



FREE STUDY GUIDE

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For use alongside supervised training

Reach Truck

Reach, retract and handle loads with confidence.



Theory knowledge. Practical preparation.

Pre-use checks, safe operation and revision with Little Cody.

STUDY & PRACTICE

How to use this guide

Scope. Reach trucks with the reach mechanism and attachment demonstrated by your instructor. Outdoor operation is included only where the actual model and workplace permit it.

Read alongside training. This original learner booklet supports supervised instruction. It does not replace the operator manual, workplace risk assessment, familiarisation or employer authorisation. Stop and ask if instructions conflict or anything is unclear.

Find your topic.

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LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

These are study notes, not permission to operate independently.



STUDY & PRACTICE

Training comes first

Learn the right category. Training on one machine type is not automatic competence on another. Learn the controls, protection and limits of the exact model before work.

Apply it at your workplace. Supervised practice, task-specific instruction and familiarisation must cover the routes, loads or work, and local hazards. Your employer decides when you are competent and authorised for the work.

Be ready to operate. Report anything affecting safe performance, including fatigue, illness or impairing medication. Use required PPE. Never carry an unauthorised passenger or defeat a safety device.

Keep competence current. Ask for further instruction when equipment, work or risks change, or if you feel uncertain. Report incidents and near misses.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

A certificate is evidence of training, not a shortcut around familiarisation.



STUDY & PRACTICE

Know your machine



Example machine only; not a condition or operating standard. Picture credit: page 24.

Identify these on your training machine:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Mast, carriage and lift chains | 2. Fork arms, heels and locking devices |
| 3. Reach carriage or moving mast | 4. Tilt and side-shift, where fitted |
| 5. Support legs and load wheels | 6. Drive/steer wheel and tyres |
| 7. Overhead guard and operator protection | 8. Battery, connector and retaining system |
| 9. Capacity plate: rated load weight, load centre and lift height | 10. Travel, brake and hydraulic controls |

STUDY & PRACTICE

Pre-use: look first

Before each shift/use. Follow the model and site checklist. Check the machine identity, instruction book, plate/labels and any required inspection status. A daily check does not replace maintenance or thorough examination.

Inspect the forks, locks, carriage, mast, chains and reach mechanism from safe positions. Look for damage, loose components, leaks and trapped debris. Check support legs, load wheels, drive tyre, guards, steps and the battery restraint. Never place hands inside moving assemblies.

Record and report. Do not assume the previous operator reported damage. If a defect could affect safety, do not operate. Follow isolation and reporting arrangements.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

Tag unsafe equipment: V.O.R. - Vehicle Off Road / Do Not Use. Follow the site isolation procedure.



STUDY & PRACTICE

Pre-use: test safely

In a clear test area, check steering, service and parking brakes, travel direction, horn and required safety devices using the model checklist. Test lift, lower, reach, retract and applicable tilt/side-shift smoothly. Confirm warning displays and limit functions work as instructed. Report drift, unusual noise or a fault.

Keep the test controlled. Use an authorised clear area, low-risk conditions and competent supervision during training. Never bypass a protection device to see what happens.

Before moving off. Select the intended function/direction and make fresh observations. Use the enable/travel controls and any brake release only through the model-specific sequence taught by your instructor.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

GOBO: Gear - Observation - Brake - Observation. Apply it through the actual model procedure.



STUDY & PRACTICE

Know the operating limits

Read the actual capacity plate for the load centre, lift height and attachment in use. A headline capacity is not a promise at every height. Establish the load weight and where its centre of gravity lies; an uneven or long load may be unsuitable even when its total weight seems acceptable.

WEIGHT

Know the load

POSITION

Load centre /
distribution

LIMITS

Height / attachment /
rating

Read the actual machine plate. No universal capacity.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

If a rating, weight or limit is unknown, stop and check before proceeding.



STUDY & PRACTICE

Stability and surfaces

Keep the reach retracted and forks/load at the prescribed travel position before moving. Extending the reach changes the load position and stability. Smooth steering and braking matter even when travelling empty. Do not reach out simply to avoid positioning the truck correctly.

Look at the route. Damaged floors, wet surfaces, debris, thresholds and unsuitable slopes can change control and support. Report problems and use an approved alternative.

Respect changes. A new attachment, load, platform configuration or route may need a different assessment and additional instruction. Never improvise counterweights or override limits.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

Smooth controls cannot make unsuitable ground or an unsafe configuration safe.



