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FREE STUDY GUIDE · USA

FORKLIFT OPERATOR STUDY GUIDE

Learn the theory before your hands-on training: what the federal rule asks for, how forklifts stay stable, how to read the data plate and how to work safe. Plus 40 practice questions with answers.

- What OSHA requires, in plain words
- Online course vs. real certification
- Stability triangle + data plate math
- Checklist, docks, LPG and batteries
- 40 practice questions + answer key



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read it in order once. Then review the study pages until you score 8 of 10 in every practice test.

1 KNOW THE RULES

Pages 3-4: what the rule asks for and what an online course can and cannot do.

2 KNOW THE JOB

Page 5: what operators do, a pay estimate and how you can grow.

3 STUDY THE MACHINE

Pages 6-8: truck classes, stability triangle, load center and data plate.

4 WORK SAFE

Pages 9-12: pre-shift check, driving, docks, LPG cylinders and batteries.

5 TEST YOURSELF

Pages 14-17: 40 original questions. Check page 18 after each section.

6 GET HIRED

Pages 19-20: a resume, ready messages and an 8-step plan.

WHAT'S INSIDE

3 What OSHA requires
4 Online course vs. certification
5 The job + pay estimate
6 Forklift classes I to VII
7 Stability triangle
8 Load center + data plate
9 Pre-shift checklist
10 Driving: ramps, forks, people
11 Docks, trailers, platforms
12 LPG cylinders + batteries
13 Glossary: 30 terms EN / ES
14 Practice: rules + certification
15 Practice: stability + capacity
16 Practice: inspection + fuel
17 Practice: driving + docks
18 Answer key with explanations
19 First job: resume + messages
20 Your 8-step plan

THE RULES What OSHA asks, in plain words

SAFETY Stability, checklist, docks

BILINGUAL EN / ES glossary

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Independent study guide, not affiliated with OSHA, any employer or school. Your operator certification comes from your employer after a hands-on evaluation at work. Pay figures are estimates; no job is guaranteed.

WHAT OSHA REQUIRES

Federal rule: 29 CFR 1910.178, part (l), operator training. Here it is in plain words.

1 FORMAL INSTRUCTION

Lessons, videos, reading or computer (online) learning about the truck and the workplace.

2 PRACTICAL TRAINING

The trainer shows you, then you practice on the truck, under direct supervision.

3 WORKPLACE EVALUATION

A qualified person watches you operate in your real workplace and checks that you are safe.

All three are required. A video or an online course alone is not enough.

Who	What they do
Your employer	Makes sure you are trained and evaluated before you operate, and certifies it in writing.
Trainer / evaluator	A person with the knowledge, training and experience to train and evaluate operators.
You	Learn, practice under supervision, pass the evaluation and follow the rules every shift.
OSHA	Writes and enforces the rule. It does not issue forklift licenses or wallet cards.

REFRESHER TRAINING IS REQUIRED WHEN...

- You were seen operating the truck in an unsafe way.
- You had an accident or a near miss.
- An evaluation shows you are not operating safely.
- You are assigned to a different type of truck.
- Something in the workplace changes that affects safe operation.

EVALUATION

3 YEARS

Each operator is evaluated at least once every 3 years.

THE CERTIFICATION RECORD SHOWS

- Operator's name
- Date of training
- Date of evaluation
- Who trained / evaluated

WHAT THE TRAINING MUST COVER

THE TRUCK

Controls and gauges, steering, visibility, forks and attachments, capacity, stability, inspection, fueling or charging, operating limits.

THE WORKPLACE

Floors and surfaces, loads and stacking, pedestrians, narrow aisles, ramps, hazardous areas, closed spaces and ventilation.

Age: under federal child labor rules, workers under 18 may not operate forklifts in non-farm jobs.

Sources: 29 CFR 1910.178(l)(1) to (l)(6), Powered Industrial Trucks: operator training; Fair Labor Standards Act, Hazardous Occupations Order No. 7. Summary in plain words; the rule text is what counts.

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ONLINE COURSE VS. REAL CERTIFICATION

Online courses are useful, but they are only one piece. This is how the full process works in the US.

1 THEORY
Online or in a classroom: rules, stability, data plate.
ONLINE OK

2 PRACTICE
On a real forklift, with a trainer watching.
IN PERSON

3 EVALUATION
At your workplace, on the truck you will use.
IN PERSON

4 CERTIFIED
Your employer signs the record with names and dates.
EMPLOYER

AN ONLINE COURSE CAN

- Teach the theory part: rules, truck parts, stability and load capacity.
- Help you learn the words before an interview.
- Count as the formal-instruction part, if your employer accepts it.
- Show an employer that you are serious about the job.

