

Skid Steer Safety

A skid steer is a standard piece of equipment found in a variety of industries. While a skid steer is small, these machines can pose a large amount of danger. It is critical to take time to recognize the hazards present during the operation of a skid steer so that you can follow the necessary best practices.

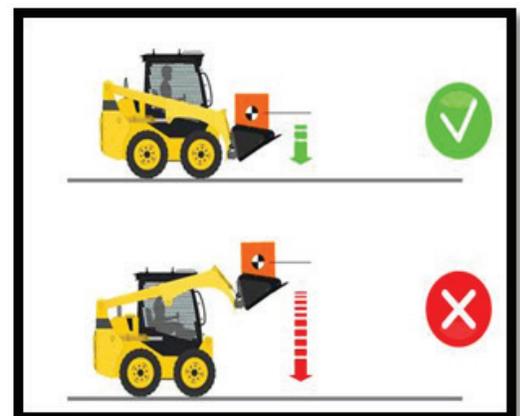
Hazards Associated with Operating a Skid Steer

There is a magnitude of possible dangers for those individuals operating skid steer as well as those who work around these machines. Some of the significant and more common hazards to consider:

- Struck-by hazards pose a serious threat to those working around skid steers. The operation of these machines often includes working in high traffic areas. Reversing is also an everyday necessity during work tasks. These factors paired with blind spots creates a considerable risk for struck-by incidents to occur.
- Crushed-by hazards are also a significant concern while operating a skid steer. Workers who are on the ground around this equipment can be pinned and crushed between a skid steer and another object if they find themselves in the line of fire. Those operating the skid steer can also fall victim to being crushed by their machine. NIOSH looked at 37 fatalities involving skid steers from 1992 to 1997 and found that 29 (78%) of them resulted from "pinning between the bucket and frame or between a lift arm and frame."
- Tip-overs or rollovers are another leading cause for fatalities of the operators of skid steers. In the same study referenced above, six of the 37 deaths resulted from rollovers.
- Pinch points are common on skid steers and can easily lead to injuries to body parts.

Best Practices for Safely Operating Skid Steer Loaders

- Always adhere to the manufacturer's guidelines for operation. Never operate a skid steer without proper training.
- Do not work under the raised arms or bucket of a skid steer, even if it is off. Always put the bucket all the way down before exiting the machine.
- Setup work areas and tasks in such a way that ground personnel is not in the line of fire. Stop work anytime you lose sight of anyone working around the skid steer.
- Never overload the skid steer. Always travel with the bucket or load low to the ground.
- Always wear your seatbelt or engage the restraint bar if there is one equipped. Inspect safety equipment before use. Inspect items such as the roll-over protective system, guards, seatbelt, interlock system, etc. Never remove or alter safety devices or guards from the equipment.
- Stay seated when operating a skid steer.
- Never carry riders or lift anyone with the attachment.



While skid steers are not as imposing as huge articulating dump trucks or excavators, they still are dangerous to operate. Lack of training and complacency of their danger paired with the prevalence of use of these machines result in many injuries every single year. Take time to evaluate the hazards of using this equipment. *Safety Share Courtesy of Texas Materials, A CRH Company*