

Forklift Attachment

Forklift Attachments Alaska - Many different jobs would be impossible without the help of forklift attachments. Forklift attachments make many jobs safer, easier and quicker to complete. In addition to general forklift training, operators must be properly training for each attachment they intent to use. Forklift attachments come in a wide variety of hydraulic and non-hydraulic attachments. The benefits of utilizing a forklift attachment include decreasing: 1. Employee accidents; 2. Damage to stock; 3. Manpower; 4. Time; and 5. Fuel consumption. Equipment Considerations A forklift attachment can replace an existing forklift attachment or can be added to a forklift that does not already have one. Several equipment-related factors must be considered before any forklift attachment is replaced or added. These considerations include: 1. The forklift type; 2. The forklift's capacity; 3. The carriage type; and 4. The number of hydraulic functions. Not considering these issues will drastically increase the safety risks associated with operating the machine and its attachments. This can increase risks relating to operator safety, forklift damage, stock damage and more. Further safety factors must also be taken into consideration, which will be discussed in greater detail below. Forklift Rating and Re-Rating Manufacturers give forklifts a lift capacity rating that needs to be considered and adjusted when adding or changing forklift attachments. There are calculators available online from forklift attachment manufacturers to estimate each attachments particular lifting capacity. However, only the forklift manufacturer can provide accurate lifting capacities. Prior to installing any attachment, it is important to contact the local authorized dealer of the forklift brand being used and request that they re-rate the forklift in accordance with the attachment being considered for use. Once the forklift manufacturer has re-rated the machine, it will ideally have a new specification plate that is factory authorized. This new specification plate will replace the original plate and should be installed showing the new rating for the forklift. Equipment Upgrades When dealing with forklift attachments it is important to note that a forklift's hydraulic function is made up of a valve on the forklift with a lever located close to the operator which provides two passages of pressurized hydraulic oil to power the attachment features. Hydraulic forklift attachments typically offer numerous features compared to the number of valves on the forklift. Not ever forklift attachment is hydraulic. When this happens, the forklift needs to have one or more valves added. There are numerous ways a valve can be added. The manufacturers of forklifts create accessories to simplify hose and valve routing. There are plenty of labor and parts involved which can be costly enough to make this an impractical solution. Other options include adding a cable reel and a hose in conjunction with a solenoid valve to divert oil from an existing location. Unfortunately, hose and cable reels can sometimes block the operator's view and can be easily damaged. Special hoses and a solenoid valve kit an be used to create an electrical conduit out of the reinforced braid. Since these hoses replace existing forklift hoses, they remain safe from external damage while maintaining clear vision for the operator. Safety Considerations Before using any type of forklift attachment, adequate training must be fulfilled. Operators need to be competent with removing, operating and fitting the attachment before using it. Two important safety factors must be considered before the use of any forklift attachment. First, any attachment on a forklift will reduce its nominal load rating, as mentioned above. The nominal load rating is computed with a stock fork carriage and forks. However, the actual load rating may be substantially lower. Secondly, the forklift's center of gravity will be affected when any forklift attachment is added. The forklift's stability will be reduced and this needs to be computed for safety. Because the weight of the attachment will be placed in front of the forklift's fulcrum point, it is necessary to drive the forklift as though it is partially loaded, even prior to picking up a load. Operators need to travel gently and slowly every time they use an attachment and take extra care while turning. Every attachment should be listed on the forklift capacity data plate. To maintain safety, special checks need to be completed before using any forklift attachment. The forklift attachment needs to be the right one for the type of forklift being used, appropriate for the load at hand, correctly

attached, locked in place and permitted on the data plate of the forklift.

List of Common Forklift Attachments

Discover a list of common forklift attachments and how they are utilized below. There are many more attachments available than are listed here but this will cover the most widely-used. As you will see, the large variety of attachments available have the capacity to greatly increase the efficiency of many jobs.

SIDESHIFTER: Allows the operator to move the forks laterally, allowing for easier placement of a load without the need to reposition the entire forklift.

FORK POSITIONERS: The fork positioners adjust for different loads by moving the forks together or apart in relation to each other.

DIMENSIONING DEVICES: Dimensioning devices offer cargo dimensions to create more warehouse efficiency and better truck and trailer space. This is commonly used with billing systems that record volume.

ROTATOR: Rotators help to right tilted skids and are useful for fast unloading and tackling custom load requirements. Many attachments include a rotator feature.

ROLL AND BARREL CLAMP: Allows for grasping of load with a rounded shape, such as rolled material and barrels, often with various pressure setting to avoid damage to more fragile materials. These attachments sometimes also have a rotate function to assist with, for example, rotating an item from a horizontal to a vertical position.

CARTON AND MULTIPURPOSE CLAMP: The carton and multipurpose clamp is for grasping loads with a squared shape. It also features pressure settings to handle bales, boxes and cartons.

POLE ATTACHMENTS: Long, metal pole used in place of forks to lift rolled items such as carpet or linoleum.

SLIP SHEETER OR PUSH-PULL: Slip sheeter or push-pull attachment lets the operator move slip sheets with a clamping option instead of pallets. It can pull the slip sheet onto thin and wide metal forks to facilitate pushing or loading. The attachment variations include “Save,” where the slip sheet is removed to be used again or “Standard.”

DRUM HANDLER: The drum handler is specifically designed to transport drums. It might feature arms to hold the drum or be a spring-loaded model to grip the top lid.

DRUM AND STORAGE BIN TIPPER: Allows for quick transfer of loose or liquid contents in large containers.

MAN BASKET: The lift platform known as a man basket is designed to transport workers vertically. It is outfitted with brackets and railings to anchor safety harnesses.

TELESCOPIC FORKS: Allows operation in a warehouse using two pallet stacking where one shelf is placed directly behind another with no aisle between the two.

SCALES: Scales allow forklift operators to weigh their pallets during transport. This increases efficiency by providing simultaneous data and not making the operator travel back and forth to scales. This attachment can be used for operators who bill by weight in legal-for-trade applications.

SINGLE-DOUBLE FORKS: Allow movement of a single pallet or platform or two pallets side by side. With the correct attachment/s a single forklift can be used for multiple specialist materials handling tasks alongside normal lifting tasks, thus reducing the need for owning a specialist unit alongside a normal unit and the larger running and maintenance costs associated with multiple units.

SNOW PLOW: Designed for snow removal and distribution but can also be used to move other types of loose material.

SKIPS: Allows safe and speedy removal of waste to the appropriate skip or waste compactor. Skips are available in a roll-forward type and a bottom-emptying type.

BOOMS AND JIBS: Booms and jibs allow forklifts extended reach. They are available to transport deep or highly stacked loads, suspended loads and more. These attachments can be low profile, precision lifting or reach over models to facilitate extended lengths.