

## How do I drive a Forklift?

Operating a forklift requires some practice and skill. They are nothing like driving in a car. Since forklifts are steered by the rear wheels, they often have counter-intuitive controls and unwieldy weight distribution. Licenses and specialized training are often required in many areas.

Firstly, it is vital to complete the pre-operations checklist. Check the around the device for any malfunction or damage which could potentially prevent the forklift from operating properly, while paying extra attention to the tire conditions and to the hydraulic mechanisms. It is important to read the operator's manual in order to familiarize yourself with all meter readings and controls. Prior to operating, note the shape and size of the materials you are lifting to ensure the fork being used is set to the correct width.

Observing the working environment prior to commencing operations is important to make sure it is clear of any obstacles. Do not use a forklift in any slippery or unsafe working conditions or within any areas of heavy vehicular or foot traffic. Using the key and start button, move the forklift through its basic operations. Ensure the levers move the forks up and down and check the steering mechanisms and speed control by test driving the forklift in an open area. To help become familiarized with operating the controls, practice by lifting sand bags or empty pallets until comfortable with the machine. Always park the forklift with the forks or prongs completely on the ground when finished to maintain a safe work environment.