

What are the three stages of forklift training?

L117 states that there are three elements of forklift training which must be completed before an operator should be allowed to use MHE equipment. Most companies accept the need for the initial basic training, but many fail to deliver the two follow-up stages: **specific job training and familiarisation training**.

THE LAW

Employers have a general duty under Section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to provide information, instruction, training, and supervision to ensure the health and safety of their employees. Regulation 9 of The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER), requires employers to ensure that all persons who use work equipment (including forklift trucks) have received adequate training for purposes of health and safety, including training in the methods which may be adopted when using the work equipment, any risks which such use may entail and precautions to be taken. Sites operating fork lift trucks, or other lifting equipment, are required to comply with The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER) which requires lifting operations to be planned and supervised by suitably competent persons. For many day-to-day operations, the lift may be planned by the operator, so they should have the appropriate training, knowledge and expertise. However, for unusual complex tasks or situations, specific risk assessments and planning are likely to be required.

Age Limits Children under the age of 16 should never be permitted to operate lift trucks. Restrictions and special conditions apply for young persons under the age of 18. Refer to FS01 for further information. Age limits relating to Maximum Authorised Mass apply when operating works trucks on the public highway.

APPROVED CODE OF PRACTICE

The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Approved Code of Practice and Guidance L117 Rider-operated Lift Trucks is aimed at employers and those responsible for the safe operation of fork lift trucks, as well as those in control of worksites, the self-employed, managers and supervisors.

Although the scope of L117 is limited to rider-operated stacking lift-trucks, operators of types of truck not covered by the Approved Code of Practice, for example pedestrian-operated trucks, 'stand-on' pallet trucks that do not lift materials for stacking, and straddle carriers, will also need training.

Forklift truck operator training is to be consistent with the standards outlined in ACOP L117. While ACOP L117 is not law, it has been produced under section 16 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act. 1974 and has special status in law

REQUIRED TRAINING

Personnel who have not completed training may operate a truck for the purposes of training only, and only under the direct supervision of the trainer.

Operator training should emphasise safe and proper operation to avoid injury to the operator and others, and to prevent property damage. It comprises three stages, all of which are obligatory:

Basic training Basic training should cover the skills and knowledge needed to safely operate all of the types of forklift truck and handling attachments the trainee will be required to use. Realistic loads and a working area representative of actual site conditions should be utilised, and all operational and associated tasks should be covered, e.g. peruse inspections, refuelling, stacking, refuelling, etc.

This training should be conducted in an area away from other trucks, obstacles, and pedestrians, for example at a suitable training centre or in a segregated area within the employer's premises.

Upon completion of basic training, the trainee should be assessed to ensure that they have achieved the required standards and are aware of the risks associated with lift truck operations.

Satisfactory completion of basic training does not provide competence to operate forklift trucks unless and until the specific job training and familiarisation training are also successfully completed.

To ensure consistent standards, both in quality and content, UKMHA recommends that basic training should be provided by an accredited training provider.

Specific job training Specific job training will normally follow the completion of basic training, although it might sometimes be combined or integrated with it. It should be tailored to the specific equipment, loads, operations and site conditions where the trainee will work, and should include: •

- Operation and control of the specific forklift truck and attachments to be used.

- Routine inspection and maintenance to be carried out by the operator.

- The actual operating environment, including, for example, gangways, loading bays, racking, automatic doors; cold stores; slopes; other vehicles; and bad weather.

- Site rules, such as one-way systems, speed limits, general emergency procedures, etc.

- Specific hazards, for example pedestrian crossing points, excavations and overhead obstructions or power lines.

- Training in the actual work to be carried out, for example, loading particular types of vehicle, handling loads and materials normally found at that workplace, including assessing weight.

- Safe systems of work, including refuelling, use of operator restraints and leaving vehicles safe and secure. When the work circumstances change, for instance, by introduction of a new load, process or attachment, additional specific job training must be provided.

Familiarisation training A period of familiarisation training, carried out on the job and under close supervision, must take place after satisfactory completion of the specific job training.

MONITORING & ASSESSMENT

Employers should have routine monitoring and assessment processes to ensure that refresher training and retesting is promptly implemented as required. Monitoring should check for any developing unsafe working practices, changes in working practices or environment, and accidents and near-misses. Assessments should be carried out by a suitably competent person to determine whether refresher training is required.

REFRESHER TRAINING

Refresher training is legally required and can be the best way to make sure employees stay competent. There is no defined time period after which an employer must provide refresher training; it should be in line with company policies following the completion of a risk assessment, but the accredited training establishment providing the initial training should be able to assist with this. A common interval for refresher training is 3 years, however, this will depend on the specific circumstances and will need to be reduced if performance monitoring indicates a requirement. Refresher training might also be appropriate where the operator has not used trucks for some time.

What subjects must be covered? Powered industrial truck operator trainees must be trained in the following topics unless the employer can demonstrate that some of the topics are not needed for safe operation.

SAMPLE OF OUR TRAINING SYLLABUS

Instructor introduction and explanation why your employees are having the training and how the training will be conducted.

1974 HSWA

PUWER 1998

LOLER 1998

HSE Publication Approved Code of Practice L117

Introduction to the truck (walk round)

The law on ignition keys

The law on the use of seat belts

Daily – Pre shift inspection & completion of daily log book-inspection book

Mounting and dismounting the truck

Starting and switching off – removing the key

Use of the hydraulic controls

Putting the forks into the traveling and parking position

Explanation of the pedals – gear shift – hand brake – emergency brake

Stability of an empty truck-centre of gravity stability triangle of the empty truck

Basic moving the truck forwards and reverse in a straight line

Turning to the right and left in an open space

Use of the pivot point steering round a pallet to the right / left in an open space
Negotiate a chicane forks leading (forwards) unladen
Negotiate a chicane forks trailing (reverse) unladen
Pick up and deposit an empty pallet
Negotiate a chicane forks leading (forwards) laden
Negotiate a chicane forks trailing (reverse) laden
Make a bulk stack of empty pallets
De-stack the bulk stack of empty pallets
Stability of a laden truck centre of gravity of the truck and load
Negotiate a chicane forks leading (forwards) with a bulk stack of 6 pallets
Negotiate a chicane forks trailing (reverse) with a bulk stack of 6 pallets
Explanation of the rated capacity plate
How to work out the weight a truck can lift with different load centre's
Pick up and deposit a laden pallet (minimum 1000kg)
Observation reverse of bulk large pallets
Stacking de-stacking corner post pallets if used
Stacking de -stacking IBC's if used
Low level racking stacking de-stacking if used
Medium level racking stacking de-stacking if used
High level racking stacking de-stacking if used
Charging the truck-re-fuelling-changing the gas (subject to your trucks motive power)
Battery care and testing (subject to your trucks motive power)
Explanation of the practical test / take the practical test
Theory test
Explanation and results of both tests
Any questions