

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Safe Use of Manual Sack Trucks

1. Purpose

This SOP provides guidelines for the safe operation, handling, and maintenance of manual sack trucks to ensure the safety of personnel.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all employees, contractors, and visitors who operate or move loads using manual sack trucks within your company.

3. Responsibilities

- **Operators/Users:** Follow this SOP at all times when handling sack trucks.
- **Supervisors/Managers:** Ensure employees are trained, equipment is inspected, and safe practices are followed.
- **Maintenance Staff:** Conduct regular inspections and repairs of sack trucks.

4. Equipment Covered

- Manual Sack Trucks

5. Procedure

5.1 Pre-Operational Checks

- Inspect sack truck for defects (wheels, frame, handle, toe plate).
- Check load capacity rating – do not exceed manufacturer's limit.
- Ensure pathway is clear of obstructions, spills, or uneven surfaces. Ensure that your route is well planned.

5.2 Loading the Sack Truck

- Place the load centrally on the width of the toe plate, against the back of the frame.
- Bend knees, keep back straight if lifting is required.
- Place heavier items at the bottom and ensure the load is evenly distributed.
- Do not stack items higher than operator's eye level.
- Secure loose or irregularly shaped items with straps if necessary.

5.3 Operating the Sack Truck

- Keep control of the sack truck at all times.
- Push rather than pull where possible.
- Tilt only enough to balance the load.
- Maintain clear visibility of the route.
- Move at a safe walking pace, especially around corners, cambers or doorways or where pedestrians are prevalent.
- Avoid sudden movements, sharp turns, or overexertion. Avoid sudden stops, unless in an emergency.
- Use ramps or lifts when transporting between levels; avoid taking a sack truck up or down stairs or over curbs unless the sack truck has Stair Skids.

5.4 Parking and Storage

- Do not leave a loaded truck unattended. Unload the sack truck when not in use.
- Store upright in a safe area.
- Do not leave the sack truck obstructing pedestrian or vehicle access, especially fire exits.

5.5 Slopes and Ramps

- Going down a slope, keep the truck in front with you behind.
- When going up a slope, stay ahead of the truck, pulling it behind you.
- Move at an appropriate speed and stay in control at all times.

6. Safety Precautions

- Always wear appropriate PPE (e.g., gloves, safety shoes).
- High visibility clothing is always recommended.
- Do not overload or use a sack truck for purposes other than intended.
- Avoid using on steep inclines or unsuitable surfaces.
- Seek assistance for heavy, awkward, or oversized loads.

7. Training

- All employees must complete manual handling induction on employment.
- Refresher training should be provided as needed.

8. Records

- Inspection checklists
- Training attendance records
- Maintenance/repair logs

This is a generic document and should be used as a guidance document, every site and every situation is different and should be treated as such.