AN ONLINE COURSE CANNOT

- Replace the hands-on practice on a real truck.
- Replace the evaluation at your workplace.
- Certify you by itself: the employer does that.
- Give you a "license" that is valid at every job.

RED FLAGS IN ADS

- "OSHA license" or "official OSHA card": OSHA does not issue forklift licenses.
- "Certified in minutes on your phone, valid everywhere."
- "Valid for life": operators are evaluated at least every 3 years.
- Paying for a plastic card that no employer asked for.

GOOD TO KNOW

- Many employers train and evaluate new operators on the job, at no cost to the worker.
- New job? The new employer still evaluates you. Training you already had may count, if it fits that truck and that workplace.
- Ask before you pay: "Will you accept this course as the classroom part?"

Sources: 29 CFR 1910.178(l)(2) (formal instruction, practical training, workplace evaluation), (l)(5) (no duplicate training) and (l)(6) (certification by the employer).

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WHAT A FORKLIFT OPERATOR DOES

You move materials with powered trucks: loading trailers, putting away stock, feeding production lines and picking orders.

$46,000
Median pay per year (estimate)
BLS May 2025, rounded

$22/HR
Median pay per hour (estimate)
$46,000 / 2,080 hours

800,000
Jobs in the US (about)
BLS May 2025, rounded

18+
Minimum age to operate
Federal rule, non-farm jobs

Pay changes a lot by state, industry and shift. Estimates only: no pay is guaranteed.

A NORMAL SHIFT

- Pre-shift check of the truck and the checklist
- Load and unload trailers at the dock
- Put away and pull pallets from high racks
- Move materials to production lines
- Scan pallets and count inventory
- Keep aisles clear and report damage

WHY THERE IS DEMAND

- Everything sold in stores and online passes through warehouses and docks.
- Distribution centers run day, night and weekend shifts.
- People who are careful and reliable on a forklift are hard to find.

WHERE OPERATORS WORK

Warehouses · Distribution centers · Factories · Food and cold storage · Home-improvement stores · Lumber yards · Ports and rail yards

HOW YOU GROW

Warehouse associate — Pick, pack, load by hand

Trainee — Practice under supervision

Operator — Certified by your employer

Specialist — Reach truck, order picker, more trucks

Lead / trainer — Trains and evaluates others

Pay and jobs: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators (SOC 53-7051), May 2025, rounded by us. National estimates; not a promise of income. Age: Fair Labor Standards Act, Hazardous Occupations Order No. 7.

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TYPES OF FORKLIFTS: CLASSES I TO VII

Training must match the truck. Know the class of the one you will drive.

Class	Type	Where you see it
I	Electric motor rider trucks (sit-down or stand-up counterbalance)	Warehouses, food plants, indoor docks
II	Electric narrow-aisle trucks: reach trucks, order pickers, turret trucks	High racks in distribution centers
III	Electric hand or hand/rider trucks: powered pallet jacks, walkie stackers	Stores, docks, short moves
IV	Internal combustion engine (LPG, gas, diesel), cushion (solid) tires	Smooth indoor floors and docks
V	Internal combustion engine, pneumatic tires	Indoors and outdoors: yards
VI	Electric and engine tractors (tow tractors)	Pulling carts at airports and plants
VII	Rough terrain forklifts, including telehandlers	Construction sites and farms

COUNTERBALANCE VS. NARROW AISLE

- Counterbalance: the weight at the back balances the load on the forks. The most common type.
- Reach truck: the forks reach out into the rack; you stand sideways.
- Order picker: you ride up with the platform, with fall protection.

NEW TRUCK = NEW TRAINING

- Each type handles differently. A different type of truck requires training and evaluation on that type.
- Some areas (ex: with flammable vapors) need specially rated trucks.

TIRES

- Cushion: solid rubber for smooth floors, tight turns.
- Pneumatic: for rough and outdoor surfaces.
- Do not take a cushion-tire truck onto gravel or mud.

POWER

- Electric: quiet, no exhaust; the battery must be charged (page 12).
- LPG: cylinders are changed with care (page 12). Engine exhaust has carbon monoxide: ventilate indoors.

MEMORIZE

Classes I, II, III: electric

Classes IV, V: engine (LPG, gas, diesel)

Class VII: rough terrain

Sources: OSHA Powered Industrial Trucks eTool (truck classes I to VII); 29 CFR 1910.178(l)(4)(ii)(D) (a different type of truck needs training) and 1910.178(c) (trucks approved for hazardous locations).

