

Toolbox Talks

Six short briefings with attendance records · about ten minutes each

Deliver these standing in the yard, not in an office. Point at the actual walkway, the actual blind corner and the actual loading bay. Ask the questions at the end and let people answer — a talk where nobody speaks has not landed.

Scope and limitations — read before use

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Adapt the wording in square brackets to match your site before delivering.

TOOLBOX TALK 1

Why we keep people and vehicles apart

Key points

- Twenty-four workers were killed after being struck by a moving vehicle at work in 2025/26. It is the second highest cause of death at work after falls from height.
- It is almost never a dramatic failure. It is an ordinary manoeuvre in an ordinary yard, and somebody on foot in the wrong place at the wrong moment.
- A forklift can weigh several tonnes. Being struck by one is not like being bumped by a car.
- Our walkways exist so that you and a vehicle are never in the same place at the same time. Using them is not bureaucracy, it is the whole control.

Ask the group

- Where are our walkways and are they clear today?
- Where do people cut the corner, and why?
- What would you do if you saw a visitor walking through the loading area?

Attendance

Name	Signature	Name	Signature

Talk delivered by	Signature	Date

TOOLBOX TALK 2

Reversing — the manoeuvre that kills

Key points

- Reversing is involved in a large share of workplace transport deaths. The driver cannot see behind, and mirrors do not show everything.
- We design out reversing where we can with the one-way system. Where we cannot, reversing only happens in the designated areas.
- If a marshal is being used, they are in charge of that manoeuvre. Do not give a driver conflicting signals — one marshal only.
- Never walk behind a vehicle that is manoeuvring. Never assume the driver has seen you. If you cannot see the driver's face or mirrors, they cannot see you.

Ask the group

- Where are our designated reversing areas?
- Who is trained to marshal here?
- What is the emergency stop signal, and who can give it?

Attendance

Name	Signature	Name	Signature

Talk delivered by	Signature	Date

TOOLBOX TALK 3

Loading and unloading

Key points

- This is where the vehicle, the machine, the load and people all come together. Most yard injuries happen here.
- Nobody is in the working area except the machine operator. That is the exclusion zone and it is not negotiable.
- Loads shift in transit. When straps or curtains come off, a load can fall. Inspect before releasing and never stand where a load could land on you.
- A vehicle driving away mid-operation is a known killer. Our control is [key control / traffic lights / supervised release] and it applies to every vehicle including regulars.

Ask the group

- What is our control to stop a vehicle moving off during loading?
- Where does a visiting driver wait on this site?
- What do you do if a load looks unstable when you open the curtain?

Attendance

Name	Signature	Name	Signature

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TOOLBOX TALK 4

Only authorised people operate machines

Key points

- A training certificate on its own does not authorise anybody. There are three stages: basic training, specific job training on our machines and site, and supervised familiarisation. Then a written authorisation.
- If your name is not on the training matrix as authorised for that machine, you do not operate it. That includes 'just moving it out of the way'.
- Authorisations and refreshers expire. If yours is due, tell your supervisor before it lapses, not after.
- Keys come out and the machine is isolated when it is left. An unattended machine with the key in is an invitation.

Ask the group

- Who is authorised for which machines here?
- What would you do if you were asked to move a machine you are not authorised for?
- When is your refresher due?

Attendance

Name	Signature	Name	Signature

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TOOLBOX TALK 5

Visiting drivers are our responsibility too

Key points

- We owe a legal duty to people who are not our employees, and that includes every delivery driver who comes through the gate.
- Drivers do not know our yard. They do not know where people walk or where the blind corners are. That is why they get the site rules card at reception.
- Do not let a driver wander into the working area. Direct them to the waiting area or back to the cab, whichever our rule is.
- If a driver ignores the rules, do not have an argument in the middle of the yard. Stop the operation and get a supervisor.

Ask the group

- Where is our driver waiting area?
- Who hands out the site rules card, and where is the signature kept?
- What do you do about a driver who does not speak much English?

Attendance

Name	Signature	Name	Signature

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TOOLBOX TALK 6

Pre-use checks and reporting defects

Key points

- The pre-use check is the last thing between a fault and an incident. It takes a few minutes.
- Brakes, steering, tyres, forks and mast, hydraulics, lights, horn, beacon, mirrors, seat restraint. Write it down — an unrecorded check did not happen as far as anyone else is concerned.
- If you find a defect that affects safety, the machine comes out of use until it is fixed. Not at the end of the shift, not tomorrow.
- Reporting a fault never gets anyone in trouble here. Saying nothing and carrying on does.

Ask the group

- Where are the pre-use check sheets kept and where do they go when complete?
- What would you take a machine out of service for straight away?
- Who do you report a defect to when your supervisor is not on site?

Attendance

Name	Signature	Name	Signature

Talk delivered by	Signature	Date