

CONSTRUCTION & FIELD OPS PRE-USE EQUIPMENT TEMPLATE

Pre-Use Equipment Checklist

Check equipment condition before use: guards, tyres or tracks, fluids, hydraulics, electrical systems, brakes, controls, alarms, attachments, work-zone readiness, defects, and release.

PROJECT / LOCATION

DATE / SHIFT

EQUIPMENT / ASSET ID

OPERATOR / INSPECTOR

1. Pre-use setup, equipment identity, operator, and task readiness

- 1 Confirm the project, work area, inspection date and shift, equipment type, make, model, asset or serial number, hour meter where applicable, operator, inspector, and supervisor.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Use the exact asset or serial number so defects follow the correct machine.

- 2 Verify the equipment is the correct type, size, capacity, rating, and configuration for the intended construction task and work environment.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Match the equipment to the actual task and environment before inspecting condition.

- 3 Confirm the operator or user is trained, authorized, familiar with the equipment, and permitted to use the specific machine, tool, or attachment.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Operator authorization should cover the equipment being used.

- 4 Review the operator manual, manufacturer warnings, site equipment rules, previous pre-use findings, open defects, and any current restrictions before inspection.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Review open defects before beginning a new shift check.

- 5 Check the planned work area for access, ground condition, overhead hazards, nearby workers, traffic, excavations, edges, power lines, weather, and other conditions that may affect safe use.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: A safe machine can still be unsafe in the wrong work area.

- 6 Record the equipment's starting condition and prevent use if it is already tagged out, under repair, overdue for a safety-critical inspection, or otherwise restricted.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Do not override an existing out-of-service status during a pre-use check.

2. General condition, structure, guards, access, labels, and visible damage

- 7 Walk around the equipment and inspect frames, structures, housings, welds, handles, mounting points, steps, ladders, handholds, covers, and visible components for damage or looseness.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Start with a full walk-around before touching the controls.

- 8 Verify guards, shields, covers, screens, interlocks, and protective devices are installed, secure, undamaged, and appropriate for moving, hot, sharp, or pinch-point hazards.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Missing guarding can expose workers to moving and hot components.

- 9 Check access and operator surfaces for oil, mud, debris, loose items, damaged anti-slip surfaces, blocked footholds, or other slip and trip hazards.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Keep operator access clean and stable throughout the shift.

- 10 Verify warning labels, control markings, capacity plates, identification plates, safety decals, and operating instructions are legible where required for safe use.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Critical control and capacity labels should remain legible.

- 11 Inspect cab glass, mirrors, windows, doors, visibility panels, or protective screens for damage or distortion that could interfere with safe operation.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Visibility defects can directly increase struck-by risk.

- 12 Remove the equipment from service when structural damage, missing guards, unsafe access, illegible critical markings, or visible defects could cause failure or injury.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Serious structural or guarding defects require immediate restriction.

3. Tyres, wheels, tracks, casters, supports, and stability

- 13 Inspect tyres for cuts, exposed cords, abnormal wear, embedded objects, damage, leakage, and correct inflation where applicable.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Check the whole tyre, wheel, or track system, not only tread condition.

- 14 Check wheels, rims, wheel nuts, hubs, studs, axles, bearings, and visible suspension components for damage, looseness, missing hardware, overheating, or leakage.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Loose wheel hardware can quickly become a serious failure.

- 15 For tracked equipment, inspect track shoes, links, rollers, idlers, sprockets, guards, tension, and undercarriage condition for damage, wear, or abnormal looseness.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Track condition affects travel, stability, and steering response.

- 16 For portable or wheeled equipment, inspect casters, wheels, brakes, stands, outriggers, stabilizers, feet, locking devices, and support frames for secure condition.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Portable equipment depends on stable supports and wheel locks.

- 17 Verify counterweights, ballast, stabilizers, supports, and equipment setup match the approved operating configuration and expected load.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Counterweights and stabilizers affect equipment capacity and stability.

- 18 Do not use equipment when tyre, wheel, track, caster, support, outrigger, or stability defects could affect safe travel, positioning, lifting, or operation.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Do not operate when stability components are unreliable.

4. Fluids, fuel, hydraulics, pneumatics, hoses, and leak condition

- 19 Check required engine oil, hydraulic fluid, coolant, fuel, transmission, brake fluid, lubricant, and other operating-fluid levels using the manufacturer method.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Use the manufacturer's method for fluid-level checks.

- 20 Inspect the equipment and ground beneath it for fresh fuel, oil, coolant, hydraulic, brake-fluid, or other leaks before starting.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Look underneath the equipment before starting it.

