

Forklift Operator Job Description

A comprehensive job description template
for Australian warehousing and logistics businesses

Business Name: _____

Location: _____

Employment Type: _____

Reports To: _____

Date: _____

DISCLAIMER

This template is provided for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. It is designed to reflect Australian workplace standards and logistics industry practices at the time of publication. You should review and tailor this template to suit your business, warehouse type, applicable modern award and specific requirements. For complex situations, independent legal or HR advice should be sought. RosterElf Pty Ltd accepts no liability for any loss arising from reliance on this document.

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1. Position Overview

1.1 Position Title

Forklift Operator / Forklift Driver / Materials Handler

1.2 Position Summary

The Forklift Operator is responsible for the safe and efficient operation of forklifts and other powered materials handling equipment to move, stack and retrieve goods within warehouse, distribution and logistics environments. This role requires strict adherence to workplace health and safety standards while maintaining productivity targets.

The position demands a valid High Risk Work Licence (Forklift), excellent spatial awareness and attention to detail. The operator must maintain equipment in good working order, ensure accurate stock movements and contribute to a safe warehouse environment.

1.3 Reporting Structure

This position reports to:

- Warehouse Manager / Supervisor
- Shift Supervisor
- Logistics Coordinator

1.4 Employment Type

This position is available as:

- Casual (variable hours based on business needs)
- Part-time (regular rostered hours)
- Full-time (38 hours per week)

2. Key Responsibilities

2.1 Forklift Operation

- Operate counterbalance, reach truck or order picker forklifts safely and efficiently
- Load and unload trucks, containers and delivery vehicles
- Move stock from receiving areas to storage locations
- Retrieve stock from warehouse locations for dispatch and order fulfilment
- Stack pallets and materials to maximise storage space utilisation
- Position loads accurately on racking systems at various heights
- Manoeuvre in confined spaces and congested warehouse environments
- Operate forklifts in both indoor and outdoor areas as required

2.2 Loading and Unloading

- Load outbound trucks efficiently and safely according to delivery schedules
- Unload inbound deliveries and verify goods against paperwork
- Secure and stabilise loads using appropriate restraints and techniques
- Ensure correct weight distribution when loading vehicles
- Handle various load types including palletised goods, crates and bulk items
- Coordinate with truck drivers regarding loading requirements

2.3 Stock Movement and Inventory

- Transfer stock between warehouse locations as directed
- Ensure accurate placement of goods in designated locations
- Scan barcodes or record stock movements in warehouse management system
- Maintain inventory accuracy through careful handling and documentation
- Assist with stocktakes and cycle counting activities
- Report discrepancies, damaged stock or location errors immediately
- Follow FIFO (First In First Out) principles for stock rotation

2.4 Safety Compliance

- Conduct pre-operational safety checks on forklifts before each shift
- Complete forklift inspection checklists and report defects immediately
- Operate within safe load limits and follow load capacity guidelines
- Maintain awareness of pedestrians and other equipment in work areas
- Use safety devices including seatbelts, lights and audible warnings
- Follow safe speed limits and traffic management protocols
- Report all incidents, near misses and hazards promptly
- Comply with all workplace health and safety policies and procedures

2.5 Equipment Maintenance

- Keep forklift clean and well-maintained through regular cleaning
- Monitor battery levels and arrange charging as required
- Refuel gas or diesel forklifts following safe procedures
- Check tyre pressure, forks and other components for wear or damage
- Report maintenance issues and equipment malfunctions immediately
- Ensure forklifts are parked safely at end of shift with forks lowered
- Assist with scheduled maintenance as directed

2.6 Warehouse Operations Support

- Assist with general warehouse duties during quieter periods
- Support other warehouse team members with materials handling
- Maintain clean and organised work areas and warehouse aisles
- Participate in warehouse improvement initiatives
- Follow receiving and dispatch procedures accurately
- Communicate effectively with supervisors, pickers and other operators

3. Required Skills and Attributes

3.1 Essential Skills

High Risk Work Licence (Forklift)

Current High Risk Work Licence for forklift operation (LF class) issued by WorkSafe or equivalent state authority. Must be able to operate various forklift types including counterbalance, reach trucks and order pickers depending on business requirements.

Spatial Awareness

Excellent spatial judgement and depth perception for manoeuvring in tight spaces. Ability to accurately judge distances, heights and load positioning. Awareness of forklift dimensions including mast height and turning radius.

Attention to Detail

Careful verification of loads, paperwork and stock locations. Precision in placing loads accurately on racking. Thoroughness in completing pre-start checks and safety inspections. Accuracy in recording stock movements.

Physical Fitness

Physical capability to operate forklifts for extended periods. Ability to climb on and off equipment frequently. Good hand-eye coordination. Sufficient strength to handle manual tasks including securing loads and minor equipment adjustments.