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STABILITY TRIANGLE + CENTER OF GRAVITY

A counterbalance forklift works like a seesaw. Learn this page and you will understand most tip-overs.

SEEN FROM ABOVE

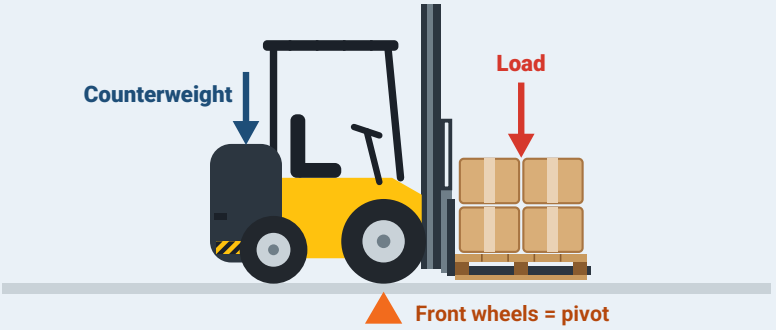


- Front wheels
- Rear axle pivot
- Empty truck
- With a load
- Outside = tip-over

HOW IT WORKS

- The truck rests on 3 points: the two front wheels and the pivot in the middle of the rear axle. That is the stability triangle.
- The center of gravity of the truck plus the load must stay inside the triangle.
- A load moves the combined center forward, toward the front wheels. Too heavy or too far out: the rear wheels lift.
- An empty truck has its center near the back: a fast turn can tip it sideways.

SEEN FROM THE SIDE



WHAT PUSHES THE CENTER OUT

- Load raised high
- Turning fast
- Hard braking
- Driving across a ramp
- Load too heavy or too far out
- Tilting forward with load up

IF THE FORKLIFT TIPS OVER

1. Do not jump
2. Hold the wheel tight
3. Brace your feet
4. Lean away from the fall

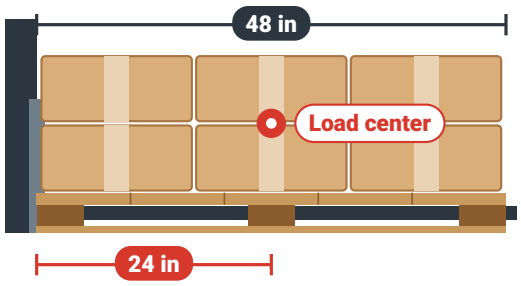
Wear the seatbelt: it keeps you inside the overhead guard.

Sources: stability triangle as explained in OSHA's Powered Industrial Trucks eTool and training materials; 29 CFR 1910.178(o) (loading). Simplified drawings, not to scale.

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LOAD CENTER + DATA PLATE

The capacity on the plate is only true at the load center printed on it. A longer load means less capacity.



WHAT IS THE LOAD CENTER?

- The distance from the front face of the forks to the center of gravity of the load.
- Uniform load pushed all the way back: half of its depth. A 48 in deep pallet = 24 in.
- Most standard plates are rated at 24 in. Uneven loads: the heavy side counts.

SAMPLE DATA PLATE (NOT A REAL MODEL)

MODEL
EX-50 (example)

3 TRUCK TYPE
LP

TRUCK WEIGHT
8,950 lb (no load)

ATTACHMENT
Sideshifter

4

LIFT HEIGHT	LOAD CENTER	CAPACITY
189 in	24 in	4,800 lb 1
2 240 in	24 in	4,300 lb

HOW TO READ IT

1. Capacity: the most weight at that load center and height, with this attachment.
2. Higher lift = lower capacity (here 4,300 lb above 189 in).
3. Truck type (ex: LP) tells which areas the truck is approved for.
4. Plate missing or hard to read? Do not use the truck; report it.

QUICK MATH (ESTIMATE, AT 189 IN LIFT)

Estimated max = 4,800 lb x 24 in / your load center

Load weight	Load center	Estimated max	Can you lift it?
3,500 lb	24 in	4,800 lb	YES
3,500 lb	30 in	3,840 lb	YES
3,500 lb	36 in	3,200 lb	NO
2,800 lb	40 in	2,880 lb	YES

Rule of thumb only. The manufacturer's plate or capacity chart has the final word. Never go over it, and never add weight to the counterweight.

Sources: 29 CFR 1910.178(a)(4) and (a)(6) (changes need the maker's approval; plates must stay legible), (o)(2) (loads within rated capacity). Plate values are invented for practice.

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PRE-SHIFT INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Check the truck before every shift. If something affects safety, the truck does not move.