- 21 Check hydraulic hoses, pipes, fittings, cylinders, couplings, seals, valves, pumps, and protective routing for chafing, cracks, bulges, damage, seepage, or active leaks.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Never use hands to search for high-pressure hydraulic leaks.

- 22 Inspect pneumatic hoses, air lines, couplings, pressure components, reservoirs, gauges, and fittings for damage, leakage, insecure connections, or deterioration.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Damaged pressure hoses and couplings can fail suddenly.

- 23 Verify fuel caps, hydraulic caps, dipsticks, drains, breathers, filler points, and fluid-system covers are secure and free from contamination.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Keep filler points and caps clean to reduce system contamination.

- 24 Take equipment out of service for fuel leaks, high-pressure hydraulic defects, damaged pressure components, severe fluid loss, overheating, or other release hazards.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Fuel and high-pressure hydraulic leaks are strong stop-use triggers.

5. Electrical condition, batteries, cords, plugs, grounding, and energy supply

- 25 Inspect batteries, battery mounting, terminals, cables, covers, isolation switches, chargers, and visible wiring for damage, corrosion, overheating, or loose connections.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Inspect both power-source condition and the equipment wiring.

- 26 For cord-and-plug equipment, check cords, plugs, strain relief, insulation, connectors, extension leads, and cable routing for cuts, exposed conductors, crushed areas, burns, or makeshift repairs.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Damaged extension leads should not be repaired with temporary tape.

- 27 Verify grounding, double insulation, GFCI or equivalent protection, voltage rating, and electrical supply arrangements meet the equipment and site requirements.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Use site-required GFCI or equivalent protection where applicable.

- 28 Inspect switches, triggers, dead-man controls, emergency stops, control pendants, sockets, panels, and protective enclosures for damage and correct operation.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Emergency stops and dead-man controls should be tested before use.

- 29 Check battery-powered equipment for damaged battery packs, swelling, leakage, overheating, cracked housings, contaminated terminals, or unsafe charging condition.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Damaged lithium or other battery packs can present fire and chemical hazards.

- 30 Do not use equipment with exposed conductors, damaged electrical insulation, failed grounding protection, defective emergency controls, damaged batteries, or other electrical hazards.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Electrical defects should be isolated before the equipment is energized.

6. Brakes, steering, operating controls, interlocks, and stopping systems

- 31 Test service brakes, parking brakes, emergency stopping systems, and holding systems where fitted to confirm reliable stopping and secure parking.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: OSHA 1926.601 requires covered vehicles to be checked at the beginning of each shift for brakes, steering, controls, seat belts, and safety devices.

- 32 Check steering, travel levers, pedals, joysticks, handles, direction controls, speed controls, transmission selection, and other operator controls for predictable response.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Test steering and controls in a safe area before productive operation.

- 33 Verify control levers, pedals, triggers, valves, and switches return, latch, lock, or release correctly and do not stick or move unexpectedly.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Controls should move freely without sticking or unintended motion.

- 34 Test neutral-start, seat, guard, access, hydraulic, travel, or other installed interlocks and safety cut-outs where the equipment design includes them.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Interlocks are only useful if they are tested and not bypassed.

- 35 Check gauges, displays, warning lights, fault indicators, hour meters, pressure or temperature indicators, and status screens for normal operation.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Do not ignore active warning lights or fault codes.

- 36 Remove equipment from service when brakes, steering, stopping systems, interlocks, controls, or safety-critical indicators are defective or unreliable.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Safety-critical brake or steering defects must be corrected before service.

7. Horn, alarms, lighting, visibility aids, fire protection, and safety devices

37 Verify the horn or other audible warning device is operable where the equipment is required to have one.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Check horns and alarms before entering active traffic areas.

38 Check reverse alarms, travel alarms, motion alarms, warning buzzers, beacons, or approved signal-person arrangements where rear or surrounding visibility is restricted.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: OSHA earthmoving rules require a reverse alarm or signal person where rear visibility is obstructed.

39 Inspect headlights, work lights, brake lights, tail lights, indicators, reflectors, and other required lighting for condition and visibility.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Lighting should match the actual work and visibility conditions.

40 Verify mirrors, cameras, radar, proximity detection, object-detection sensors, and other installed visibility aids are clean, aligned, powered, and functioning.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Clean cameras and sensors before judging their operation.

41 Check fire extinguishers, suppression systems, emergency lowering, emergency egress, warning labels, safety switches, and other installed protective devices as applicable.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Fire and emergency systems are part of pre-use readiness.

42 Restrict use when required alarms, lights, visibility aids, fire protection, or safety devices are missing or defective and the hazard cannot be otherwise controlled.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Do not rely on operator caution to compensate for failed required safety devices.

