

4 Important Questions to help you determine what type of Forklift you need!

1. Forklift Capacity? – What does this mean and Why is it important?

The capacity of a forklift is the amount of weight it is able to lift. Forklift capacity is found on the unit's data plate along with other important information. Remember, the higher you lift a load, the lower the capacity will become. Also, if you add an attachment, this will also affect the unit's capacity. Make sure you have a good idea of the weights and sizes of the loads you intend to lift. It is important to know what capacity unit you need not only to make sure you get the job done, but that you get it done safely. Using a forklift with too small of a capacity can cause damage to the goods you are lifting and can be potentially deadly to operators and those around them.

2. Load Center? – What does this have to do with my load?

Load weight, weight distribution, size, shape, and position are key factors affecting the stability of the forklift. Forklifts are designed to carry a capacity load at a standard load center, commonly 24 inches. This means that the forklift's capacity was determined as if the load were a cube whose weight is evenly distributed (i.e., whose center of gravity is exactly in the center of the cube) and which is resting on a standard pallet having dimensions of 48 inches by 48 inches. With such a load, the horizontal distance from the center of the load to the vertical part of the forks would be 24 inches. Of course, most loads are not perfectly shaped cubes having their center of gravity exactly in the middle of the cube. To the extent that the load differs from this theoretical load — such as if it is irregularly shaped, has unbalanced weight distribution, or is not centered on the forks — the capacity may be reduced.

3. Lifting Height? – Is the Sky The Limit ?

Along with capacity, you also need to know how high you want to lift your material and if you have any height restrictions. Lift height can be key if you are working on projects that reach above the typical 188"-189" of a triple stage upright mast. "Quad" units have a fourth mast, allowing them to lift to heights of 240" or more. A forklift's collapsed height is measured from the tallest part of the unit to the floor, when the forks are completely lowered. This measurement is important if you have low doors or ceilings in the building you are working in, or in the trucks you are loading/unloading.

4. My Application? – We aren't talking Smart Phones are we?

When selecting a forklift two of the very first questions that should come to mind are "What am I using this forklift for? & Where am I using it?" The answer to those 2 questions is your application. What are you using it for: to stack pallets, move large rolls of paper, carpet or logs, piping? The possibilities are endless. Where are you doing the primary lifting: in a warehouse, outside on asphalt, gravel, mud, grass, in the woods? The product you are moving and the type of environment you are working in determines your application. The type of application you have determines certain specifications on your forklift such as the type of fuel, tires, and any attachments you might need.