WORKPLACE TRANSPORT

Workplace transport risk assessment: warehouse / distribution centre

This is a starting point. Your assessment must reflect your own site: walk it, talk to the people who drive and work there, and change anything that doesn't fit.

Company and site	Assessed by	Date	Review date

Hazard	Who might be harmed	Typical controls (HSE)	How you'll check it's working	Source	Already in place?	Action by whom / by when	Done
Every site with vehicles							
People on foot struck by vehicles where routes are shared or poorly separated	Employees on foot, visitors, contractors, visiting drivers out of their cabs	Separate pedestrian and vehicle routes, preferably entirely, following the paths people naturally walk ("desire lines"). Where not possible: markings and signs, raised kerbs, barriers or guard rails at building entrances and exits, corners, and places where people could step straight into a road. Separate vehicle and pedestrian doors, with vision panels.	Watch a busy hour: are people using the walkways, or cutting across? Note the shortcuts; they show where the route doesn't match the desire line. Re-check monthly and after any layout change.	HSG136 paras 47, 49, 50; INDG199 p1–2			
Vehicles too fast for the site, so drivers can't stop or avoid people	Pedestrians, other drivers	Fixed traffic calming (speed humps, narrowed routes, rumble strips), checking they don't make some vehicles unstable (most lift trucks can't take humps). Speed limits that suit the vehicles and loads, are based on measured actual speeds, are clearly signed and are enforced.	Measure actual speeds on the main routes, as HSE suggests when setting limits, then spot-check after the limit is set.	HSG136 paras 62–64, 67; INDG199 p2–3			
Poor visibility at bends, junctions and crossings	Pedestrians, drivers	Avoid sharp or blind bends; where you can't, give enough visibility at junctions and bends, for example with convex mirrors. Signs placed so people can see and act on them in time, kept clean, reflective or lit if used in the dark. Road markings maintained, and faded ones replaced.	Walk each junction and crossing from the driver's seat and on foot. Can each see the other in time? Check mirrors and markings monthly.	HSG136 paras 61, 70, 72; INDG199 p2–3			
Forklifts and lift trucks							
People on foot struck by lift trucks in operating areas	Employees on foot, visitors, drivers out of their cabs	"Where possible, prohibit pedestrians from areas where lift trucks are operating and only allow access to those who operate truck equipment, or supervisors." If not possible: separate them, with a physical barrier where possible; mark pedestrian routes and crossing places; warning signs; horn instructions at set points. Other measures: reversing bleepers, beacons, mirrors or CCTV, presence-sensing equipment, hi-vis where other controls aren't enough.	Count people inside lift-truck areas over a shift. Who are they, and why are they there? Check that barriers are still in place and gates kept shut.	L117 paras 121–122			

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Untrained or unauthorised people driving lift trucks	The driver, people nearby	Training in all three stages (basic, specific job, familiarisation), then written authorisation for the trucks each person is trained on. Nobody operates without authorisation, except a trainee under close supervision. Monitor and re-assess authorised operators.	Keep a list of authorised operators and the trucks each may use. Spot-check who is actually driving, especially early or late deliveries.	L117 paras 66–68 (see also HSG136 para 250)			
Trucks used by the wrong person, or left unsafe	People nearby	A device to prevent unauthorised use (removable key, PIN keypad or fob). Keys kept secure and issued by a responsible person. Never leave a truck unattended with the key in or the keypad live. End of shift: level ground, parking brake on, forks lowered, engine off, keys returned.	Walk the site at shift change: any keys left in, or forks left raised?	L117 para 136			
Lift truck overturns	The operator	Plan routes that avoid steep slopes, uneven surfaces and sharp turns; carry loads as close to the ground as practicable; only trained operators. On slopes: loaded trucks with forks facing uphill; never drive diagonally down a slope; never turn across a slope. Seat restraints fitted where possible and worn, unless a risk assessment concludes otherwise.	Check that seat restraints are being worn, as HSE says site operators should. Look at the routes and slopes that trucks actually use.	HSG136 paras 154–155, 217–218			
HGVs and visiting drivers							
Visiting drivers who don't know the site	The visiting driver, site staff	Drivers report to the site operator on arrival for the layout, route, and where to park, load and unload. A site plan at the entrance with clear instructions in several languages, possibly with pictures. Co-operate with the driver's employer.	Ask the next three visiting drivers what they were told at the gate. Check the site plan at the entrance is current.	HSG136 paras 125–126			
Drivers on foot in the loading area during loading or unloading	Visiting drivers	Agree arrangements when the order is placed and confirm them in writing. Provide a safe place to wait, and a clearly marked safe position if the driver needs to watch loading. Drivers know they may refuse or stop loading for safety reasons.	Watch a delivery: where does the driver stand while the truck is loaded?	HSG136 paras 120, 122–123, 127–128			
Large vehicles that can't turn safely	Pedestrians, other drivers	Routes wide enough for large goods vehicles to manoeuvre safely, especially articulated and drawbar vehicles whose trailers swing out.	Watch the tightest turn on site with the largest vehicle that uses it.	HSG136 para 45			
Deliveries that clash with shift change	Pedestrians, car drivers	On large sites, schedule collections and deliveries away from the start and end of shifts.	Compare delivery times with shift times for a week.	HSG136 para 124			
Reversing							
People struck by reversing vehicles	Pedestrians, banksmen, other drivers	Remove the need to reverse first: a one-way system, drive-through loading and parking, turning areas. If reversing can't be avoided: marked reversing areas; keep non-essential people out; fixed mirrors; reversing aids on vehicles (CCTV, sensors); a trained banksman only when all other options have been exhausted.	Count reversing moves in a busy hour, and where they happen. Are people in the reversing areas while vehicles move?	HSG136 paras 90–92, 94; INDG199 p3			

