

YOUR LES®

QUICK GUIDE

TO

HAND PALLET TRUCKS



Hand operated pallet trucks - often called manual pump trucks, pallet jacks, or hand pallet lifters - are essential tools for moving palletised goods safely and efficiently. Simple, durable, and highly cost-effective, they remain one of the most widely used pieces of material-handling equipment in warehouses, retail environments, workshops, and transport operations.

This quick guide covers the fundamentals of how they work, what to consider when purchasing, installation and setup advice, and essential maintenance tips to maximise lifespan and performance.

UNDERSTANDING MANUAL PUMP TRUCKS

A manual pallet truck is a non-powered, user-operated tool designed to lift and move pallets at ground level. It typically consists of a hydraulic pump, a set of forks, a handle with steering capabilities, and load wheels for smooth movement.

How they work:

- The operator inserts the forks into the pallet openings.
- Pumping the handle activates the hydraulic system, raising the forks and lifting the load just enough to roll freely.
- The operator then pulls or pushes the truck to the desired location.
- Releasing the trigger or lever lowers the load safely back to the ground.

These trucks are ideal for short-distance movement, tight spaces, and environments where powered equipment may not be practical or necessary.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS WHEN PURCHASING

a. Load Capacity

Typical capacities range from 2,000 kg to 3,000 kg. Always choose a model that comfortably exceeds your heaviest typical load. Overloading can cause damage and safety risks.

b. Fork Size

Fork length and overall dimensions must match your pallet type (e.g., Euro pallets, UK pallets, or custom sizes). Common lengths range from 1000–2500 mm.

c. Wheel Material

- *Nylon wheels*: Durable, low-rolling resistance, ideal for smooth floors.
- *Polyurethane wheels*: Quieter, more floor-friendly, and better suited to uneven surfaces.
- *Rubber wheels*: Best for delicate floors or noise-sensitive environments.

d. Pump Quality and Build Construction

Look for robust steel frames, reinforced fork sections, and high-quality hydraulic pumps. Premium pumps last longer and require less maintenance.

e. Specialised Options

Depending on your operation, consider low-profile trucks, galvanised or stainless steel models (for corrosive or hygienic environments), or high-lift variants for ergonomic working.

“ A reliable pallet truck is the backbone of efficient, everyday material handling ”

INSTALLATION & SET UP TIPS

While pallet trucks require minimal setup, correct preparation ensures smooth operation:

- **Unpack and inspect** for transit damage, especially around the hydraulic cylinder, handle mount, and forks.
- **Attach the handle** according to the manufacturer's instructions, ensuring the linkage operates the pump and release mechanisms smoothly.
- **Check hydraulic fluid** levels if applicable; most units come prefilled, but a quick inspection is wise.
- **Test the raising/lowering function** without a load to confirm smooth operation.
- **Ensure floor suitability** - uneven, cracked or debris-covered surfaces can impede movement and damage wheels.

MAINTENANCE & CARE GUIDE

Proper care significantly extends the life of your pallet truck.

a. Regular Lubrication

Grease pivot points, axles, and the pump mechanism to keep movement smooth and minimise wear.

b. Wheel & Roller Checks

Inspect wheels for flat spots, cracks, or embedded debris. Replace worn wheels promptly to avoid floor damage and operator strain.

c. Hydraulic System

Monitor the hydraulic pump for leaks, slow lifting, or inconsistent lowering. Low fluid or worn seals can typically be serviced rather than needing full replacement.

d. Fork and Frame Inspection

Check for visible bending, cracks, or structural damage—particularly if the truck has been overloaded.

e. Cleanliness

Regularly clean the truck to prevent dirt buildup around the pump, joints, and wheels.

SAFETY & OPERATIONAL TIPS

- Always operate within the specified load limits.
- Keep feet clear of wheels and pallets during lifting or lowering.
- Push rather than pull whenever possible to reduce strain.
- Ensure loads are stable and centred on the forks.
- Train operators in proper technique, especially for manoeuvring in tight spaces.

OUR MOST POPULAR HAND PUMP TRUCKS



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TRUCK W/ SCALES**

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