

SOP Template: Loading and Unloading Protocols

This SOP details the **loading and unloading protocols** essential for ensuring the safe and efficient handling of goods during transportation. It covers steps for proper vehicle positioning, securing cargo, use of appropriate equipment, communication among team members, and safety measures to prevent accidents and damage. Adhering to these protocols minimizes risks to personnel and materials, streamlines operations, and maintains compliance with safety regulations.

1. Purpose

To outline the standard procedures for the safe and efficient loading and unloading of goods to protect personnel, prevent material damage, and ensure regulatory compliance.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all employees and contractors involved in the loading and unloading of goods at company facilities and during transportation.

3. Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Supervisors	Ensure protocols are followed, provide training, oversee operations, and address safety concerns.
Operators & Handlers	Follow procedures, use equipment properly, report hazards, and communicate with team members.
Drivers	Position vehicles correctly, secure cargo, and collaborate with onsite teams.
Safety Personnel	Monitor compliance and respond to emergencies or safety incidents.

4. Procedure

- **Preparation**
 - Review loading/unloading schedule and cargo details.
 - Inspect equipment (forklifts, pallet jacks, PPE, etc.) for proper functioning.
 - Ensure clear, unobstructed areas around the vehicle.
- **Vehicle Positioning**
 - Position vehicles on level ground and engage brakes.
 - Chock wheels to prevent movement.
 - Verify proximity to loading docks or ramps.
- **Loading/Unloading Process**
 - Wear appropriate PPE (gloves, hard hats, safety shoes, hi-vis vests).
 - Assign a trained spotter if visibility is limited or loads are oversized.
 - Use appropriate material handling equipment.
 - Evenly distribute load weight and avoid overloading.
 - Secure cargo using straps, nets, or other restraints.
 - Remove and store restraints only after ensuring stability.
 - Do not stand on or near moving loads.
- **Communication**
 - Maintain clear, constant communication among team members (use radios or hand signals as needed).
 - Confirm actions before proceeding to next steps.
- **Post-Loading/Unloading**
 - Verify all cargo is accounted for and securely positioned.
 - Inspect area and equipment for any damage or hazards.
 - Complete logs and report any incidents or near-misses.
 - Restore equipment and area to ready conditions.

5. Safety Measures

- Follow all site-specific safety protocols.
- Never bypass safety devices or procedures.
- Immediately report unsafe conditions or incidents to supervisors.
- Participate in all required safety training and drills.

6. Documentation

- Complete daily checklists for equipment and vehicles.
- Maintain loading/unloading logs and incident/accident reports.

7. Revision History

Version	Date	Description	Author
1.0	2024-06-16	Initial template release.	[Your Name]