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Vehicles reversing into structures or over edges	The driver, people nearby	Barriers, buffers, bollards or wheel stops that are visible and able to stop a vehicle at low speed; floor lines or guide rails to position the vehicle.	Check the stops for damage monthly; damage shows they are being hit.	HSG136 para 93			
Reversing aids relied on too much	Pedestrians	Know their limits. CCTV needs drivers to check it and react, needs clean lenses, and may not cover all blind spots. Alarms can be drowned out or ignored on a busy site. Test sensing systems regularly.	Include the camera, sensor and alarm on the daily vehicle check, and test that they work.	HSG136 paras 226–228, 230			
Loading bays							
Vehicle drives away or creeps from the bay during loading	Lift truck operators, people in the bay	Prevent movement: wheel chocks or trailer restraints, traffic lights or barriers, control of keys or cab access, a safe system so the driver knows when it is safe to leave.	Check every bay at a random time: is the vehicle restrained, and do the lights show the right state?	HSG136 paras 133–134			
Falls from the loading bay edge; crushing at the bay	People on the dock and below it	Mark the bay edges clearly; guard rails where needed. At least one exit from the lower level (two on wide bays), or a refuge. Dock levellers not at steep slopes, and used only by competent people.	Check edge markings and rails monthly. Watch whether people walk at the lower level between vehicles.	HSG136 paras 129–132			
Falls from vehicles during loading, sheeting or access	Drivers, loaders	Avoid work at height (work from the ground where possible); use collective protection (platforms, gantries with guard rails) before personal fall protection; safe steps and handholds; never jump down.	Watch who climbs onto trailers and loads, and why. Could that job be done from the ground or a platform?	HSG136 paras 172–176, 186–188			
Pedestrian routes and crossings							
People crossing vehicle routes at unmarked or dangerous points	Pedestrians	Marked, signposted crossing points with dropped kerbs; barriers or rails to stop crossing at dangerous points; deterrent paving to guide people to the crossing. Clear sight in all directions at crossings. Consider traffic flows, vehicle types and pedestrians' likely behaviour when siting crossings.	Watch where people actually cross. Do most use the crossing? If not, either the crossing is in the wrong place or the barrier is missing.	HSG136 paras 51–53; INDG199 p2			
Members of the public in work areas	The public	Keep public routes separate from work and segregated from vehicles, with clear signs. "The public should not be allowed in lift-truck operating areas." Consider scheduling deliveries outside opening hours.	Check signs and barriers on public routes during opening hours.	HSG136 paras 55, 57–58; L117 para 124 (same sentence in HSG136 para 58)			
Drivers							
Drivers not trained for this site, or not following the rules	Drivers, pedestrians	Training covering the site's routes, how to report faults and hazards, speed limits, parking and loading areas, PPE, supervision and emergency procedures. "Even experienced people should be monitored to make sure they are working in accordance with both the training they have received and any safe systems of work."	Observe driving against the site rules on different shifts, including nights and weekends, as HSE says to monitor. Record what you find.	HSG136 paras 248–249			
Vehicle defects	Drivers, pedestrians	Daily checks signed off before use; a simple way to report problems and take a vehicle out of use; planned maintenance.	Check that daily check sheets are being completed and that reported defects get fixed.	HSG136 paras 230–231			

Also read, for a warehouse / distribution centre: HSE HSG76 Warehousing and storage (cited in HSG136 para 58)

If the site is complex or you are not sure the controls are enough, get competent help. Regulation 7 of the Management Regulations 1999 requires every employer to appoint competent help with health and safety.

Next: put the routes, crossings and loading areas into a traffic management plan.