



Safety Bulletin

Safety guide for people working near forklifts

Forklifts are used to lift, stack and transfer loads in many warehouses, factories, shipping yards, freight terminals and other workplaces across Australia.

While forklifts offer a practical materials handling solution for many businesses, each year they continue to be associated with workplace injuries and deaths.

We're serious about forking safety, and you should be too. If you work near forklifts, this guide will help keep you safe.

Keep your distance

Fully loaded, a standard forklift and its load can have a combined weight of five or more tonnes.

If you work near forklifts, you are equally at risk from being killed or seriously injured through being hit or crushed by the forklift itself, or being hit or crushed by the load the forklift is moving. You are most at risk of being hit by a forklift or its load if you are:

- walking alongside it
- picking stock off a nearby shelf
- walking in between it and a delivery vehicle
- stepping in to its path, or
- assisting with loading/unloading

What you can do:

- Always keep a safe distance.
- Stay on pedestrian pathways and/or safety zones.
- Be aware that a forklift operators field of vision is obscured by the mast and load – don't assume they have seen you.
- Never approach a moving forklift to speak with the operator. Wait for the forklift to stop and the operator to acknowledge your presence before approaching.
- Establish eye contact with the forklift operator before crossing an aisle.
- Don't assist in loading or unloading unless you have been trained and authorised to do so.
- Give way to moving vehicles, including forklifts.
- Don't use your mobile or headphones.
- Wear high visibility clothing and other appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE).



Always follow the site safety rules, traffic management plan and safety instructions from your employer.

Information for this article was sourced from www.safework.nsw.gov.au. For further forklift safety information contact MLA Holdings on 131 652 or www.mlaholdings.com.au