Forklift pedestrian safety toolbox talk

29 CFR 1910.178, 1910.176

Date _____ Trainer _____ Location _____

Opening question

Where on this site do forklifts and people on foot cross paths, and who has the right of way?

Why it matters

A forklift is heavy, and the load can block the driver's view. A person on foot can step into a blind spot in an instant. Drivers and pedestrians both have a job to do, and when either one gets distracted, someone can get pinned, struck or crushed. Clear rules, clear paths and eye contact keep everyone safe.

Key points

1. **Only trained operators drive**
   The employer must make sure each powered industrial truck operator is competent to operate it safely, shown by completing training and an evaluation (29 CFR 1910.178(l)(1)(i)). Training must cover pedestrian traffic in the areas where the truck will be operated (29 CFR 1910.178(l)(3)(ii)(D)). If you are not trained and authorized, you do not drive.
   29 CFR 1910.178(l)(1)(i)

2. **Drivers: look where you are going**
   The driver must look in the direction of travel and keep a clear view of the path (29 CFR 1910.178(n)(6)). If the load blocks your view, travel with the load trailing. Slow down and sound the horn at cross aisles and other places where vision is blocked (29 CFR 1910.178(n)(4)). Keep the truck at a speed that lets you stop safely (29 CFR 1910.178(n)(8)).
   29 CFR 1910.178(n)(6)

3. **Nobody under the forks and nobody riding**
   No person may stand or pass under the elevated part of a truck, loaded or empty (29 CFR 1910.178(m)(2)). Unauthorized people may not ride on a truck (29 CFR 1910.178(m)(3)). Drivers must not drive up to anyone standing in front of a bench or other fixed object (29 CFR 1910.178(m)(1)).
   29 CFR 1910.178(m)(2)

4. **Pedestrians: use the walkway and stay alert**
   Use marked walkways and crossings. Permanent aisles and passageways must be appropriately marked (29 CFR 1910.176(a)). Do not walk while looking at your phone or wearing earbuds. Never assume the driver sees you. Wait until the driver looks at you and gives a clear signal before you cross.
   29 CFR 1910.176(a)

ToolboxKits by ALC Media LLC. Not affiliated with OSHA or the U.S. Department of Labor. Not legal advice.

5 Keep aisles and exits clear

Aisles and passageways must be kept clear, with nothing across them that could create a hazard (29 CFR 1910.176(a)). Fire aisles, access to stairways and fire equipment must stay clear too (29 CFR 1910.178(m)(14)). Do not park pallets, carts or equipment in walkways, and watch out for wet or slippery floors, where drivers must slow down (29 CFR 1910.178(n)(10)).

29 CFR 1910.178(m)(14)

6 Everyone speaks up

If a driver is going too fast, a mirror is broken or a walkway is blocked, say something. Defects found when a truck is examined must be reported right away and corrected (29 CFR 1910.178(q)(7)), and a truck that is unsafe must be taken out of service until it is fixed (29 CFR 1910.178(p)(1)). Keep one rule on the floor for everyone: if you cannot see each other, stop.

29 CFR 1910.178(p)(1)

Scenario

Picture this: A forklift driver is carrying a tall stack of boxes through the warehouse. The load blocks the view ahead, and he is running late. At a cross aisle, a worker walks out with his head down, reading a pick list. The driver does not sound the horn and does not slow down. What should each of them have done differently?

Crew discussion

1. Where on this site do forklifts and people mix most?
2. Where are our worst blind corners, and what could we do about them?
3. What would you do if an operator was driving too fast?
4. How do we make sure people stay out of the forklift lanes?

Bottom line

Drivers look, slow down and sound the horn; people on foot stay in marked walkways and never walk under forks.

Free to share and adapt for non-commercial use under the CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 license (creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0). Credit: ToolboxKits, toolboxkits.com/topics/forklift-pedestrian-safety/

Sign-in sheet / Hoja de asistencia

Topic / Tema Forklift and pedestrian safety / Montacargas y peatones

Date / Fecha _____

Trainer / Instructor _____ Location / Lugar _____ Company / Empresa _____

#	Name Nombre	Signature Firma	Company Empresa	Date Fecha
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Trainer signature / Firma del instructor _____ Time / Hora _____

ToolboxKits by ALC Media LLC. Not affiliated with OSHA or the U.S. Department of Labor. Not legal advice.