STUDY & PRACTICE

People and observation

Keep people separate. Follow barriers, marked routes and site access rules. A horn, warning light or sensor does not give right of way.

Look before every movement. Check the direction of travel, side/rear swing and the movement path. Stop if the view or clearance is inadequate. Use a trained banksman only under the agreed safe system.

LOOK

All around

PLAN

Clear route

MOVE

Observe continuously

Stop whenever the view or clearance is inadequate.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

If agreed communication or sight of a required banksman is lost, stop immediately.



STUDY & PRACTICE

Travel under control

Observe all around and then in the direction of travel. Allow for rear swing, support legs and the load. Travel with the reach retracted, suitable ground clearance and the specified tilt where fitted. If the load blocks the view, use the approved clear-view direction or stop for a safe plan.

Adjust to conditions. Follow site speed rules and slow enough for visibility, load, surface and stopping distance. Approach doors, junctions and blind corners cautiously.

New direction, new observation. Do not rely on an earlier check. Stop before a change that the machine instructions require to be made stationary. Never operate controls while distracted.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

Look in the direction you are moving; stop if you cannot see a safe route.



STUDY & PRACTICE

Pick up a pallet

Check first. Confirm the pallet, load and fork spacing are suitable. Approach squarely and stop at a safe distance. Secure the truck for stationary handling as the model requires.

Engage and lift. Level the forks as required, align with the openings and obtain the specified engagement. Extend only after checking the whole movement path. Lift just enough to clear the support, then retract without dragging.

Prepare to travel. Confirm the pallet is supported and stable. Retract fully, set the prescribed travel height/tilt and make fresh observations before moving.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

Do not travel with the reach extended.



STUDY & PRACTICE

Place into racking

Plan the position. Check the bay, pallet supports, rack capacity and clearances. Select a height and load within the truck plate limits.

Raise under control. Stop and secure the truck in the prescribed position. Raise smoothly, checking overhead and side clearance. Reach into the bay only when aligned and clear.

Set down. Lower onto the intended supports and confirm stable support before releasing the load. Withdraw the forks freely, retract and lower to the prescribed travel position.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

Nobody may reach into the rack to guide your forks.



STUDY & PRACTICE

Retrieve and withdraw

Inspect the load. A shifted pallet, damaged rack or loose load needs a safe plan, not a quick attempt.

Engage fully. Set the forks to the correct level, reach in carefully and confirm engagement. Lift sufficiently to clear the supports without striking anything above.

Clear the rack. Retract smoothly with the load supported. Check that nothing catches. Before travelling, restore the prescribed reach, height and tilt configuration. Look in the travel direction, making brief clearance checks only when safe.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

If the pallet snags, stop. Do not pull harder.



STUDY & PRACTICE

Floors and outdoor use

Not every reach truck is the same. Some models are designed for indoor/outdoor work and use suitable tyres. Other models need smooth indoor floors.

Check the whole application. Tyre specification, clearance, gradient limits and the manufacturer's permitted use must suit the route. Changing tyres alone is not approval to operate outside.

Plan the journey. Check thresholds, wet or uneven surfaces, drainage channels and overhead clearance. Follow the exact loaded/unladen gradient procedure; do not turn across a slope or attempt a route outside the truck's limits.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

Ask which routes this particular reach truck is approved to use.



STUDY & PRACTICE

Parking and charging

Park in the authorised location. Retract the reach and set tilt as prescribed, lower forks, secure against movement using the specified brake/direction-control procedure, switch off and prevent unauthorised use. Keep exits, fire equipment and walkways clear.

Charge safely. Use only the approved battery/charger combination and charging area. Follow the correct isolation and connection sequence. Keep ignition sources away and provide the ventilation required for the battery type.

Do not improvise. Only authorised trained people should service or change batteries. Report damaged connectors, leaking or unusually hot batteries. Follow the site emergency plan for smoke, fire or leakage.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

Park safely before leaving the operating position, even for a short interruption, and remove the key. On keyless machines, log out or secure access as instructed.



STUDY & PRACTICE

If something goes wrong

Stop safely. Use the taught emergency response for the actual model. Keep people away from an unstable load, damaged machine or other danger. Do not attempt a movement that could worsen the situation.

