

Q: Can I use a Fork Lift on a public road

A: The simple answer is Yes, but it is not that simple.

What is classed as a public road? The definition of a road in England and Wales is ‘any highway and any other road to which the public has access and includes bridges over which a road passes’ (RTA 1988 sect 192(1)). This could mean for example that the shared car park on a private industrial estate is classed as a public under the act. If you cross a pavement to unload a truck parked outside the gates of your works premises this is classed as Road Use and there are many requirements and regulations to be followed.

There are different rules depending on how far you are going to travel, if you are travelling more than 1000 yards then you must comply with **The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986** or have **Type Approval which is official confirmation from a government or other body that a manufactured item meets required specifications**. Compliance can be quite onerous and may involve major modifications to your vehicle.

If you are travelling less than 1000 yards, then there is a relaxing of the rules (dispensation from compliance with the regulations)

The regulations dictate that your truck must be:

- Registered and the number plates must be displayed.
- Insured
- Taxed (depending on how far you travel will determine the amount of duty to be paid and in some cases a zero-rated tax disc may be issued)
- The vehicle may need the appropriate lighting systems depending on the conditions it is being used in
- When travelling unladen on a public highway the forks must be removed.
- The driver must hold the relevant category of driving licence, this can be a provisional licence and if so then L plates must be displayed on the vehicle. (as a fork lift truck is only fitted with one seat a provisional licence holder is permitted to drive without a full licence holder’s supervision)

The interpretation above is based on our current understanding of the regulations currently in place, it is your responsibility to ensure you comply with the law and you should make your own checks. Pro-skills will not accept liability for any problem arising because of the content of this document

Further advice can be obtained from:

- Your Local Councils Highways Department
- Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
- Department of Transport
- Acts and regulations are available as enacted or as amended at www.legislation.gov.uk

The Fork Lift Truck Association produce a Technical Bulletin on this matter that is free to members and available for purchase by non-members. Tel 01635 277577