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Front-End Loader Safety Fundamentals

INSTRUCTOR + PRINT PACKET

AUDIENCE	EST. TIME	REFERENCE
Loader operators & spotters	30-40 min	29 CFR 1926.602 / applicable ROPS requirements + manufacturer instructions

IMPORTANT USE NOTE

General formal instruction. Employer must provide model-specific hands-on training, manufacturer requirements and task/worksite evaluation.

What is inside this packet

- Instructor quick-start and site-specific preparation checklist
- Slide-by-slide trainer guide with discussion prompts
- Employee handout / key takeaways
- Printable 10-question knowledge check
- Separate answer key and coaching notes
- Attendance record
- Practical / workplace evaluation checklist
- Certificate wording and completion record
- Primary regulatory/source reference

Run a strong session without overcomplicating it.

1. PREPARE	Review the deck and packet. Insert your procedures, equipment, routes, photos, emergency contacts and site rules.
2. PRESENT	Use the PowerPoint/PDF on a screen. Pause for discussion rather than reading every bullet.
3. CHECK	Give the knowledge check. Review missed items and coach to the expected decision.
4. VERIFY	Complete required hands-on or workplace-specific practice/evaluation with an appropriate trainer/evaluator.
5. DOCUMENT	Use the attendance record, evaluation and certificate only after required training elements are complete.

BEFORE EMPLOYEES WORK

General formal instruction. Employer must provide model-specific hands-on training, manufacturer requirements and task/worksite evaluation.

Learning objectives

- Recognize rollover, struck-by, blind-spot and load hazards
- Inspect loader, attachment and work area before use
- Travel, load, dump and park with stable bucket position and controlled speed
- Coordinate safely with spotters, pedestrians, trucks and slopes

1. Machine stability

- Bucket/load changes the center of gravity.
- Slopes, uneven ground, sharp turns, raised loads and speed increase rollover risk.
- Use ROPS and seat belt/restraint as equipped and required.

DISCUSSION PROMPT

Where could this fail here?

2. Pre-use inspection

- Check tires/tracks, steering, brakes, hydraulics, bucket/attachment, pins, lights, horn/back-up alarm/camera and safety devices.
- Walk the area for drop-offs, soft ground, overhead lines and traffic.

DISCUSSION PROMPT

What control do we use?

3. Visibility and people

- Large blind areas exist around loaders.
- Use cameras/mirrors as aids, not substitutes for looking and site controls.
- Use a trained spotter when required and establish clear signals.

DISCUSSION PROMPT

What would make you stop?

4. Travel and load position

- Carry the bucket/load low for stability and visibility.
- Avoid sudden turns/braking and travel at a speed suitable for ground conditions.
- Do not travel with people in the bucket.

DISCUSSION PROMPT

Where could this fail here?

5. Loading and dumping

- Approach piles/trucks squarely and maintain stable ground.
- Do not undercut unstable material or work below unsupported loads.
- Keep people clear of bucket swing/dump zones.

DISCUSSION PROMPT

What control do we use?

6. Slopes, parking and maintenance

- Follow manufacturer slope limits and travel orientation.
- Park on stable ground, lower attachment, neutralize controls, set brake and shut down.
- Block/support raised components before maintenance; never rely only on hydraulics.

DISCUSSION PROMPT

What would make you stop?

Stop-work / red-flag conditions

- Traveling with bucket high
- Person enters blind spot without positive communication
- Working near edge/soft ground or excessive slope
- Maintenance under a raised bucket without approved blocking/support

SCENARIO

A loader operator needs to drive across uneven ground with a full bucket. What bucket position is generally safest?

RECOMMENDED RESPONSE

Carry the load as low as practical while maintaining safe ground clearance, use controlled speed and follow the manufacturer/site procedure.

Make it site-specific

- Actual loader controls, attachment and manufacturer manual
- Site traffic plan, spotter signals and backing controls
- Slope/edge/ground conditions and overhead clearances
- Hands-on loading/dumping and workplace evaluation

Front-End Loader Safety Fundamentals

KEEP THIS PAGE

Key decisions to remember

Machine stability: Bucket/load changes the center of gravity.

Pre-use inspection: Check tires/tracks, steering, brakes, hydraulics, bucket/attachment, pins, lights, horn/back-up alarm/camera and safety devices.

Visibility and people: Large blind areas exist around loaders.

Travel and load position: Carry the bucket/load low for stability and visibility.

Loading and dumping: Approach piles/trucks squarely and maintain stable ground.

Slopes, parking and maintenance: Follow manufacturer slope limits and travel orientation.

Stop and get help when...

