

Training requirements for hand pallet trucks

Hand pallet trucks, or rather their operators, are responsible for many incidents in the workplace. Therefore, training requirements should not be underestimated.

Law

The use of work equipment such as pallet trucks is covered by **The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998** (PUWER), which requires:

- Work equipment is suitable for the purpose it is used or provided for and is properly maintained and inspected at suitable intervals.
- Where the use of work equipment is likely to involve specific risks, the use, maintenance etc of that equipment is restricted to people given the task of using and/or maintaining it; users, supervisors and managers have received adequate training for the purposes of health and safety, including: training in the methods which may be adopted when using work equipment; any risks which such use may entail and precautions.

The degree of training required, and the time it will take, will vary according to the type of equipment and the tasks to be performed.

Accredited training provider

Although accreditation is voluntary, the use by an employer of an accredited training provider (ATP) provides some assurance that the training provided will be at least to the standard described in the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) and guidance **L117 Rideroperated Lift Trucks**.

Each accrediting body will be able to provide details of appropriately qualified and experienced ATPs to enquirers who seek advice about training, along with a description of their assessment criteria.

For more basic equipment it may be possible to provide in-house training. This still needs to be properly organised and formally recorded.

If you are in any doubt, professional advice should be sought.

Use of pallet trucks

The HSE plant and machinery guidance note **PM15 Pallet safety** states:

If pallet trucks are used, make sure that the small finger wheels do not damage the base boards of pallets. Chamfered edges to the top of the base boards will assist entry of the pallet truck finger wheels.

Use of pallets meeting base window requirements of BS ISO 67803 together with trucks meeting BS ISO 5099 will normally avoid such damage.

Pallet truck fingers of unsuitable length can cause baseboard damage and can also be dangerous to workers. The forks of a handling device should extend into the pallet at least 75% of the dimension parallel to the forks.

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Health and Safety Executive guidance

Although the Health and safety Executive (HSE) Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) and guidance **L117 Rider-operated Lift Trucks** is for rider-operated fork lift trucks, the basic principles and training requirements described should still be applied to hand-operated equipment.

Whereas the HSE Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) and guidance **L22 Safe use of work equipment** is aimed at employers, duty holders and anyone who has responsibility for the safe use of work equipment, such as managers and supervisors.

ACOP L112 sets out what is needed to comply with the PUWER, which place duties on people and companies who own, operate or have control over work equipment (duty holders). PUWER also places responsibilities on businesses and organizations whose employees use work equipment, whether owned by them or not.

The HSE Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) and guidance **L113 Safe use of lifting equipment** is for those that work with any lifting equipment provided at work, those who employ such people, those that represent them and those who act as a competent person in the examination of lifting equipment.

UKMHA further guidance

Also see UKMHA Fact Sheets 1, 2, 6, 9, 23 and 27 for further information.

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The information in this Fact Sheet has been assembled and interpreted to give truck owners and users basic guidance on frequently asked questions. Further important information will be given in the quoted reference documents. Responsibility for meeting the safety obligations discussed rests with the employer, and the UKMHA will not accept liability for any problem arising as a result of the content of this document. Technical Bulletins, containing more detailed information and updated as appropriate, are made available free to members of the **UKMHA SAFE USER GROUP**.

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34B Kingfisher Court,
Hambridge Road,
Newbury,
Berkshire RG14 5SJ

01635 277570
info@ukmha.org.uk
www.ukmha.org.uk