Visual check (power off)	What to look for
Forks	Cracks, bends, worn heels; locking pins in place; both forks level
Mast and chains	Damaged links, loose or uneven chains, oil leaking on the mast
Tires and wheels	Cuts, missing chunks, low pressure (pneumatic), loose lug nuts
Fluids and leaks	Engine oil, hydraulic fluid, coolant, fuel; puddles under the truck
Overhead guard, backrest	Bent or broken parts, missing bolts
Data plate and decals	In place and easy to read; right for any attachment
LPG or battery	Cylinder latched, hose OK, no gas smell; battery cables, plug, cover

OPERATIONAL CHECK (POWER ON)

- Horn, lights, backup alarm and warning lights work.
- Service brake and parking brake hold.
- Steering is smooth, without extra play.
- Lift, lower, tilt and side-shift move smoothly.
- Gauges: fuel or battery charge, no warning codes.

BEFORE YOU MOVE

- Fasten the seatbelt.
- Adjust the seat and mirrors.
- 3 points of contact getting on and off.

FOUND A PROBLEM?

- Do not use the truck. Tag it "Out of service" and remove the key.
- Report it to your supervisor right away.
- Only authorized people repair it.

HOW OFTEN

- At least once a day, before use.
- Trucks used around the clock: after each shift.
- Fill in and sign your site's checklist.

MEMORIZE

Before every shift

Defect = tag out + report

Seatbelt on before moving

Sources: 29 CFR 1910.178(q)(1) (unsafe trucks taken out of service) and (q)(7) (examination before use, at least daily; after each shift when used around the clock; defects corrected first).

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DRIVING SAFELY: RAMPS, FORKS, PEOPLE

Most of the job is driving. These rules protect you, the load and the people around you.

Situation	Rule
Traveling	Forks low, just clear of the floor (many trainers teach 4-6 in), tilted back
Following another truck	Keep about 3 truck lengths of distance
Ramp over 10%, with a load	Load pointing uphill: forward going up, reverse going down
Ramp, no load	Forks pointing downhill
Load blocks your view	Travel in reverse, looking where you go (or use a spotter)
Leaving the truck	Forks down, controls in neutral, power off, brake set; block wheels on a slope

PEDESTRIANS

- Never drive toward a person standing in front of a wall, rack or bench.
- Nobody stands or walks under raised forks, loaded or empty.
- Make eye contact. Slow down and sound the horn at corners and cross aisles.

NEVER

- Carry riders without a proper seat.
- Lift a person on the forks or on a pallet.
- Stunts, racing or using your phone while driving.

SPEED AND TURNS

- Drive at a speed that lets you stop safely. Follow site limits.
- Slow down before turns and on wet floors.
- Cross railroad tracks at an angle when you can.

STACKING

- Only stable loads within the truck's capacity.
- Tilt forward with the load raised only to set it down.
- Look up: lights, pipes, sprinklers, door frames.

MEMORIZE

Forks low, tilted back

About 3 truck lengths

Loaded on a ramp: load uphill

Sources: 29 CFR 1910.178(m) (operation: people near trucks, parking, unattended = 25 ft or out of view), (n) (traveling: 3 truck lengths, grades over 10%, view blocked), (o) (loading and tilting).

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LOADING DOCKS, TRAILERS AND PLATFORMS

Docks are one of the riskiest places: edges, gaps and trailers that can move.

Before you drive in	Why
Trailer brakes set + wheel chocks (or a dock lock)	Stops the trailer from rolling or creeping away
Dock plate secured and rated for the weight	A plate that slides or bends can drop the truck
Check the trailer floor	Holes or weak boards can break under the weight
Fixed jacks under an unhooked trailer	Keeps the front of the trailer from tipping
Light inside the trailer	You must see the load and the floor

AT THE DOCK EDGE

- Keep away from the edge; it should be marked.
- Never back up near an open dock door without looking.
- Do not cross a plate that is not secured.

FUMES

- Engine trucks in trailers and closed rooms make carbon monoxide.
- Headache or dizzy? Get fresh air and tell your supervisor.

RAILROAD CARS

- Railcar brakes set and wheel stops in place.
- Use a secured bridge plate; watch for gaps.

LIFTING PEOPLE

- Only on a work platform made for it, secured to the forks.
- The operator stays at the controls.
- Never on bare forks or a pallet.

MEMORIZE

Brakes + chocks before entering

Plate secured and rated

People only on a platform

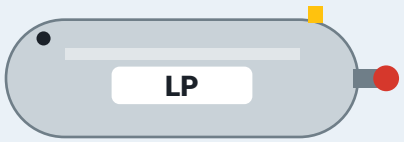
Sources: 29 CFR 1910.178(k) (trailer brakes, wheel chocks, fixed jacks, railcar wheel stops, floors checked), (m)(12) (lifting people on a platform), (n) (dockboards secured); 1910.26 (dockboards).

