

Electric Forklift

Used Electric Forklift San Diego - Electric forklift models do not rely on combustion engines but use an electric motor instead. The electricity source is derived from either a fuel cell or internal industrial batteries. Internal batteries often provide the electrical source. They are capable of being recharged by connecting the battery to a source that is electrically compatible. Rechargeable battery options include lithium-ion or lead-acid. Electrical production by means of a fuel cell is similar to a battery source but cannot be recharged by connecting to an electrical source, instead requiring refueling. Electrical forklifts can do the same type of work as internal combustion engine forklifts. That is, they usually use two power-operated horizontal forks to load, transport for short distances and unload materials. The source of power is the main difference between an internal combustion engine and an electrical forklift model. Typically, electric forklift models are used indoors in warehouses and similar facilities that cannot rely on internal combustion engines due to interior air quality.

Electric Forklift Classifications The electric forklift truck can fall into one or more forklift truck classifications. They are:

1. Class 1: Electric Motor Rider Trucks These forklifts can have pneumatic or cushion tires. Pneumatic tires are used on forklifts primarily operated outdoors in dry areas and on uneven surfaces whereas cushion tires are better on forklifts used primarily indoors, on smooth surfaces.
2. Class 2: Electric Motor Narrow Aisle Trucks These types of forklifts operate in very narrow aisles, where space is limited. This allows for maximum use of storage space. Class 2 forklifts have a modified design to minimize the amount of space taken up by the forklift.
3. Class 3: Electric Motor Hand or Hand-Rider Trucks The Class 3 Electric Hand-Rider Trucks or Electric Motor Hand models are hand controlled. This means the operator uses a steering tiller and is positioned in front of the machine as opposed to riding on the forklift.
4. Class 6: Electric and Internal Combustion Engine Tractors The Class 6 Electric and Internal Combustion Engine Tractors are another classification. This includes models that can be used for broad application. The electric versions can be used outdoors in dry applications or used indoors.

A list of forklift trucks that are typically powered by electricity are:

Sources of Electricity for Electric Forklifts Mostly, electric forklift models are used for interior applications on even, flat floors. Battery-powered forklifts are better suited for interior jobs as they do not emit poisonous gases; making them ideal for food-processing and healthcare applications. Refrigerated jobs prefer to use fuel cell forklifts. They make no emissions and are capable of working in colder locations without a power reduction, unlike battery-operated models.

Lead-acid battery Lead-acid batteries are the most commonly used type of rechargeable battery. The lead-acid battery's ability to supply high surge currents means that it has a relatively large power-to-weight ratio. Electric forklift trucks rely on lead-acid batteries that are affordable and durable. However, lead-acid batteries are susceptible to freezing in colder temperatures. They also require maintenance which, if ignored, can shorten the life of the battery.

Lithium-ion Battery A lithium-ion battery or li-ion battery is another type of rechargeable battery used in electric forklifts. The main drawback of lithium-ion batteries is that they can be a safety hazard since they contain a flammable electrolyte that, if incorrectly charged or damaged can cause explosions and fires. Additionally, Li-ion batteries cost more compared to lead-acid batteries initially; although they need zero maintenance and provide better efficiency compared to lead-acid batteries. Another benefit is that the lithium-ion batteries can operate with a wider temperature range and better energy densities compared to lead-acid varieties.

Fuel Cell Forklifts with fuel-cell power showcase the benefits of both battery-operated forklift trucks and internal combustion models. Similar to battery-powered forklifts, there are no local emissions delivered from fuel cell models. One disadvantage is that fuel cell power efficiency is 40 to 50 percent which is about half the efficiency of lithium-ion batteries. However, fuel cell power has a higher energy density which can allow electrical forklifts to run longer. Fuel cell powered forklifts also have the advantage of performing better in lower temperatures as lithium-ion batteries. Refrigerated warehouses rely on fuel cell models due to their ability to function in cooler locations. Fuel cells need a fuel source in order to

create an electrical current and need refueling. Fuel cells only require approximately 3 minutes to refuel instead of the much longer recharging time for rechargeable batteries. Many larger companies that have multiple forklifts in their fleet running numerous shifts benefit from using fuel cell models that can keep operating without long periods of time spent charging.

Pros and Cons of Electrically Powered Forklifts

Advantages of Electric Forklifts

Electric forklifts are often a popular choice compared to internal combustion models if the lifting capacity doesn't exceed 12,000 pounds. There are many factors to consider in each specific application in order to determine whether an electric forklift is the best option. Taking a look at the pros and cons of electric forklifts versus internal combustion engine forklifts is necessary. Specific advantages of electric powered forklift models vs. internal combustion engine models are listed below.

1. Operating costs can be much lower for battery powered electrical forklifts because of the ongoing and often increasing cost of fuel.
2. Electricity costs are more predictable than fluctuating fuel costs. This makes electric forklifts a more reliable choice in terms of operating expenses and budgets.
3. Electric forklift trucks rely on recharging stations which eliminates the requirement of fuel transportation and storage for both the equipment and the job site.
4. Battery-powered electric forklift models and fuel cell electric forklifts generate no noise pollution or dangerous emissions. Both internal combustion engine forklifts and electric models have a back-up alarm that is noisy but necessary.
5. Operator fatigue and equipment wear and tear are reduced in electric forklift models with the automatic braking system.
6. Electric forklifts boast greater intervals between maintenance compared to internal combustion engine models. This is mainly because there are less moving parts required by a fuel cell or battery-powered forklift model.

Disadvantages of Electric Forklifts

For many of the reasons listed above, forklifts powered by electrical means have been more popular than power by internal combustion engines in recent years. There are numerous working conditions however that make electrical models less practical. Certain electric forklift models disadvantages as compared to combustion models are listed below.

1. Electric forklifts feature a lifting capacity of around 12k lbs. or less, limiting them from heavier jobs. This translates to using an internal combustion forklift on jobs where there is limited heavy lifting required.
2. Electric forklifts rely on battery power and require recharging stations to be installed. If there are none at the facility, this could greatly increase the overall cost.
3. Batteries need to be monitored to ensure adequate timing regarding how long they are charged. This is important since battery life can be reduced if they are charged too frequently or infrequently.
4. Electric forklift trucks are also initially more expensive than internal combustion engine forklifts.
5. Certain older buildings may need to undergo electrical upgrades to accommodate increased voltage systems.
6. Battery powered forklifts sometimes require machinery to lift or lower the heavy batteries when replacement of batteries is necessary.

Overall, electric forklift trucks provide numerous advantages compared to internal combustion engines however, they may not work in a variety of outdoor applications with their weight and weather restrictions.