

## Forklift Attachment

Forklift Attachments Iowa - Many different jobs would be impossible without the help of forklift attachments. Forklift attachments make many jobs safer, easier and quicker to complete. Forklift operators require training for each attachment they will be using as well as their general forklift training. Many hydraulic and non-hydraulic forklift attachments are available. They offer numerous benefits by decreasing man-power, employee accidents, fuel consumption, damage to stock and time. Equipment Considerations A forklift attachment can replace an existing forklift attachment or can be added to a forklift that does not already have one. There are many equipment factors to consider prior to adding or replacing any forklift attachments. Considerations include the carriage type, the forklift model, the capacity of the forklift and the number of hydraulic functions used to power the features of the attachment. Failing to take these aforementioned factors into consideration can create extra safety hazards and risks for the operator, the forklift, its' attachments and the stock. Further safety factors must also be taken into consideration, which will be discussed in greater detail below. Forklift Rating and Re-Rating Forklifts are given lift capacity ratings by the manufacturer which will need to be adjusted if adding or changing a forklift attachment. Online calculators are available from manufacturers of forklift attachment's to provide estimates on every attachments' lifting capacity. It is important to note that only the forklift manufacturer can provide accurate lifting capacities. The first step before installing any attachment is to get in touch with the authorized local forklift dealer to request that that forklift brand is re-rated accordingly with the attachment. After the manufacturer of the forklift has re-rated the forklift, it should have a new factory authorized specification plate. 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. While not all forklift attachments are hydraulic, hydraulic attachments often include more features than the forklift has valves. When this happens, the forklift needs to have one or more valves added. There are several methods of adding a valve. The manufacturers of forklifts create accessories to simplify hose and valve routing. However, the parts and labor to install these can be so expensive as to make this option impractical. Other options include adding a cable reel and a hose in conjunction with a solenoid valve to divert oil from an existing location. However, the operators' view may be compromised due to the cable reels and hose installation. These parts also may be easily damaged by their location. Special hoses and a solenoid valve kit can be used to create an electrical conduit out of the reinforced braid. Because these hoses replace the existing hoses housed in the forklift, the hoses are safe from damage while keeping the operator's field of vision clear. Safety Considerations Proper training must be obtained prior to fitting any forklift attachment. An operator must be competent in the fitting, operating and removal of the attachment. Before using any forklift attachment, two safety issues need consideration. First, any attachment on a forklift will reduce its nominal load rating, as mentioned above. Forks and a stock fork carriage compute the nominal load rating; although, the precise load rating may be much lower. Secondly, the forklift's center of gravity will be affected when any forklift attachment is added. Obviously, the stability of the forklift is reduced. Since the attachment's weight is prominent in front of the fulcrum point on the forklift, the operator needs to drive the machine as though it is partially loaded even before it is carrying a load. Thus, when using any attachment, an operator should travel at a slow speed and make turns slowly and gently. 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 A list of the most common attachments and their general uses are set out

below. There are numerous forklift attachments and this list will cover the most popular. The variety of attachments can drastically increase efficiency for 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 feature cargo dimensions useful for creating better efficiency in trucks, trailers and warehouses. This technology is often used alongside billing systems that monitor volume.

**ROTATOR:** A rotator helps to straighten tilted skids and handle custom load requirements and fast unloading. Numerous attachments have a rotator feature.

**ROLL AND BARREL CLAMP:** The roll and barrel clamp allows the forklift to grasp rounded loads including barrels. It is outfitted with different pressure settings to facilitate fragile options and often has a rotate function to simplify horizontal and vertical positioning.

**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 built for holding drums. It may have arms that encompass the drum for transporting or it may feature a spring-loaded jaw to grip the drum’s top lip.

**DRUM AND STORAGE BIN TIPPER:** The drum and storage bin tipper is designed for easier transport of liquid items or loose materials into bigger containers.

**MAN BASKET:** Lift platform meant for lifting workers and complete with railings and brackets for safety harnesses.

**TELESCOPIC FORKS:** The telescopic forks are used in locations with a two pallet stacking design where one shelf is placed right behind another with no aisle between them.

**SCALES:** Scales are helpful for allowing operators to transport pallets while weighing them. This stops the need for interrupting work with regular travel to the scales. It can be used in legal-for-trade weights for operations that bill by how much items weigh.

**SINGLE-DOUBLE FORKS:** The single-double forks can be used alongside regular lifting tasks. It allows a single pallet or platform to move or two pallets beside each other. Additional attachments can be used and this replaces the need for having a separate specialty unit; thus reducing maintenance and operating costs associated with more than one machine.

**SNOW PLOW:** Originally designed for snow removal, snow plow attachments can be used to move other loose items.

**SKIPS:** Skips facilitate fast and safe removal of waste to the proper waste or skip compactor. Skips are either a bottom-emptying model or a roll-forward 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.