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LPG CYLINDERS + BATTERY CHARGING

Fuel and charging are part of the job. Follow your site's written procedure and these basics.

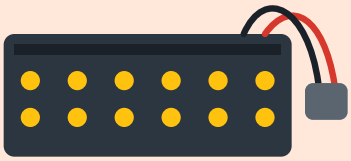
CHANGING AN LPG CYLINDER



1. Go to the designated area. Forks down, brake set.
2. Gloves and safety glasses: liquid LP can cause frostbite.
3. Close the cylinder valve, let the engine run until it stops, key off.
4. Disconnect the coupling, unlatch, lift the empty one carefully.
5. Check the new cylinder for dents and the coupling seal (O-ring).
6. Locating pin in its hole (relief valve on top), latch the straps.
7. Connect, open the valve slowly, check for leaks with soapy water.

NEVER: flames, smoking or sparks nearby. Smell gas? Close the valve and report it.

CHARGING A BATTERY



1. Charge only in the charging area: ventilation and eyewash.
2. Park in position, forks down, brake set, key off.
3. Face shield or goggles, gloves and apron: electrolyte is acid.
4. Open the battery cover so heat and gas can escape.
5. Charger off before you connect or disconnect the plug.
6. Keep metal tools and jewelry off the top of the battery.
7. Add water only as your procedure says. Mixing? Acid into water.

NEVER: smoking, flames or sparks. Charging batteries give off hydrogen, which can explode.

PROTECTIVE GEAR

- Safety glasses or face shield
- Chemical gloves
- Acid apron (batteries)
- Safety boots
- Hi-vis vest

IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG

Gas leak
Close the valve if it is safe, no sparks or engine starts, move people away and report it.

Acid in eyes or on skin
Flush with water at the eyewash for at least 15 minutes and get medical help.

Acid spill
Keep people away and use the spill kit the way your procedure says.

Sources: 29 CFR 1910.178(f) (fuel handling), (g)(1)-(g)(14) (changing and charging batteries), 1910.110 (LP gas). Always follow the truck maker and your site procedure.

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WORK ENGLISH: 30 TERMS

The words you will hear at the dock and in the aisles. Useful for mixed English and Spanish crews.

English	Español
1. Forklift	Montacargas
2. Operator	Operador
3. Pallet	Tarima
4. Forks	Horquillas (uñas)
5. Mast	Mástil
6. Carriage	Carro portahorquillas
7. Load backrest	Respaldo de carga
8. Overhead guard	Techo protector
9. Counterweight	Contrapeso
10. Load center	Centro de carga
11. Center of gravity	Centro de gravedad
12. Stability triangle	Triángulo de estabilidad
13. Data plate	Placa de capacidad
14. Rated capacity	Capacidad nominal
15. Tilt back / forward	Inclinar atrás / adelante

English	Español
16. Raise / lower	Subir / bajar
17. Reach truck	Montacargas retráctil
18. Pallet jack	Patín hidráulico
19. Order picker	Recogepedidos
20. Loading dock	Andén de carga
21. Dock plate	Placa niveladora
22. Wheel chock	Calza de rueda
23. Ramp / grade	Rampa / pendiente
24. Pedestrian	Peatón
25. Horn	Claxon
26. Seatbelt	Cinturón de seguridad
27. Pre-shift check	Revisión antes del turno
28. LPG cylinder	Tanque de gas LP
29. Battery charger	Cargador de batería
30. Near miss	Casi accidente

5 PHRASES FOR THE SHIFT

This forklift is out of service. ▶ Este montacargas está fuera de servicio.

The horn is not working. ▶ El claxon no funciona.

Please stay clear. I'm backing up. ▶ Hazte a un lado, por favor. Voy en reversa.

Are the trailer wheels chocked? ▶ ¿Ya pusieron las calzas en el tráiler?

This load is over the capacity. ▶ Esta carga pasa la capacidad.

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PRACTICE · RULES + CERTIFICATION

10 original questions. Pick one answer for each. Answers and explanations on page 18.

