



SUBJECT	FORKLIFT SAFETY – KEEP FORKLIFTS & PEOPLE SEPARATED
	Forklift drivers and others who work near moving forklifts

FORKLIFT SAFETY – STARTS WITH YOU

There are three main reasons why workers are killed or seriously injured in forklift incidents:

- Being hit or crushed by a forklift.
- Being hit or crushed by a load that the forklift is moving.
- Being crushed in a forklift tip-over

When it comes to working safely around forklifts, businesses are responsible for the health and safety of workers, contractors, volunteers, and any visitors to your site.

PREPARATION FOR THE TALK

- Make sure there are barriers and/or clearly marked pedestrian walkways and safety zones in the workplace. Visit Safework Australia’s Workplace Traffic Management Guidance material for more information: <https://bit.ly/2WujQEE>
- Make sure you have internet access to show forklift safety video, “Moving around safely during loading and unloading”: <https://bit.ly/2zFgKoS>
- Pen and notebook to make notes on any items raised that needs to be followed up.
- Print out any handouts or instructions for trainees.
- If forklift available, organise a demonstration (optional).

FACT

People are most at risk of being hit by a forklift if they are:

- **Walking alongside it**
- **Picking stock off a nearby shelf**
- **Walking in between it and a truck**
- **Stepping into its path, or**
- **Assisting with loading/unloading.**

CASE STUDY

A container/furniture removals truck is parked in the depot and the container/large pallets are being unloading by the forklift driver into the storage area of the site.

A worker entered the loading dock area is looking for one of his colleagues. The forklift was reversing and hit the worker, causing services lower leg injuries.

There were clearly marked walkways with barriers throughout most of the workplace.

The driver was wearing a hoodie and had earphones in listening to music.



The forklift was fitted with a working reversing sensor, but it could not be heard over the sound of the noise in the loading dock.

The forklift driver said he sounded his horn before reversing and was looking behind but the CCTV footage showed he was looking toward the front of the forklift.

Ask your workers: What could have been done differently?

Possible answers:

- Better staggering of product to prevent forklifts being in the same place as workers
- Forklift driver checked over his shoulders
- Driver should have worn a beanie instead of a hoodie, to enable better vision
- Used proximity devices for forklifts and people
- Used pallet jacks instead of forks during busy times
- Not worn headphones on or near forklifts.

**FORKLIFTS AND PEOPLE DON'T MIX.
WATCH OUT FOR EACH OTHER AND STAY IN THE AREAS
DESIGNATED FOR YOU.**

Practical exercise

Workers who have never driven a forklift do not realise how a driver's vision is impaired by the mast and load when driving. Get your workers who have never driven a forklift to sit in the driver's seat (making sure the forklift has been secured so it can't move with keys removed) to demonstrate a drivers impaired vision.

Ask your workers to point out the main blind spots, such as mast and load. Also ask workers to look over their shoulders to see how vision is obscured when travelling in reverse.

Video

Show your workers the following 2-minute video reminder of how to safely unload a truck:

Moving around safely during loading and unloading: <https://bit.ly/2zFgKoS>



In summary

- It is important to remember that working safely in and around forklifts is everyone's responsibility
- Is there anything that we could be doing better in our workplace in relation separating people and forklifts? Take notes about any suggestions:

WORKPLACE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SHEET

Overview

This Information Sheet provides advice for small businesses and workers on managing traffic risks in the workplace.

More information is in the *General guide for workplace traffic management* and the specific guides for traffic management on [warehouses](#), [construction workplaces](#), [shopping centres](#) and [events](#).



What are the risks?

Where there are vehicles like cars, trucks or forklifts at your workplace there is a risk that they will collide with people.

People who work with or near vehicles are most at risk and customers and visitors to your workplace may also be at risk.



What do I need to do?

You must manage the risk of vehicles colliding with people at your workplace. There are a number of ways of doing this depending on the size of your workplace, the kinds of vehicles being used and how often vehicle and pedestrians interact.

You should start by identifying the hazards and the potential points of collision between people and vehicles. You can do this by considering the flows of traffic and people and by asking your workers and health and safety representatives about any problems they encounter at the workplace. You must then put in place control measures to eliminate or minimise the risks so far as is reasonably practicable. A number of control measures are generally needed to control the risks effectively.

Keeping people and vehicles apart

The best way to protect people is to keep them physically separated from vehicles. Think about how vehicles and pedestrians move around the area. Are they separated? Are there ways to stop them interacting?

