

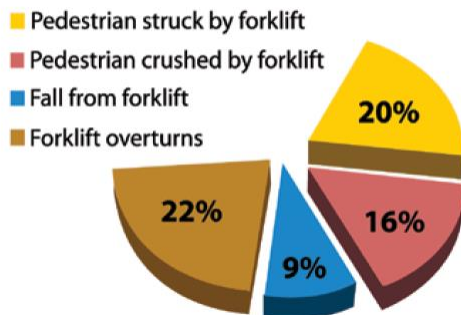
Forklift Accident Statistics

Industry statistics in the United States cite a **90% probability** of a forklift being involved in a **serious injury or fatality accident** over its useful lifetime. The Occupational Safety & Health Administration estimates that forklifts account for 61,800 minor injuries, 34,900 serious injuries, and 85 forklift related deaths every year. With almost 900,000 forklifts in operation in the United States, those numbers amount to a 1 in 10 chance that each forklift working in your facility will be involved in an accident this year. Almost 80% of forklift accidents involve a pedestrian. In the United States, 1 out of every 6 workplace deaths are forklift –related.

FORKLIFT FATALITIES BY TYPE OF ACCIDENT:

Fatal Accident Type	%
Crushed by vehicle tipping over	42
Crushed between vehicle and a surface	25
Crushed between two vehicles	11
Struck or run over by a forklift	10
Struck by falling material	8
Fall from platform on the forks	4

Pedestrians in Peril



Where most people are concerned about being struck or run over by a forklift, this may prompt them to stand beside the forklift where they think they are safest. However, the statistics show that the greatest hazard is being crushed when the forklift tips over.

According to OSHA in the United States, 70% of forklift accidents could have been avoided with standardized training and safety procedures. This is, in part, why Manitoba introduced mandatory training and driver certification for forklift operators.

Industry	%
Mining	1.2
Construction	23.8
Manufacturing	42.5
Transportation	11.0
Wholesale Trades	12.5
Retail Trade	9.0

The manufacturing section has the most number of fatalities caused by forklifts

Here is a breakdown of the most common causes of forklift accidents:

1. Poorly Trained Driver

A poorly trained driver might not know how to respond to a changing workplace. New inventory, obstacles and employees, or changes in floor gradient, can all cause problems for an inexperienced operator. It helps to incorporate a comprehensive certification process in the operators' training program.

2. Speeding

All too often, drivers become comfortable and drive irresponsibly. In some cases, workers are under pressure to finish the job quickly or meet a time line. OSHA advises drivers to stay at or below 5 miles per hour. Even if the vehicle stops, the load may topple during harsh braking.

3. Operating a Forklift with an Elevated Load

This happens often in all sorts of industries. OSHA regulations encourage drivers to carry loads as near to the ground as possible, approximately 4 inches from the floor.

4. Improper Turning

Forklifts are designed to balance heavy loads. So without a load, they're not necessarily the sturdiest machines. Turning a corner too fast can cause the lift to tilt to one side. The correct approach is to slow down well before the turn and maintain a gradual speed through the entire rotation.

5. Insufficient Warnings and Markings

In workplaces with both foot- and forklift traffic, it's an absolute necessity to mark forklift zones. Even if people must walk through these zones on a regular basis, they know when to watch out for heavy machinery. There are a number of ways to mark a forklift zone. While paint and standing signs work, floor tape is perhaps the most efficient option. If any wears or tears happen, it's easy to replace a small section of tape, which isn't true for standing signs or even paint. Also, floor tape is easy to apply, and you don't have to shut down production to get the job done.

6. Giving Rides or Riding on the Forklift Load

This is a common case of irresponsible operation. Under no circumstances should a driver transport a worker on a forklift load. Likewise, workers that are helping to load the truck should never use their body parts to balance a load.

7. Workplace Design

When purchasing forklifts, make sure it's the right design for your needs. If you work in a warehouse with minimal aisle space, invest in a narrow-aisle lift. Workplace design can have a major impact on safe forklift operation.

Here are a few tips for maintaining a safe area for forklift operation:

- Remove all obstructions at doors and intersections.
- Keep aisles uncluttered.
- Keep traffic volume low in the work area.
- Mark changing floor gradients and ramps.
- Maintain a clean loading dock.