1 **Who certifies that a forklift operator has been trained and evaluated?**

(A) An online training website
(B) OSHA
(C) The employer
(D) The state DMV

2 **Training must combine formal instruction, practical training and:**

(A) A written essay
(B) A driving test at the DMV
(C) A medical exam
(D) An evaluation of the operator in the workplace

3 **Each operator's performance must be evaluated at least once every:**

(A) 3 years
(B) Year
(C) 5 years
(D) 10 years

4 **Which event requires refresher training?**

(A) A holiday
(B) A new supervisor
(C) A new uniform
(D) A near miss

5 **The certification record includes the operator's name, dates of training and evaluation, and:**

(A) A home address
(B) A Social Security number
(C) Who did the training or evaluation
(D) The truck's serial number

6 **A trainee may operate a forklift:**

(A) Alone, after watching a video
(B) Under direct supervision of a qualified person, where it is safe
(C) Only on public roads
(D) Never, until a card arrives in the mail

7 **What part can an online forklift course cover?**

(A) The full certification
(B) The workplace evaluation
(C) The formal (theory) instruction
(D) The employer's signature

8 **You move from a sit-down truck to a stand-up reach truck. You need:**

(A) Nothing new
(B) Training and evaluation on the new type
(C) A new driver's license
(D) Only to read the manual

9 **Federal minimum age to operate a forklift in non-farm jobs:**

(A) 16
(B) 17
(C) 21
(D) 18

10 **You start a new job and already have a forklift card. Your new employer:**

(A) Still evaluates you; training you already had may count
(B) Must accept the card for life
(C) Sends it to OSHA
(D) Cannot hire you for 6 months

Original practice questions written from the public federal rule. This is not an official test.

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PRACTICE · STABILITY + CAPACITY

10 original questions. Pick one answer for each. Answers and explanations on page 18.

11 **The stability triangle of a counterbalance forklift is formed by:**

(A) The 2 front wheels and the rear axle pivot
(B) The 4 wheels
(C) Forks, mast and seat
(D) The 2 rear wheels and the load

12 **To stay stable, the combined center of gravity of truck and load must stay:**

(A) Behind the counterweight
(B) Above the mast
(C) Inside the stability triangle
(D) In front of the front wheels

13 **The load center is:**

(A) The weight of the load
(B) The distance from the fork face to the load's center of gravity
(C) The height of the forks
(D) The middle of the warehouse

14 **A uniform 48 in deep load, pushed all the way back on the forks, has a load center of about:**

(A) 12 in
(B) 48 in
(C) 36 in
(D) 24 in

15 **Plate: 5,000 lb at 24 in. Your load center is 36 in. Estimated max (rule of thumb):**

(A) 5,000 lb
(B) 3,333 lb
(C) 4,000 lb
(D) 7,500 lb

16 **Plate: 4,000 lb at 24 in. Your load center is 32 in. Estimated max:**

(A) 3,000 lb
(B) 3,200 lb
(C) 5,333 lb
(D) 4,000 lb

17 **Which makes a forklift LESS stable?**

(A) Load low and tilted back
(B) Driving slowly
(C) Turning with the load raised high
(D) Keeping the load centered

18 **Where do you find the truck's rated capacity?**

(A) On the data plate
(B) On the fuel cylinder
(C) On the work order
(D) On the tires

19 **A side-shifter attachment is added. The capacity:**

(A) Goes up
(B) Does not change
(C) Usually goes down; the plate must show it
(D) Doubles

20 **If a sit-down forklift starts to tip over, you should:**

(A) Jump out on the low side
(B) Raise the forks
(C) Open the door and run
(D) Stay in, hold on, brace your feet, lean away

Original practice questions written from the public federal rule. This is not an official test.

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PRACTICE · INSPECTION + FUEL

10 original questions. Pick one answer for each. Answers and explanations on page 18.

21 **Forklifts must be examined before being used at least:**

(A) Once a week
(B) Once a month
(C) Once a day (after each shift if used 24/7)
(D) Once a year

22 **During the pre-shift check you find a cracked fork. You:**

(A) Use it carefully
(B) Tag it out, remove the key and report it
(C) Weld it yourself
(D) Only tell your coworkers

23 **Which item is part of the operational check (power on)?**

(A) Horn, brakes, steering, lift and tilt
(B) Counting the tires
(C) Checking the paint
(D) Reading the manual cover

24 **If you ever mix electrolyte for a battery, you must:**

(A) Pour water into acid
(B) Mix both fast
(C) Use a metal can
(D) Pour acid into water

25 **Smoking in the battery charging area is:**

(A) Allowed outdoors
(B) Allowed with a fan on
(C) Prohibited: charging gives off hydrogen
(D) Allowed at night

26 **Before changing or charging a battery:**

(A) Position the truck and set the brakes
(B) Raise the mast
(C) Leave the engine running
(D) Heat the battery

27 **Changing an LPG cylinder. Which step is correct?**

(A) Do it next to a welder
(B) Leave the engine running
(C) Hold the coupling with bare hands
(D) Wear gloves and eye protection

28 **The locating pin on the LPG cylinder bracket makes sure that:**

(A) Nobody can steal the cylinder
(B) The relief valve sits on top (in the vapor)
(C) The gauge reads correctly
(D) The cylinder is full

29 **After connecting a new LPG cylinder, check for leaks with:**

(A) A lighter
(B) Your nose only
(C) Your ears only
(D) Soapy water or leak detector

30 **Metal tools left on top of an uncovered battery can:**

(A) Charge it faster
(B) Cause a short circuit and sparks
(C) Cool it down
(D) Do nothing

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PRACTICE · DRIVING + DOCKS

10 original questions. Pick one answer for each. Answers and explanations on page 18.