3.2 Personal Attributes

- Safety-conscious mindset and commitment to safe work practices
- Reliable and punctual with good attendance record
- Professional attitude and willingness to follow instructions
- Ability to work independently with minimal supervision
- Team player who supports colleagues and warehouse operations
- Flexible approach to changing priorities and work demands
- Good concentration and focus during repetitive tasks
- Willingness to work across different shifts if required
- Pride in maintaining equipment and work standards

4. Qualifications and Requirements

4.1 Mandatory Requirements

- Current High Risk Work Licence (Forklift) - LF class minimum
- Eligibility to work in Australia (citizenship, permanent residency or valid work visa)
- Minimum 18 years of age
- Physical fitness and ability to pass pre-employment medical if required
- Clean safety record with no serious workplace incidents

4.2 Desirable Qualifications

- Additional forklift licences (reach truck, order picker, etc.)
- Certificate II or III in Warehousing Operations
- Dangerous goods handling certification if applicable
- Experience with warehouse management systems (WMS)
- RF scanner operation experience
- Previous warehouse or logistics experience

4.3 Experience

Previous experience as a forklift operator in warehouse, logistics or manufacturing environments is highly regarded. Entry-level positions may be available for licensed operators with limited experience who demonstrate strong safety awareness and willingness to learn. Operators should have practical experience with the specific forklift types used in the workplace.

5. Working Conditions

5.1 Hours of Work

- Shift work may include day, afternoon or night shifts
- May include weekend and public holiday work depending on operation
- Typical shift lengths of 8-12 hours
- Overtime may be required during peak periods
- Roster provided in advance as per award requirements

5.2 Physical Requirements

- Operating forklifts for extended periods (up to full shift duration)
- Climbing on and off forklift equipment multiple times per shift
- Working at heights when operating reach trucks or order pickers
- Twisting and turning to maintain visibility while operating
- Occasional manual handling tasks associated with load preparation

- Prolonged sitting while operating forklifts

5.3 Work Environment

- Warehouse and distribution centre environments
- May work in temperature-controlled, cold storage or ambient conditions
- Both indoor and outdoor work areas
- Exposure to noise from equipment and machinery
- Interaction with trucks, delivery vehicles and mobile equipment
- Dust, vehicle emissions and warehouse environmental conditions

5.4 Safety Equipment

- High visibility vest or clothing (provided)
- Steel-capped safety boots (required)
- Hard hat in designated areas
- Hearing protection when required
- Safety glasses or goggles as needed
- Gloves for specific tasks

6. Award Information

6.1 Modern Award Coverage

This position is typically covered by the Storage Services and Wholesale Award 2020 (MA000084). The award sets minimum pay rates, penalty rates, allowances and conditions for employees in warehousing, storage and wholesale distribution businesses. Some businesses may be covered by different awards depending on the industry and business activities.

6.2 Classification Level

Forklift Operators are generally classified at Level 3 or above under the award:

- Level 3: Forklift operators with basic LF licence operating standard counterbalance forklifts
- Level 4: Experienced operators with multiple licences or specialised equipment operation
- Higher levels: Operators with additional responsibilities such as leading small teams or training duties

The specific classification level will be determined based on the duties performed, licence types held and the experience of the successful candidate.

6.3 Penalty Rates and Allowances

Employees are entitled to penalty rates for work performed:

- Afternoon shift: Applicable shift loading
- Night shift: Higher shift loading

- Saturday and Sunday: Premium rates apply
- Public holidays: Premium rate applies
- Cold storage allowance: If working in refrigerated or freezer environments

Casual employees receive a 25% casual loading instead of paid leave entitlements. Refer to the Storage Services and Wholesale Award for current rates and conditions.

7. Expected Behaviours

7.1 Safety Leadership

- Prioritise safety above productivity in all situations
- Never operate forklifts when tired, unwell or impaired
- Stop work immediately if unsafe conditions are identified
- Report all incidents and near misses without delay
- Follow safe operating procedures and speed limits at all times
- Challenge unsafe behaviours observed in others
- Participate actively in safety meetings and toolbox talks

7.2 Operational Excellence

- Maintain productivity targets while adhering to safety standards
- Handle goods with care to minimise damage
- Ensure accurate stock movements and location updates
- Communicate clearly with supervisors about progress and issues
- Adapt to changing priorities and urgent requirements
- Maintain high standards of housekeeping in work areas

7.3 Equipment Care

- Treat forklifts and equipment with respect and care
- Complete pre-start checks thoroughly every shift
- Operate equipment within manufacturer specifications
- Report maintenance issues promptly and accurately
- Keep equipment clean and well-presented
- Never operate equipment with known faults or defects

7.4 Professionalism and Teamwork

- Arrive on time and ready to work for rostered shifts
- Notify supervisor of absence or lateness as soon as possible
- Support colleagues with materials handling and warehouse operations
- Communicate respectfully with all team members and management

- Accept feedback constructively and implement improvements
- Follow instructions and company policies consistently

8. Application Process

8.1 How to Apply

Interested candidates should submit:

- Current resume/CV
- Copy of current High Risk Work Licence (Forklift)
- Copies of any additional licences or certifications
- Brief cover letter outlining forklift experience and availability
- Contact details for two employment referees
- Details of any workplace incidents or licence suspensions

8.2 Selection Process

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to:

- Initial phone screening interview
- Practical forklift skills assessment at the workplace
- Face-to-face interview with warehouse management
- Reference checks with previous employers
- Pre-employment medical and drug and alcohol screening if applicable

8.3 Equal Opportunity

We are an equal opportunity employer and welcome applications from all qualified candidates regardless of age, gender, cultural background, disability or other characteristics protected by law.

Position Acknowledgement

I have read and understood this job description. I understand that my duties may be varied from time to time to meet the operational needs of the business.

Employee Name: _____

Employee Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

For Manager Use Only

Manager Name: _____

Manager Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____