

INTRODUCTION

Pallet jacks, also known as pallet trucks, make it easier to move, load, and unload heavy materials. Pallet jacks can be manual, where they use a hydraulic system to lift up the pallets, or they can be electrical, where they use a battery powered system to both lift up the pallets and move the jack. In order to avoid injuries caused by using pallet jacks, follow these tips.

BEFORE USE

Before you use the pallet jack, be sure you:

- Know how to use the pallet jack
- Inspect the pallet jack and tires
 - If they are unevenly worn, the machine will not carry the load evenly and it will increase the possibility of having the load tip or fall
- Wear the proper personal protective equipment
 - Steel toed boots protect your toes from getting crushed by the pallets or pallet jack
 - Gloves prevent blisters and help you maintain a good grip on the controls
 - Safety glasses protect eyes, especially when you're moving chemicals or material that could cause a hazard if spilled
- Secure the load to the forks of the pallet jack
 - Wrap tape, bungee cords or banding around the load and the forks
 - Never exceed a pallet jack's load capacity
 - Make sure the load is in the center of the forks so the jack doesn't tip
- Make sure the route you are taking is free and clear from hazards and uneven surfaces before you begin to move your load
 - Make sure the work area is set up to protect exposure from moving vehicles



OPERATION

- Never place any part of your body in the lifting mechanism or under the load
- Never carry passengers
- Never use the pallet jack for horseplay
- Do not let go of the jack while the load is moving unless it gets out of control and may flip
 - If that happens, let go and get out of the way

PALLET JACK SAFETY

- Get someone to work as a spotter when transporting a tall load
 - The spotter's job is to look out for hazards you can't see because of the load
- Get someone to help pull non-power driven power jacks if they are heavy or if you must pull the jack on a wet floor or on a grade
- Operate the pallet jack only from the position designated by the instruction manual
- Keep coworkers clear of the pallet jack to avoid being crushed by the machine
- Always lower the pallet if you leave it unattended for any time
- Be cautious and use common sense

ELECTRICAL PALLET JACKS

Follow the same safety rules with electrical pallet jacks as you would with manual pallet jacks. In addition, remember the following:

- Know where the emergency shut off switch is
- Plug the electric pallet jack into the battery charger after use
 - Keep jacks charged up and ready for use at all times in case the power goes out
 - If the power does go out, unplug all electrical jacks to avoid damage to the batteries because of the surge when the power comes back on
- If you are going to be out of sight from the jack, remove the key if it has one or disable it so it cannot be used by unauthorized personnel



CONCLUSION

Pallet jacks are useful tools if the operators are cautious and use common sense while using the jacks.