31 **When traveling with a load, keep the forks:**

(A) At eye level
(B) As high as possible
(C) Low, just clear of the floor, tilted back
(D) Tilted forward

32 **The load blocks your view ahead. You should:**

(A) Drive forward and honk
(B) Lean out to the side
(C) Raise the load to see under it
(D) Travel in reverse, looking where you go

33 **On a ramp over 10% WITH a load, the load should point:**

(A) Uphill
(B) Downhill
(C) Sideways
(D) It does not matter

34 **On a ramp WITHOUT a load, the forks should point:**

(A) Uphill
(B) Downhill
(C) Sideways
(D) It does not matter

35 **Safe following distance behind another forklift:**

(A) Half a truck length
(B) 1 truck length
(C) Close enough to touch
(D) About 3 truck lengths

36 **At a blind corner or cross aisle you should:**

(A) Speed up to clear it
(B) Slow down and sound the horn
(C) Flash the lights only
(D) Turn off the engine

37 **A forklift is "unattended" when the operator is:**

(A) 25 ft or more away, or out of view
(B) Sitting on it
(C) On the seat with the engine off
(D) Talking on the radio

38 **When you park and leave the forklift:**

(A) Forks at head height
(B) Engine running so it is ready
(C) Forks down, neutral, power off, brake set
(D) On a ramp, brake off

39 **Before you drive into a truck trailer:**

(A) Just drive in
(B) Check brakes, wheel chocks and a secured dock plate
(C) Honk twice
(D) Only open the doors

40 **A coworker wants a ride up on the forks to reach a shelf. You:**

(A) Say yes if he holds on
(B) Lift him slowly
(C) Let him stand on a pallet
(D) Say no: only an approved, secured platform

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ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Score each section. 8 of 10 or more: you know the theory. The real evaluation is done at work, on the truck.

RULES + CERTIFICATION

1 · C The employer certifies it (1910.178(l)(6)). OSHA does not issue forklift licenses.

2 · D Formal instruction + practical training + workplace evaluation, all three.

3 · A At least once every 3 years, and also after events that require refresher training.

4 · D Accident or near miss, unsafe operation, a bad evaluation, a new truck type or workplace changes.

5 · C Name, date of training, date of evaluation and identity of the trainer or evaluator.

6 · B Trainees operate only under direct supervision and where nobody is put at risk.

7 · C Only the formal part. Practice and evaluation happen in person, at work.

8 · B A different type of truck requires refresher training and evaluation.

9 · D 18. Federal child labor rules ban forklift work under 18 in non-farm jobs.

10 · A Past training can count if it fits that truck and workplace, but you must be evaluated.

INSPECTION + FUEL

21 · C Daily before use; after each shift when trucks are used around the clock.

22 · B A truck that is not safe is taken out of service until an authorized person fixes it.

23 · A Power on: horn, lights, brakes, steering and the hydraulic controls.

24 · D Acid into water, never water into acid (1910.178(g)(9)).

25 · C Hydrogen from charging batteries can explode. No smoking, flames or sparks.

26 · A The truck must be in position with the brakes set (1910.178(g)(10)).

27 · D Liquid LP is very cold and can cause frostbite. Gloves and glasses.

28 · B Pin in its hole = relief valve on top, where it can release vapor, not liquid.

29 · D Bubbles show a leak. Never use a flame to look for leaks.

30 · B Tools and metal objects must stay away from uncovered batteries.

STABILITY + CAPACITY

11 · A Three points: both front wheels and the pivot pin in the middle of the rear axle.

12 · C Inside the triangle. If it moves out, the truck tips forward or sideways.

13 · B Measured from the vertical front face of the forks to the load's center of gravity.

14 · D Half of the depth: 48 / 2 = 24 in.

15 · B 5,000 x 24 / 36 = 3,333 lb. The maker's chart has the final word.

16 · A 4,000 x 24 / 32 = 3,000 lb.

17 · C A raised load moves the center of gravity up; turning pushes it out of the triangle.