Report and prevent reuse. Tell the responsible person what happened. Apply the site isolation/tagging procedure: V.O.R. means Vehicle Off Road. A tag does not replace necessary isolation.

Leave repair to authorised people. Do not search for hydraulic leaks with your hands, enter a mechanism or work beneath unsupported equipment. Return to service only after the authorised competent person confirms it is safe.

Know the emergency plan. Identify the alarm, first-aid and rescue contacts before starting. Follow the model-specific overturn/entrapment instructions taught during familiarisation.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

A near miss or small contact still needs reporting.



STUDY & PRACTICE

Practical preparation

Demonstrate checks, plate reading, unladen and laden travel, observation, controlled turns, pickup, stacking and retrieval at agreed heights, free withdrawal and safe parking. Your instructor sets the actual loads, heights and exercise. Shunting allowances are set by the examiner for each manoeuvre.

Explain your decisions. Be ready to show why the load/work, route, machine and protection are suitable. If a task cannot be completed safely, stop and explain why.

Practise under supervision. Use agreed equipment, loads, heights and areas. Do not practise emergency situations by creating a real hazard.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

The aim is safe, controlled work - not rushing to finish.



STUDY & PRACTICE

Ready for assessment

Confirm your scope. Ask which machine, configuration and practical exercises are included. Tell the instructor if a control or task is unfamiliar.

Theory at FLT Academy. The formal online test is supervised and unlocked by the trainer. Timing starts when you open it. Wait for the instruction to begin, and ask about the test rules beforehand.

Practical assessment. Listen to the briefing, make your checks and observations, and stop whenever safety requires it. The examiner explains the assessment rules; this guide is not a marking sheet.

Use the next pages to revise. Answer in your own words before checking the suggested answers. These are fresh study prompts, not copies of the live examination.

LITTLE CODY'S REMINDER

Ask now if you are unsure. Understanding matters more than memorising a phrase.



Check your understanding

1. Why can a plate show less capacity at a greater height?

2. The load weighs less than the headline capacity. Is that enough?

3. What must happen to the reach before normal travel?

4. What should you do if a pallet catches during withdrawal?

5. Does fitting different tyres automatically authorise outdoor use?

6. What confirms a pallet can be released in a rack?

Check your understanding

7. Where should you look while withdrawing from a load?

8. What is checked before extending into a bay?

9. Why inspect load wheels as well as the drive tyre?

10. Can someone guide forks by hand under a raised pallet?

11. Who decides the assessed shunting allowance?

12. What should happen after a safety-critical defect is found?

Suggested answers

- 1.** The permitted capacity depends on the stated height, load centre and configuration. Read the applicable rating, not just the largest number.
- 2.** No. Check load centre, height, attachment, stability and pallet condition too.
- 3.** Retract it and restore the prescribed travel configuration.
- 4.** Stop, secure the truck and obtain a safe plan. Do not drag or force it.
- 5.** No. The model, tyre specification, route and manufacturer limits must all permit the work.
- 6.** It is stably resting on its intended supports and the forks can be withdrawn freely.

Suggested answers

- 7.** Mainly in the direction of travel, with brief safe checks of pallet and fork clearance; stop if you cannot maintain a safe view.
- 8.** Alignment, side/overhead clearance, the load and its supports, and the complete reach movement path.
- 9.** All support/contact points affect safe travel and stability; damage or debris may make operation unsafe.
- 10.** No. Keep people away and use a safe alternative.
- 11.** The examiner specifies it for each manoeuvre; do not assume a universal free allowance.
- 12.** Stop safely, report it and isolate/tag the truck under the site procedure until authorised safe return to service.

COMPLETE WITH YOUR INSTRUCTOR

Your workplace notes

Machine make/model and training scope

Plate limits / load or occupancy / height

Approved routes, ground and environment

Required protection and daily checklist

Emergency, rescue and defect-reporting contacts

Instructor notes / points to practise

Sources and credits

Use the exact operator manual first. The sources below support general guidance, not approval of a particular task. Links were checked on 22 September 2026. Manufacturer examples describe only their own designs.

[HSE: Rider-operated lift trucks, L117](#)

[HSE: Workplace transport safety, HSG136](#)

[Toyota: BT Reflex indoor/outdoor reach truck](#)

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Using this guide. Original learner text and revision prompts for supervised learning. Check against the actual machine and training scope before student use. Formal exam questions and marking criteria are not reproduced.

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