

SAFE USE OF FORKLIFT HOOK ATTACHMENTS

Applies to: Eichinger, Conquip, and similar hook and lifting point attachments for forklift trucks

Purpose

Forklift hook attachments convert a forklift into a lifting device capable of handling suspended loads via a central hook or shackle point.

They are ideal for lifting loads that cannot be palletised or accessed with forks directly.

This leaflet provides safe use guidance to prevent overloading, tipping, or equipment failure.

Before Use

- Inspect the attachment – Check frame, fork pockets, welds, hooks, and pins for cracks, deformation, or corrosion.
- Verify SWL (Safe Working Load) – Ensure the attachment's capacity exceeds the total weight of the load, including lifting gear.
- Check certification – Ensure the attachment and lifting accessories (chains, slings, shackles, etc.) have valid inspection tags.
- Confirm forklift capacity – Verify that the forklift's rated capacity (at the relevant load centre) is not exceeded when using the hook attachment.
- Ensure secure fitment – Fork pockets must be fully engaged and locked using heel pins or retaining bolts.
- Inspect the hook – Check the safety latch, hook throat opening, and swivel for proper operation.
- Ensure the load path and area are clear of obstacles and personnel.
- Confirm operator competence – Only trained forklift operators should use hook attachments for lifting.

During Operation

- Fit and secure the hook attachment according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Ensure heel pins and safety locks are in place before lifting.
- Always lift vertically – never drag, pull, or side-load from the hook.
- Keep the load as close to the forklift mast as possible for stability.
- Raise and lower smoothly – avoid sudden or jerky movements.
- Never exceed the rated load for the forklift or hook attachment.
- Use tag lines to control long or swinging loads.
- Maintain communication between the operator and signaler.
- Ensure exclusion zones are maintained around the lift area.
- Fully lower the load before adjusting or repositioning the attachment.

Do Not

- Exceed the SWL of the attachment or forklift.
- Use if pins, bolts, or locking mechanisms are missing or damaged.
- Lift or carry people using the hook attachment.
- Use for towing, dragging, or pulling operations.
- Operate on uneven or soft ground.
- Modify, weld, or drill the attachment.

- Leave suspended loads unattended.
- Use the attachment if visibility or forklift balance is compromised.

After Use

- Lower and remove the load completely.
- Detach the attachment from the forklift and clean it.
- Inspect for wear, cracks, bent hooks, or damaged pins.
- Tag out and report any defects immediately.
- Store in a clean, dry, secure area away from damage or contamination.
- Maintain inspection and examination records as required by LOLER and PUWER.

Safety Reminders

- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions and load charts.
- Conduct a pre-use inspection and lifting plan before operation.
- Never exceed the forklift's capacity at the specified load centre.
- Keep all personnel clear of suspended loads and forks.
- Use appropriate PPE: safety helmet, gloves, safety boots, and high-visibility clothing.
- Have the attachment thoroughly examined periodically by a competent person.
- Never use hook attachments for lifting people or non-rated applications.

Support and Maintenance

For service, inspection, and spare parts, contact your local Lifting Gear and Safety Depot

Depot List

Bristol: 0117 9714883
Avonmouth: 0117 9550456
Newport: 01633 334450
Port Talbot: 01639 540007
Pembroke: 01646 574000
Plymouth: 01752 474488
Fareham: 01329 550988
Redruth: 01209 703990