

How to Catch Forklift Problems Early with a 3-Minute Inspection

Forklifts work hard every day—and most breakdowns or safety issues don't happen all at once. They start small. A simple 3-minute inspection at the start of each shift can help catch problems early, reduce downtime, and keep operators safe.

1. Walk Around (1 Minute)

- Check for fluid leaks under or around the forklift
- Inspect forks and mast for cracks, bends, or damage
- Look for loose or missing bolts
- Inspect tires for wear, damage, or uneven tread



2. Safety & Controls Check (1 Minute)

- Ensure seatbelt is secure and functional
- Test horn and lights
- Check brakes and steering response
- Watch for dashboard warning lights



3. Power & Lift Test (1 Minute)

- Test lift and lower functions for smooth movement
- Tilt mast forward and back
- Listen for unusual noises or vibrations
- Check battery or fuel levels

If You Spot a Problem

Report issues immediately, even if they seem minor. Tag out unsafe equipment, log the issue for maintenance, and never operate a forklift with a known safety concern.

Make It a Habit

Consistency is key. Use a simple checklist, train operators on the importance of inspections, and encourage a culture where reporting problems is supported. Three minutes per shift can prevent hours of downtime later.