

FORKLIFT DAILY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Pre-Operation Inspection (Key OFF)

Opening / Pre-Shift Tasks

Week of: Truck ID: Operator:

TASK	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
Confirm you are trained and authorized to operate this truck (OSHA 1910.178(l)). Untrained operation is a citable violation.							
Walk fully around the truck. Look for leaks (oil, hydraulic fluid, coolant, fuel) on and under the machine.							
Inspect both forks for cracks, bends, or excessive wear. Check the heel of each fork — over 10% wear means replace.							
Check fork positioning latches and the load backrest extension are in place and secure.							
Inspect the mast and lift chains for cracks, kinks, or excessive slack. Chains must be evenly tensioned.							
Check all hydraulic hoses, lines, and fittings for wear, chafing, or leaks. A hose failure can drop an elevated load.							
Inspect tires for cuts, gouges, flat spots, or missing chunks. Check for embedded debris and correct pressure (pneumatic).							
Check wheels for cracks, bent rims, and missing or loose lug nuts.							
Verify the overhead guard and load backrest are securely mounted with no cracks or bent members.							
Check the operator seat, seatbelt, and mounting. The seatbelt must latch and retract properly.							
Confirm the data plate (capacity plate) is present and legible. Verify the rated capacity.							
Check that all warning decals and the operator compartment are clean and free of grease or debris.							
Additional Task:							

Instructions:

Complete **BEFORE** each shift with the key off (OSHA 1910.178(q)(7)). Trucks used around the clock must be examined after each shift. Only trained and authorized operators may inspect and operate a forklift (OSHA 1910.178(l)). This is the visual walk-around — check for anything that would affect safe operation before the truck moves. Forklifts cause roughly 85 deaths and 34,900 serious injuries per year in the U.S.; most are preventable with a proper pre-operation inspection. If any safety-critical item fails, do not operate the truck.

FORKLIFT DAILY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

(Operational Inspection — Engine/Motor ON)

Operational Inspection (Engine/Motor ON)

Week of: Truck ID: Operator:

TASK	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
Start the truck. Listen for unusual noises or vibrations and report anything abnormal immediately.							
Test the service brake: it should stop the truck firmly with no fade or pulling.							
Test the parking brake: it must hold the truck stationary on a slope with a load.							
Test steering through full left and right travel. Steering must be smooth with no excessive play or binding.							
Test forward and reverse drive controls for smooth, responsive operation.							
Test the hoist (raise/lower): forks should raise and lower smoothly with no drift when held.							
Test the tilt control forward and back. The mast should hold position with no drift.							
Test any attachment controls (side-shift, clamp, etc.) for correct, smooth operation.							
Test the horn — it must be clearly audible.							
Test all lights: headlights, tail lights, and warning/strobe lights (if equipped).							
Test the backup alarm (if equipped) — it must sound when reverse is selected.							
Check all gauges and the hour meter read correctly. Note any warning lights that stay on.							
Raise forks and check for hydraulic drift — mast and forks must hold position without settling.							
Additional Task:							

Instructions:

Complete AFTER the key-off walk-around, with the engine or motor running, before entering the work area. These operational checks apply to all forklift types. Test brakes, steering, drive, hoist, tilt, horn, lights, and the backup alarm. Watch closely for hydraulic drift — if raised forks or the mast settle on their own, a hydraulic hose or seal is failing, which is a leading cause of dropped-load incidents. Report any unusual noises or vibrations immediately and take the truck out of service if any control fails.

FORKLIFT DAILY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

(Power-Type-Specific Checks)

Power-Type-Specific Checks

Date: Truck ID: Power type: ☐ Electric ☐ Propane ☐ Diesel/Gas

TASK	STATUS
ELECTRIC — Check battery charge level is adequate for the full shift.	
ELECTRIC — Inspect battery case for cracks, corrosion, or electrolyte leakage. Check cables and connectors are secure.	
ELECTRIC — Verify battery is properly restrained/secured in its compartment.	
ELECTRIC — On wet-cell batteries, check electrolyte level (trained personnel only — hydrogen gas and acid hazard).	
PROPANE (LP) — Verify the tank is properly mounted and seated in its bracket, with the locating pin engaged.	
PROPANE (LP) — Confirm the pressure relief valve points up (roughly 12 o'clock position).	
PROPANE (LP) — Inspect the tank for dents, cracks, and rust. Check hose and connector for damage.	
PROPANE (LP) — Check for propane odor (leak). If you smell gas, do NOT start — tag out and report. Use PPE when checking fittings.	
PROPANE (LP) — Verify the tank restraint bracket holds the tank firmly with no shifting.	
INTERNAL COMBUSTION — Check engine oil level and condition on the dipstick. Dark, gritty oil is overdue for change.	
INTERNAL COMBUSTION — Check coolant level in the reservoir (engine cold). Inspect radiator and hoses for leaks.	
INTERNAL COMBUSTION — Check fuel level for the shift and inspect fuel lines and filter for leaks.	
INTERNAL COMBUSTION — Check the air filter restriction indicator; clean or replace if flagged. Verify exhaust emits no sparks or flames.	
Additional Task:	

Instructions:

Complete the section that matches your truck's power source. Electric: battery charge, case condition, restraint, and (trained personnel only) electrolyte level — wet-cell batteries pose hydrogen gas and acid hazards. Propane (LP): the most safety-critical daily check is the leak/odor test — if you smell propane, do not start the truck; tag it out and report it. Always wear a face shield and gauntlet gloves when checking LP fittings, and verify the pressure relief valve points up. Internal combustion: check oil, coolant, and fuel for level and leaks; verify the exhaust emits no sparks or flames (OSHA 1910.178(q)(8)).

FORKLIFT DAILY INSPECTION CHECKLIST

(Defect Reporting & Out-of-Service)

Defect Reporting & Out-of-Service

Date:

TASK	STATUS
Record the truck ID/unit number, operator name, date, and shift on every inspection.	
Mark each item Pass, Fail, or N/A. Note the specific defect for anything marked Fail.	
If ANY safety-critical item fails, do NOT operate the truck. Take it out of service immediately (OSHA 1910.178(p)(1)).	
Attach an 'Out of Service — Do Not Operate' tag to any defective truck and remove the key.	
Report all defects to a supervisor or qualified mechanic immediately. Defects must be corrected before the truck returns to service.	
Do not return a truck to service until a qualified mechanic has corrected the defect and it passes re-inspection.	
File the completed inspection record where it is available for OSHA review on request.	
Retain inspection records per company policy so the inspection history for each truck can be tracked.	
Additional Task:	

Instructions:

OSHA 1910.178(p)(1) requires that any powered industrial truck found to be in need of repair, defective, or in any way unsafe be taken out of service until repaired — at any time, not just at the morning inspection. When a safety-critical item fails, tag the truck 'Out of Service,' remove the key, and report it to a supervisor or qualified mechanic immediately. Defects must be corrected before the truck returns to service. Powered industrial truck violations consistently rank among OSHA's top-10 most-cited standards, so keep inspection records available for OSHA review.