

Skid steer loader safety

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Know your machine

- Balance is the key to the stability and turning capability of a skid steer loader. Roughly two-thirds of the skid steer's weight is on the rear axles with no load in the bucket. Weight shifts to the front end when the bucket is loaded.
- Overloading can make a skid steer excessively front heavy which reduces stability and handling response. Do not exceed a skid steer loader's rated operating capacity.
- Never attempt to operate the steering levers or any other hydraulic controls while standing outside of the cab! Hydrostatic drive means that the skid steer will respond instantly when levers are engaged.
- Operation of controls becomes almost instinctive for an experienced skid steer driver. Experienced operators and novices alike can become confused when performing a number of functions at once. If this happens, it is usually best to remove hands and feet from the controls. All machine functions will stop when pressure on the controls is released.





Familiarize yourself with the controls and safety devices in the cab.

- Never remove the rollover protective structure (ROPS) from a skid steer, and always keep side screens in place.
- Use the seat belt and safety bar whenever you are operating a skid steer.
- Make sure that attachment locking devices are in place, even if you are switching attachments for only a few minutes. If not locked, an attachment could break free and roll back down the loader arms or fall onto a bystander.
- Road travel with a skid steer is not recommended.

Travel safely

- Skid steer stability decreases as the loader arms are raised. Always keep the bucket as low as possible when traveling or turning.
- Avoid steep slopes and rough terrain. Always travel up and down slopes, never across.
- Move up and down slopes with the heavy end of the loader pointed uphill. Remember, no load means most of the weight is on the rear of the skid steer;

SAFETY SIGNS



DANGER indicates an imminently hazardous situation which, if not avoided, will result in death or serious injury.



WARNING indicates a potentially hazardous situation which, if not avoided, could result in death or serious injury.



CAUTION indicates a potentially hazardous situation which, if not avoided, may result in minor or moderate injury.

a loaded bucket may result in more weight on the front (depending on the material being handled).

- Try to travel around obstacles rather than over or through them.
- Stay away from creeks, gullies, and ravines, as the banks can be deep. The earth could shear and send the skid steer crashing to the bottom. A rule of thumb is to stay as far away from the ditch as it is deep.



Familiarize yourself with your skid steer's components.

- A. Instrument cluster (upper left)
- B. Left auxiliary controls
- C. Instrument cluster (upper right)
- D. Right auxiliary controls
- E. Know your engine compartment

Work safely

- Familiarize yourself with warning devices, gauges, and controls. Study the operating procedures and safety recommendations outlined in the operator's manual.
- Check for obstacles, overhead power lines, and soft soil conditions in the work area.
- Never permit riders on skid steer loaders or any attachments, and never use a skid steer as a work platform. Hydraulic failure is always a possibility.
- Adjust speed to suit working conditions and terrain. Avoid sudden stops, starts, or turns.
- Never lift, swing, or move a load over anyone. Insist that all bystanders leave the area before you start work. Be aware of blind spots.
- Take care when handling loose materials such as rocks. Lifting the arms too high and rolling the bucket too far back could cause the objects to fall into the cab. That is why it is so important to keep the bucket level while the arms are being raised.

- Avoid dumping over fence posts or similar obstructions that could enter the cab if the loader were to tip forward.
- Take care when backfilling. The trench wall could collapse under the skid steer's weight.
- Never undercut a high embankment. The earth could give way and bury the loader.
- Never place any part of your body or limb under raised loader arms or outside of the cab. Fatal crush injuries have occurred when individuals were caught between loader arms and the skid steer frame on "unscreened" machines. That is why it is so important to keep safety screens in place.
- If it is necessary to carry out repairs with the loader arms raised, be sure to lock the arms in place.

Work efficiently

- Drive slowly into a material pile, such as a manure pack or sand pile, then raise the front of the attachment. Back away with the load in the raised bucket or fork.
- Drive to the unloading site with loader arms down. Stop, raise loader arms, and drive forward slowly until the bucket is just over the spreader or pile.
- Use the hydraulics to keep the attachment level while raising the lift arms at a slow, even rate. Be prepared to lower the load if the skid steer becomes unstable.

Employers are responsible for operator training

- Anyone operating a skid steer should read the operator's manual and take time to learn the controls and safety features.
- Employees must be provided with safety training on the skid steer that they will be operating at a minimum of every 3 years.

SKID STEER LOADER SAFETY



Skid steer components to check.

- A.** Engine and hydraulic oil reservoir **B.** Diesel fuel reservoir **C.** Back-up and work light, alarm horn **D.** Windshield washer fluid reservoir **E.** Cooling system reserve and air filter **F.** Check the condition of tires and cleanliness of boom attachment points

- If the employee is injured or causes damage with the skid steer, a training refresher is required.
- Nonfamily employees under 16 years of age may not legally operate a skid steer for agricultural purposes under federal and state child labor laws. Employees for other industries must be 18 years of age or older.



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