

OSHA Forklift Audit-Readiness Checklist

Powered industrial truck operator training — 29 CFR 1910.178(l)

Run through this list before an inspector does. Every item maps to a specific OSHA requirement or a gap we see cost employers in citations. Check what you can prove on paper today.

1. Training & certification records

- ☐ **Formal instruction record for every operator** 1910.178(l)(2)(ii)
Lecture, online, or written materials plus a knowledge check. You need proof it happened, not just that it was offered.
- ☐ **Practical evaluation record for every operator** 1910.178(l)(2)(iii)
A hands-on evaluation by a qualified evaluator, in your workplace, on your equipment. A training certificate alone does not satisfy this.
- ☐ **Certification record with the four required fields** 1910.178(l)(6)
Operator name, training date, evaluation date, and the identity of the person who did the training/evaluation.
- ☐ **Re-evaluation at least every three years** 1910.178(l)(4)(iii)
Calendar it. Expired certifications are one of the most common — and most easily avoided — citations.
- ☐ **Refresher training after trigger events** 1910.178(l)(4)(ii)
Accidents, near-misses, observed unsafe operation, a new truck type, or workplace changes all require refresher training and re-evaluation.

2. Coverage gaps that cause citations

- ☐ **Everyone who touches a truck is certified**
Including fill-ins, temps, and "just moving it real quick." If they operate it, they need certification.
- ☐ **New hires certified before operating independently** 1910.178(l)(1)
Trainees may only operate under direct supervision, away from other workers. Prior-employer certificates do not transfer your evaluation duty.
- ☐ **Training covers your trucks and your site** 1910.178(l)(3)
Truck-specific topics (controls, capacity, stability) and workplace-specific topics (surfaces, ramps, pedestrian traffic, narrow aisles).
- ☐ **Records kept for operators who left**
Departed operators stay in your records. If an incident from their tenure surfaces, you still need their file.

3. Day-to-day discipline

- ☐ **Daily pre-operation inspections are documented** 1910.178(q)(7)
Each truck examined before service, defective trucks pulled from service.

☐ **Operators use restraints and respect capacity limits**

Seat belts worn, loads within rated capacity, pedestrian areas respected — the behaviors your practical evaluation should verify.

4. The two-minute test: if OSHA arrived today

☐ **Could you produce a certified-operator roster in minutes?**

Not a stack of folders — a current list with status, evaluation dates, and expirations.

☐ **Are your evaluation records signed and dated?**

Unsigned checklists read as incomplete records.

☐ **Can an inspector verify a certificate is genuine?**

Certificates with a verification code or QR remove any question of authenticity.

Forklift Certified keeps all of this in one place: operators train on their phones (English or Spanish), supervisors record practical evaluations digitally, and the whole file exports as a one-click audit pack.

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Educational aid only — not legal advice. Refer to 29 CFR 1910.178 for the full standard.