- Traveling with bucket high
- Person enters blind spot without positive communication
- Working near edge/soft ground or excessive slope
- Maintenance under a raised bucket without approved blocking/support

Our site-specific information

- ☐ Actual loader controls, attachment and manufacturer manual
- ☐ Site traffic plan, spotter signals and backing controls
- ☐ Slope/edge/ground conditions and overhead clearances
- ☐ Hands-on loading/dumping and workplace evaluation

Employee notes:

Front-End Loader Safety Fundamentals - Knowledge Check

Employee: _____ Date: _____

1. A raised loader bucket generally:

- ☐ A. Raises the center of gravity and can reduce stability
- ☐ B. Improves stability
- ☐ C. Eliminates blind spots
- ☐ D. Increases brake capacity

2. A loader operator should normally travel with the bucket:

- ☐ A. Low as practical for stability/visibility
- ☐ B. Fully raised
- ☐ C. Dragging on the ground
- ☐ D. Above the cab

3. Blind spots are best controlled with:

- ☐ A. Site controls, operator checks and spotters/cameras as appropriate
- ☐ B. Speed alone
- ☐ C. Horn disabled
- ☐ D. Only mirrors

4. Before operating, inspect:

- ☐ A. Machine and work area
- ☐ B. Only fuel level
- ☐ C. Only bucket teeth
- ☐ D. Only paperwork

5. On slopes the operator should:

- ☐ A. Follow manufacturer/site limits and procedures
- ☐ B. Travel any direction at full speed
- ☐ C. Keep bucket raised
- ☐ D. Turn sharply

Score: _____ / 10 Passing requirement / retraining criteria:

6. People should be:

- ☐ A. Kept clear of bucket/load and machine travel zones
- ☐ B. Allowed to ride in the bucket
- ☐ C. Used as wheel chocks
- ☐ D. Positioned under raised loads

7. Maintenance under a raised attachment requires:

- ☐ A. Approved blocking/support and energy control as applicable
- ☐ B. Hydraulic pressure only
- ☐ C. Engine running
- ☐ D. A warning sign only

8. ROPS and operator restraint:

- ☐ A. Work together to protect the operator in a rollover when used as designed
- ☐ B. Are optional decorations
- ☐ C. Eliminate the need for training
- ☐ D. Allow higher travel speed

9. A spotter should use:

- ☐ A. Agreed signals and remain visible/safely positioned
- ☐ B. Random hand motions
- ☐ C. A position directly behind the loader
- ☐ D. No communication

10. This course alone qualifies an operator on every loader model.

- ☐ A. False
- ☐ B. True

Employee signature: _____

Answer key + coaching notes

1. **A - Raises the center of gravity and can reduce stability** | A raised loader bucket generally:
2. **A - Low as practical for stability/visibility** | A loader operator should normally travel with the bucket:
3. **A - Site controls, operator checks and spotters/cameras as appropriate** | Blind spots are best controlled with:
4. **A - Machine and work area** | Before operating, inspect:
5. **A - Follow manufacturer/site limits and procedures** | On slopes the operator should:
6. **A - Kept clear of bucket/load and machine travel zones** | People should be:
7. **A - Approved blocking/support and energy control as applicable** | Maintenance under a raised attachment requires:
8. **A - Work together to protect the operator in a rollover when used as designed** | ROPS and operator restraint:
9. **A - Agreed signals and remain visible/safely positioned** | A spotter should use:
10. **A - False** | This course alone qualifies an operator on every loader model.

COACHING RULE

Do not treat a passing written score as proof of hands-on competency. Retrain missed critical concepts and complete workplace-specific verification where required.

Attendance + completion record

Course: Front-End Loader Safety Fundamentals

Date: _____ Instructor: _____ Department / Location:

Employee Printed Name	Employee Signature	Job / Department	Date

Site-specific topics / notes:

Can the employee apply it?

Employee: _____ Evaluator: _____ Date: _____

Evaluation Item	Meets	Coach	N/A
Performs walk-around/pre-use inspection	☐	☐	☐
Uses seat belt/restraint	☐	☐	☐
Checks blind areas and work zone	☐	☐	☐
Maintains low travel load	☐	☐	☐
Controls speed/turns	☐	☐	☐
Coordinates with spotter	☐	☐	☐
Loads/dumps without exposing people	☐	☐	☐
Parks/lowers attachment safely	☐	☐	☐

Comments / coaching:

Result: ☐ Competent for evaluated task (subject to employer authorization) ☐ More training/practice needed

Evaluator signature: _____ Employee signature: _____

CERTIFICATE OF TRAINING

This certifies that

completed the formal / awareness training portion of
Front-End Loader Safety Fundamentals

Date: _____ Instructor: _____
Employer / Location: _____

General formal instruction. Employer must provide model-specific hands-on training, manufacturer requirements and task/worksite evaluation.

Regulatory / source reference

Primary reference: 29 CFR 1926.602 / applicable ROPS requirements + manufacturer instructions

<https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1926/1926.602>

Before delivery

- Confirm current OSHA and applicable state-plan requirements
- Confirm manufacturer instructions and employer procedures
- Insert workplace-specific hazards, controls, emergency contacts and rules
- Use competent/qualified trainers or evaluators where required
- Complete practical/workplace training and authorization requirements where applicable
- Retain training records according to employer and regulatory requirements

FINAL REMINDER

General formal instruction. Employer must provide model-specific hands-on training, manufacturer requirements and task/worksite evaluation.