18 · A The data plate (nameplate). It must be in place and easy to read.

19 · C Attachments add weight and move the load out. Changes need the maker's approval.

20 · D Do not jump. The seatbelt and overhead guard protect you.

DRIVING + DOCKS

31 · C Low and tilted back keeps the load stable and the center of gravity low.

32 · D Travel with the load trailing and look in the direction of travel.

33 · A Loaded: load upgrade. Forward going up, reverse going down.

34 · B Unloaded: forks downgrade on all grades.

35 · D About 3 truck lengths, or enough to stop safely.

36 · B Slow down and sound the horn where your view is blocked.

37 · A 25 ft away or out of sight = unattended. Park it the safe way.

38 · C Forks fully lowered, controls neutral, power off, brake set; block wheels on a slope.

39 · B Brakes set and chocks in place keep the trailer from moving under you.

40 · D Never lift people on forks or pallets. Use a platform made for it.

Missed a question? Go back to the matching study page (3-12) and read that topic again.

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FIRST JOB: GET HIRED AS AN OPERATOR

No experience? Start in the warehouse and ask for forklift training. Show that you are careful, on time and ready to learn.

OPERATOR RESUME (FILL IN)

NAME
[Your name] · [City, State] · [Phone] · [Email]

GOAL
Forklift operator / trainee. Bilingual English-Spanish. Ready for hands-on training and evaluation.

SKILLS
Pallet jack · loading and unloading · RF scanner · safety first · lifting · teamwork

EXPERIENCE
[Job] · [Company] · [Dates]: [what you did: orders per day, zero incidents, on time]

TRAINING
Forklift theory course: [name], [year] · Operator certification: [employer], [date], [truck type]

EXTRAS
Shifts: [1st / 2nd / 3rd] · weekends · reliable transportation · safety boots

Be honest: call an online course "theory course". List a certification only with the employer and the truck type.

WHERE TO LOOK

- Warehouses and distribution centers: apply as "warehouse associate" or "material handler" and ask about forklift training.
- Staffing agencies for warehouse and factory jobs.
- Home-improvement and big-box stores (night crews).
- Lumber yards, building supply and equipment rental.
- Food plants and cold storage.
- Job sites: "forklift operator", "forklift trainee", "reach truck".

WHAT TO ASK IN THE INTERVIEW

- Do you train and evaluate new operators?
- Which trucks: sit-down, stand-up, reach?
- Pay per hour, shift differential, overtime?
- Which shifts are open? Weekends?
- Which safety gear do you supply?
- Can I see where I would work?

READY-TO-SEND MESSAGES

Asking for a job

Hi, my name is [Name]. I'm interested in your warehouse openings. I finished a forklift theory course and I'm ready for hands-on training. I speak English and Spanish.

After applying

Hi [Name], I applied for the [position] on [day]. I'm still very interested and I can start right away. When is a good time to talk?

After the interview

Thank you for your time today, [Name]. I would like to join your team and learn the trucks you use. I can start on [date].

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YOUR 8-STEP PLAN

An example path from zero to your first shift on a forklift. Go at your own pace.

STEP 1

LEARN THE RULES

- [ ] Read pages 3-4
- [ ] Learn the 30 terms on page 13
- [ ] Know what an online course covers

STEP 2

STUDY THE THEORY

- [ ] Study pages 6-12
- [ ] Take a theory course if you want one
- [ ] Practice the data plate math

STEP 3

TEST YOURSELF

- [ ] Do the 40 questions (pages 14-17)
- [ ] Repeat until 8 of 10 per section
- [ ] Review what you missed

STEP 4

RESUME

- [ ] Fill in the resume on page 19
- [ ] Write "theory course" honestly
- [ ] Get 2 references

STEP 5

APPLY

- [ ] Warehouse, staffing, stores
- [ ] Ask about forklift training
- [ ] Send the messages on page 19

STEP 6

PRACTICE

- [ ] Hands-on with a trainer
- [ ] Do the pre-shift check every time
- [ ] Ask when you are not sure

STEP 7

EVALUATION

- [ ] Pass the evaluation at work
- [ ] Ask to see your training record
- [ ] Learn your site's rules

STEP 8

GROW

- [ ] Learn more truck types
- [ ] Keep a clean safety record
- [ ] Aim for lead or trainer

Example only. Each employer has its own process and timeline. No job or pay is guaranteed.

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FROM TRAINEE TO OPERATOR

Learn the theory, practice with a trainer, pass your evaluation at work and keep the habits: check, look, slow down. More free guides at vifalio.com.

Study → Practice → Evaluation → Certified → Job

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