with gloved hands, it is recommended that there is a gap of 90 mm between any handhold and the side of the platform.

Visibility

It is recommended that the platform is painted in a conspicuous colour.

Warning signs

With the exception of working platforms intended for use on VNA trucks, referred to, a permanent notice must be fitted to the platform in a position where the fork truck operator can read it from their normal operating position when the platform is lowered stating, 'Before elevating the platform apply the parking brake and ensure the transmission is in neutral' or equivalent.

A sign must be provided on the working platform, where it can be read, informing the truck operator to stay at the truck controls while the platform is in a raised position.

Identification plate

An identification plate must be attached to the platform giving the following information:

- name and address of the platform manufacturer or authorised representative.
- serial number and year of manufacture.
- unladen weight of the platform and the position of the centre of gravity.
- lost load centre (if the platform is carriage mounted);
- maximum allowable load in kg;
- maximum number of people that the platform is intended to carry.