8. Attachments, tools, couplers, accessories, lifting points, and capacity

- 43 Inspect attachments, buckets, forks, blades, hooks, platforms, bits, discs, blades, guards, accessories, and work tools for damage, excessive wear, cracks, or missing components.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Inspect attachment condition before checking attachment operation.

- 44 Verify pins, retainers, quick couplers, locking devices, tool holders, chuck systems, clamps, guards, and attachment connections are fully engaged and secure.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Physically confirm quick-coupler and pin locking.

- 45 Confirm the attachment or accessory is approved for the equipment and does not exceed the machine, tool, carrier, or power-source limitations.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: An attachment that fits physically may still be outside approved equipment limits.

- 46 Check rated-capacity information, load charts, lifting points, fork markings, hooks, slings, or attachment ratings where the equipment will lift, handle, or support loads.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Capacity information matters whenever equipment handles loads.

- 47 Verify auxiliary hydraulic, pneumatic, electrical, or mechanical connections are properly connected, protected, routed, and free from interference or pinch hazards.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Protect auxiliary hoses and cables at articulation and pinch points.

- 48 Stop use when an attachment, tool, coupler, locking device, lifting point, capacity marking, or accessory cannot be verified as secure and suitable for the task.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Unverified attachment locks require immediate stop-use.

9. Controlled functional test, work-zone readiness, and safe operating behavior

49

Perform a controlled pre-use functional test in a safe area to verify startup, shutdown, travel, controls, braking, steering, attachments, alarms, and other normal operating functions.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Functional tests should be done away from pedestrians and live work.

50

Observe for abnormal noise, vibration, smoke, overheating, warning codes, hesitation, drift, creep, poor control response, or unexpected movement during the functional test.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Drift, creep, abnormal noise, or warning codes can reveal developing defects.

51

Confirm the work route, operating surface, slope, access road, ground bearing condition, edge distance, overhead clearance, and turning space are suitable for the equipment.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: OSHA requires construction access roadways and grades to safely accommodate the equipment using them.

52

Verify pedestrians are separated from equipment movement, swing, lifting, discharge, pinch, crush, and line-of-fire zones using suitable barriers, spotters, or exclusion controls.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Control people around swing, travel, and line-of-fire zones.

53

Check equipment operating near energized overhead power lines follows applicable clearance, de-energization, grounding, signaling, or barrier controls.

CRITICAL

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Treat overhead lines as energized unless properly confirmed otherwise.

54

Stop the equipment immediately when the functional test or work environment reveals an uncontrolled collision, struck-by, rollover, electrical, stability, or mechanical hazard.

PRE-USE

Compliant

Needs attention

Out of service

N/A

Execution tip: Stop testing when equipment behavior or site conditions are unsafe.

10. Defects, out-of-service control, repair, parking, and pre-use sign-off

- 55 Classify each pre-use defect as acceptable, monitor, repair before use, restricted operation, or out of service according to the manufacturer and site defect criteria. **CRITICAL** PRE-USE
- Compliant Needs attention Out of service N/A

Execution tip: Use simple, visible equipment-status categories.

- 56 Tag, isolate, lock out, or otherwise clearly identify equipment that must not be used until a safety-critical defect is corrected. **CRITICAL** PRE-USE
- Compliant Needs attention Out of service N/A

Execution tip: Prevent another operator from using equipment that has failed pre-use inspection.

- 57 Assign each defect an owner, priority, repair action, due date, parts requirement, restriction, verification method, and closure evidence requirement. **CRITICAL** PRE-USE
- Compliant Needs attention Out of service N/A

Execution tip: Every defect needs a specific closure test or evidence rule.

- 58 After repair, retest the affected safety-critical function and complete any required maintenance, competent-person, qualified-person, or third-party inspection before release. **CRITICAL** PRE-USE
- Compliant Needs attention Out of service N/A

Execution tip: Retest the exact function affected by a repair.

- 59 When equipment is parked, secure it using the parking brake, lowered or safely supported attachments, neutralized controls, engine shutdown where appropriate, and wheel chocks on inclines where required. **CRITICAL** PRE-USE
- Compliant Needs attention Out of service N/A

Execution tip: OSHA requires parking brakes to be set and wheels chocked on inclines.

- 60 Record the final pre-use decision, defects found, restrictions, repair status, functional-test result, next inspection or maintenance date, operator, inspector, supervisor, date, time, and sign-off. PRE-USE
- Compliant Needs attention Out of service N/A

Execution tip: The final pre-use record should state clearly whether the equipment is released or restricted.

RUN THIS CHECKLIST DIGITALLY

Turn pre-use equipment defects into out-of-service control, repair, and verified release

Capture equipment condition, defects, restrictions, repairs, functional retesting, and release evidence in Taotics.

[Try Pre-Use Checks in Taotics](#)