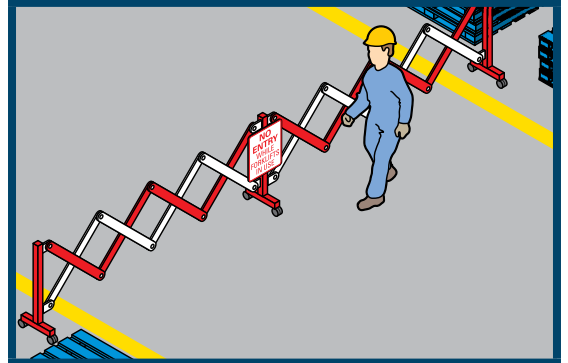
Consider the layout of your workplace and see whether this can be achieved, for example by excluding people from vehicle operating areas.

This may not always be possible so minimise the risks in other ways, for example by:

- providing gates or temporary barriers to separate vehicles from people

- scheduling work to avoid or reduce the need for pedestrians and vehicles to be in the same area
- creating exclusion zones like forklift-only areas in loading bays or pedestrian-only areas around tearooms, amenities and entrances
- locating delivery areas away from pedestrians or work activities
- clearly marking vehicle areas with signs or reflective paint to warn pedestrians
- clearly marking pedestrian walkways and crossings with paint or bollards
- using mirrors and vision panels in pedestrian doors entering vehicle areas
- using signs for speed limits, hazards like forklift operating areas and exclusion zones
- ensuring traffic areas are well lit, and
- ensuring workers wear high visibility clothing.

FIGURE 1 Temporary physical barrier to keep people away from vehicles



Vehicle movement

Where possible workers that are not needed for the activity should be excluded from vehicle areas.

Think about a vehicles visibility of pedestrians and whether devices are needed like external and side mirrors, reversing sensors, flashing lights or reversing alarms.

Reduce the speed of vehicles, for example using speed limiters on forklifts, implementing speed limits or speed humps on vehicle routes.

Reversing vehicles

Reversing vehicles are a significant hazard to pedestrians. If there is no alternative and vehicles need to reverse, think about:

- whether vehicles can be fitted with devices like reversing cameras, rotating lights or audible reversing alarms
- fixing mirrors at blind corners and other areas to aid visibility
- using a person to direct the reversing vehicle - this person should be in visual contact with the driver at all times and wear high visibility clothing
- keeping non-essential workers away from reversing areas, or
- ensuring reversing areas are well lit and clearly marked with signs or line markings.

Loading and unloading areas

You can manage loading and unloading safely by:

- designating pedestrian exclusion zones in loading and unloading areas which are clearly marked with signs, reflective paint, witches hats or physical barriers like chains or bollards
- designating a safety zone for the driver - they should be seen by the plant operator at all times
- introducing clear and effective communication systems between the plant operator and the driver e.g. hand signals or two-way radios, and
- providing ways to warn pedestrians and vehicle drivers that loading is in progress e.g. signage, cones, lights, alarms and horns.

Parking

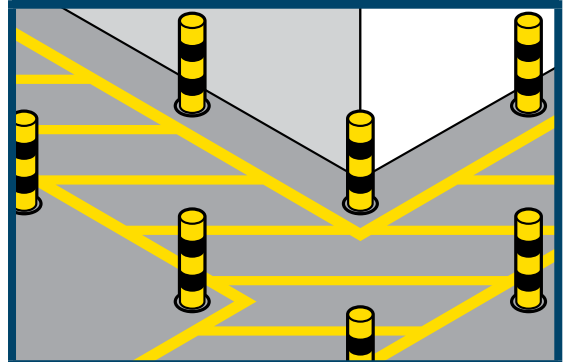
Parking areas may be needed for workers, visitors, large vehicles like trucks and other vehicles used in the workplace.

A good way to protect pedestrians is to:

- have parking areas away from busy work areas and traffic routes
- clearly mark and sign-post parking areas, or
- if possible, protect walkways leading to and from parking areas with physical barriers like bollards.

The person operating the forklift should control the exclusion zone and clear operating procedures should be understood and implemented at all times.

FIGURE 3 Walkway marked with lines and bollards



i For further information see the [Safe Work Australia](http://www.swa.gov.au) website (www.swa.gov.au).

FIGURE 2 Examples of signs

