

Proper ProStack® Handling

Your company has selected the ProStack® to improve bottle life, production efficiency, reduce truck damage and improve safety conditions for all employees.

We are providing this video to help you and your company get the maximum useful life and safe handling of the ProStack® through optimum handling techniques.

With your help, the ProStack® Modular Rack System will provide optimum bottle protection, durability and safe and stable handling in the warehouse and on the routes - which translates into lower costs and increased profits.

I. Forklift Blade Specifications

A. Forkblade Length

To prevent unnecessary pallet damage the fork blades should never exceed the shortest width of the pallet. If the forkblade length is longer, the forkblade will extend beyond the first rack pallet and strike or enter into the second rack pallet possibly breaking it when lifting.

B. Dull Points

The forkblade ends should also be ground blunt or ordered with dull points to reduce the likelihood of punctures.

C. Blade Spacing

To minimize minor pallet deflection when lifting the ProStacks®, we suggest 5" wide forkblades and spacing should be set to the maximum width of the pallet pockets. The combination of narrow forkblades and incorrect positioning may create instability in top-heavy stacks. Top-heavy stacks are racks with empty bottles in several bottom layers and full bottles in the top. We recommend that forkblade width, length and position specifications be followed for all facilities using the ProStack®.

II. ProStack® Handling

A. Approaching the Pallet

Forklift drivers should never drive directly into the pallets. They should pull up to the pallet and always stop in front of the rack, make sure the forkblades are lined up square with the pallet and then proceed to enter the pallet. Drivers should not hit the pallet using it as a stop to determine when the forkblades are all the way into the pallet.

B. Grounding Forkblades

Forklift drivers should never attempt to enter a pallet with the forkblades touching the ground. The forks must be at least 2" off the ground upon entry or they will damage the pallet. The pallet is critical to the production process and safe stacking.

C. Pallet Positioning

Forkblade tips should never be used to push or pivot the pallets or modules to turn them for positioning. Always lift and maneuver the rack into a proper position with the fork lift.

D. Do Not Push Pallets

Pallets and racks should never be pushed along the warehouse floor or outdoors. Raised imperfections in the floor such as cracks or on rough surfaces outdoors can easily cause damage to pallets.

- E. Moving Racks Only one rack should be moved at a time. Moving two racks stacked on top of one another may create an unstable load and an unsafe work environment.
- F. Separating Modules (Layers) Forklift drivers should never drive directly into the fork openings between layers. Always stop in front of the racks making sure the forklift blades are lined up with the fork openings before slowly entering.
- Modules should not be removed unless there is a balanced load within the layer. All tunnels must be empty, filled with empty bottles or filled with full bottles. Any other combination will create an unbalanced load during handling possibly resulting in the load tipping off of the forks.
- G. Pallet Damage (Tell Someone!) In the event of a damaged pallet or module, please inform your supervisor immediately. Removing damaged pallets at the time of the incident will save valuable production time and increase safety.

The damaged pallet should be marked noting how damage occurred so it can be evaluated to determine its future use.

III. Storage

- A. Stacking The ProStack® Rack System is designed to stack (3) racks high (each 5 layers) or (15) bottles high with full product on itself only.

The ProStack® is not designed for edge racking in fixed warehouse racks and should never be used in edge racking systems. Forklift operators should always line up the forklift and rack right to left before lifting the ProStack® up to be stacked upon another rack. The racks must be held at least 2" above the lower rack to avoid interference with the stacking cleats on the rack below it.

The ProStacks® should never be set down off center or on top of the stacking cleats. When lifting the racks, the operator must enter the pallet, carefully lift the rack up at least 2" and then back the forklift away from the stack. After backing away and clearing the lower rack, the operator must lower the rack close to the floor before turning or moving the rack to its next position.

- B. Truck Loading When loading the ProStack® racks into the rear bay of the route trucks, forklift drivers should be sure to load the rack toward the front side of the bay which is toward the cab. This will minimize movement of the racks in the rear bay.

- C. Retainer Bars In some cases where route trucks travel on rougher roads retainer bars are added to the floor of the truck bay to prevent the racks from shifting towards the bay door. These retainer bars can cause damage to the lower pallet base if the ProStack® racks are not properly loaded. The ProStack® rack should be completely placed inside the truck bay clearing the retainer bar before lowering the ProStack® rack into position. Never rest or push the ProStack® rack on the retainer bar as it can cause damage to the base of the pallet.

IV. Unloading bottles

A. Unloading Racks

For optimal bottle performance it is recommended that you unload bottles from your ProStack® racks from the top down.

Our racks offer a unique reach through feature that assists in removing the higher layer bottles from the back position. Once the bottle is pulled forward to the front position, support the bottle from the bottom of the neck with palms facing up. Slightly lift up on the neck and pull out. This helps to easily move the bottle over the rubber stops that are there to help prevent the bottles from coming out while in transit.

Grabbing the top of the bottle and pulling down on the bottle engages the rubber buttons, obstructing the bottles easy movement out of the tunnel.

V. Be Safe

A. Do Not Speed

The last recommendation but not the least important is forklift safety. A major contributor to damage is unsafe driving speed. An adjustment to fork positioning is much more difficult at high speed. The faster the forkblades impact the pallet the more severe the damage. Governors on forklifts have led to greatly reduced pallet damage, reduced forklift maintenance costs, extension of battery life and a much safer work environment. Never drive forklifts with the racks higher than a few inches off the floor.

Review and Recommendations

I. Forklift Blade Specifications

Fork blade width, length and position specifications be followed for all facilities using the ProStack

II. Handling

Fork blade tips should never be used to push the rack or turn it for positioning. Always move the lift into a better position, not the rack. ProStack® should never be pushed along the warehouse floor. Modules should not be removed unless there is a balanced load within the layer

III. Storage

Forklift operators should always line up the forklift and rack right to left before lifting the ProStack® up to be stacked upon another rack.

IV. Unloading bottles

Support the bottle from the bottom of the neck with palms facing up. Slightly lift up on the neck and pull out. This helps to easily move the bottle over the rubber stops.

V. Safety

Never drive forklifts with the racks a few inches off the floor. Only one rack should be moved at a time. Drive carefully, and do not speed.