



SAFETY UNLIMITED, INC.

Weekly Safety Meeting

Manual Pallet Jack Safety

Pallet jacks are used to make easy work out of what would usually be a multiple person job lifting a load from point A to B, eliminating the strain and energy while also saving time. When operating a pallet jack (even for a short time span) you should ensure you are wearing the correct safety equipment including steel capped boots, gloves, and safety eyewear (when transporting dangerous chemicals).

Pallet jacks may seem simple enough to use, but employees should not operate a pallet jack unless they have been trained on safe operation of the pallet jacks used in their current workplace.

Pre-Use Inspection:

Perform a basic pallet jack and workplace inspection at the beginning of every shift or before using the pallet jack for the first time each work day.

At minimum, look for the following:

- Survey the workplace where the pallet jack may be used, clean up any spills, and move anything that could later be in the path of a moving pallet jack.
- Inspect the wheels to ensure they are rolling easily and do not have flat spots.
- Check the forks before loading to ensure they are not damaged or defective.
- Make sure there are no fluid leaks coming from the pallet jack.
- Test the controls, handles, levers, and horn on the pallet jack to make sure everything is working properly before attempting to add a load.

Pallet Jack Concerns:

- Load dropped on foot;
- Strain or dislocation of shoulder due to forceful pulling of a pallet jack;
- Strains from moving a loaded pallet jack; and
- Trips from exposed pallet jack “forks.”

Best Practices:

- Report damaged or worn pallet jacks.
- Report pallet jacks that have flat spots in wheels or that will not roll well.
- Report pallet jacks with a failing hydraulic unit.

- Never overload the pallet jack load capacity.
- Only PUSH pallet jacks.
- NEVER PULL pallet jacks—places major strain on shoulders – rotator cuff injury could result!
- Start the pallet jack slowly – no shoving.
- Never yank or throw the pallet jack handle.
- NEVER ride a pallet jack for fun.
- Never stand on a pallet jack.
- Unused pallet jacks are a major trip hazard.
- When not in use, pallet jacks must be rolled into an area that does not have pedestrian traffic:
 - Under a shelf or pallet rack; or
 - In a pallet or under a table.
- Keep your heels safe!
- Move the jack slowly!
- Do not brace or stop a pallet jack with the foot!
- When moving a pallet jack and load, keep the jack control handle in the “neutral” position.
- Keep your feet out from beneath the load.
- Lower load before working around a pallet jack.
- Never leave a pallet jack with the load elevated.
- Keep the pallet jack in front of you when descending a ramp.
- Wear gloves when handling pallets.
- When a pallet jack is stuck in a pallet, push down on the handle until the front fork wheels come up slightly, and then pull the jack out of the pallet.
- Stack the pallet load so it will not shift or turn over – the handle can “whip” when the jack turns over – resulting in injury.

Remember:

If manual pallet jacks are used in your workplace, then make sure you don't skip the safety meeting! All employees who work in the area should be familiar with the unique hazards associated with pallet jacks and the safe work practices expected in the workplace.

The best safety device is your brain...Use it!!

