

GUIDANCE NOTE	Pallet Trucks	Code: G218	Issue: A
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INTRODUCTION

Frequent and heavy lifting and handling can cause back injuries. Manual handling accidents account for more than a third of all accidents reported each year to the enforcing authorities. The vast majority of reported manual handling accidents result in an over-three-day injury, most commonly a sprain or strain, often of the back. But using lifting and handling aids can remove or reduce that risk and keep workers healthy and at work. Pallet trucks are just one type of handling aid which when used and maintained correctly can help prevent injury.

HAZARDS

The main hazards associated with pallet trucks are injuries caused by pushing/pulling over uneven surfaces and the pallet and its contents falling from the pallet truck. Additionally, there are hazards associated with striking or being struck by a pallet truck.

CONTROL MEASURES

Always wear good quality safety shoes, (steel toe caps) and industrial work gloves.

Regular inspections should be carried out to ensure that all bolts, pins and securing devices are correctly in place and in good condition. Check for signs of cracked welds, bent or loose pins or other signs of structural damage. Do not use if any of these conditions exist. A record of these inspections should be maintained. An example of a LOLER inspection report form can be found within section G of the health and safety policy. Ensure repairs are carried out by qualified persons only. Ensure the machine is properly maintained at all times.

The forks should be lowered to their lowest position when not in use, and ensure it is left where it cannot become a hazard to others. If necessary, the wheels must be chocked to prevent it from moving and possibly becoming a hazard.

The load should be evenly distributed on the forks and is perfectly stable before attempting to raise. Never exceed the load for which the machine was designed. If the load capacity and other warning labels become defaced or illegible, have them replaced. Do not leave load on pallet truck for lengthy periods. Rapid loading of the truck, i.e.; dropping heavy loads directly onto forks should be avoided. The pallet truck should not be used as a vehicle jack, and never use the truck to transport persons, or use as a scooter.

Do not allow any person to operate the machine unless they are completely familiar with all aspects of operation. The pallet truck should not be used on rough terrain, floor requirements are, smooth, non slip, hard, level and without obstacles. If pallets have to be moved over uneven surfaces then a specialised pallet truck with pneumatic wheels should be employed. Lifting equipment fitted with pneumatic tyres should not be used to lift loads unless the tyres are inflated to the correct pressure. The truck must not be altered or modified in any way.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

No additional specialist PPE is required.

REFERENCE**Regulations/ACoPs:**

Lifting Operations and Lighting Equipment Regulations

Approved Code of Practice and Guidance [LOLER], L113

Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations

Approved Code of Practice and Guidance [PUWER], L22

HSE Guidance:

Manual pallet trucks, Construction Occupational Health case study COH06

Other:

Clarke Strongarm Pallet Truck PTE550 operation and maintenance instructions