

↑ CAREER LAUNCHER

Material Handler



“You’ll find me where things need to be moved—at a factory, warehouse, grocery store, or construction site. I think driving a forklift is fun.”



- **Education needed:** High school diploma
- **Salary range:** \$16,400 – \$37,940 annually
- **Related jobs:** Bus driver, distribution manager, manufacturing equipment operator, truck driver

Material Handler

➤ **What I do every day**

I move stock and freight from one place to another. Depending on the size and shape of the container, I use carts, dollies, forklifts, or handtrucks. If the boxes are light, I carry them by hand. I know where to move everything because my boss instructs me, either verbally or in writing. I move all kinds of raw materials and finished goods between work areas, storage areas, and loading docks. The things I move depend on where I work. It's important that I work quickly and carefully because other workers depend on me to get the materials to them on time and in good condition.

Material Handler

➤ **The best part of my job**

Even though I'm busy all day, I'm rarely stressed by my work. I like riding around, although I make sure I drive carefully and use common sense. I get to meet people who work in every part of the building. It's a great way to make friends.

➤ **The worst part of my job**

I'm not very mechanical. When the cart or forklift I'm using doesn't work right, I have to ask a co-worker what's wrong, even though it may be something I should know. I get embarrassed when the problem is a simple one I should be able to figure out.

Material Handler

➤ **What I need to know and be able to do**

Material handlers must be reliable and hard working, and they should enjoy doing repetitive work. They need to be able to follow directions and ask questions if they don't understand an instruction. When working around dangerous machinery, they must use safety precautions to protect themselves. Material handlers need to get along well with their co-workers and supervisors.

➤ **How I prepared to be a material handler**

After graduating from a career and technical center, I was hired at a manufacturing plant. I learned all my skills on the job by shadowing another material handler during the first two weeks. Now that I'm experienced, I often train new material handlers.

Material Handler

➤ How I could have prepared better

I wish my communication skills were better. I've noticed that my co-workers who've been promoted are those who use correct grammar and speak well. I'm afraid this will hold me back from getting a promotion.

► Skill Check 1

At the warehouse where you work, you must stack and move boxes in a certain way. You stack large boxes on the lowest shelves in the warehouse. Stacks on these shelves must be no taller than four feet and must have no more than three boxes. You also check the expiration dates of all materials and move items that will expire soon to the front of each shelf. When you find expired items, you must contact your supervisor. You are not allowed to drive the forklift faster than five miles per hour indoors or eight miles per hour outdoors.

Your supervisor asks you to create a numbered list of instructions she can post for new employees to follow. Prepare the list from the information above.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

► Skill Check 2

You are responsible for seeing that the warehouse forklift runs properly. Occasionally, you must check the oil in the forklift. Read the instructions below and answer the questions that follow.

Checking Engine Oil Level

Note: Check oil once daily when running engine more than four hours a day.

1. Park forklift on a level surface.
2. Stop engine.
3. Engage emergency brake.
4. Lift hood.
5. Remove dipstick and wipe with a clean cloth.
6. Insert dipstick but do not tighten. Let dipstick threads rest on top of the tube; rotate cap counterclockwise until it clicks or drops into the thread lead.
7. Remove dipstick. Check oil level on dipstick; oil level must be between L (Low) and F (Full) marks.
8. If oil level is low, add oil to bring oil level to F (Full) mark on dipstick. Do not overfill.
9. Insert and tighten dipstick.
10. Lower hood.

(continued)

► Skill Check 2

(continued)

1. How often should you check the oil? _____
2. Where should you park the forklift when you want to check the oil?

3. In what direction should you turn the dipstick when measuring the oil level?

4. What should you use to wipe the dipstick? _____
5. When should you tighten the dipstick? _____

► Skill Check 1

At the warehouse where you work, 25 gross of DVD towers were just delivered. If you must move and store every DVD tower, how many DVD towers must you move and store? Note: A gross equals 144.

Answer: _____

► Skill Check 2

As a material handler, you earn \$8.35 an hour. If you work more than 80 hours in a two-week period, you earn overtime at a rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ times your usual rate for every hour over 80. If you worked 92 hours during the last two weeks, what will your total pay be?

Answer: _____