

Operator daily checks

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) Regulation 5 applies to all work equipment.

The Regulations require that: work equipment is suitable for the purpose it is used or provided for and is properly maintained and inspected at suitable intervals.

The Law requires all work equipment to be regularly maintained and the non-lifting parts (for example tyres, brakes and lights) inspected. In addition, lifting equipment must be thoroughly examined at suitable intervals, and inspected if necessary, to make sure it remains in a safe condition.

Always follow the manufacturer's or authorised supplier's instructions on inspection, maintenance and servicing. You should make sure there is: a documented pre-shift check; a system for reporting defects and ensuring remedial work is carried out; a planned routine maintenance system; a periodic thorough examination and regular safety inspection.

At the beginning of each shift, the operator should check the lift truck in accordance with the vehicle handbook and document the results. They should report to the supervisor any defects which might affect its safe operation to ensure they are put right. Checks may typically include:

- damage to tyres, for example swarf, nails and other embedded material, cuts and bubbles. Pay particular attention to the side walls;
- tyre pressures on pneumatic tyres;
- the condition of the wheels, particularly the flanges on rims fitted with pneumatic tyres;
- the tightness and security of wheel nuts;
- a functional test on the parking brake, service brakes and steering gear to ensure they are working efficiently;
- fluid levels, for example check fuel, water, engine and transmission oils are correct in internal combustion engine lift trucks;
- the batteries of battery-operated lift trucks to check they are adequately charged and leak free, the charger is switched off, the charge lead disconnected and properly stored, and the battery retention device is in place;
- a functional test on systems for lifting, tilting and manipulation, including attachments to ensure they are working properly;
- a visual inspection of hydraulic systems to check for obvious leaks, and make sure hydraulic fluid levels are correct when the forks are in the parked position;
- the condition and security of the overhead guard and load back-rest extension;

The information in this document has been assembled and interpreted to give truck owners and users basic guidance on frequently asked questions. Responsibility for meeting the safety obligations documented rests with the employer, and Bsafe will not accept liability for any problem arising as a result of the content of this document.

- the forks, for cracks, particularly on the heels and mounting hooks, bent or damaged fork tips and missing or damaged fork positioning locks;
- the chains, for secure anchor pins, fixing bolts, damaged or elongated links and lubrication;
- any audible warning signal, for example a horn; lights;
- mirrors and any other visibility aids, if fitted.

Fork lift trucks can be very dangerous if they are not maintained properly. Whilst managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring pre-use checks are carried out correctly, the operator is responsible for carrying out the check in accordance with the employers policy