



Empty Skids and Pallets

A 5-Minute Safety Training Aid

HS93-021G (10-24)

Skids and pallets are both essential components in industrial packaging and material handling, but they have distinct characteristics and uses. Let's explore these in detail:

Skids are single-deck platforms used for storing and transporting goods. They are often described as "sleds" or "sledges" because they are easily dragged or pulled. A skid consists of:

- A top deck for placing goods.
- Runners (also called stringers), which form the foundation.
- No bottom deck.



Pallets are more stable structures that are suitable for repeated loading and unloading. A pallet includes:

- A top and bottom deck for placing goods.
- Stringers or blocks for support.



Key Differences

- **Stability.**
Pallets are more stable due to their bottom deck, making them better suited for warehouse use and repeated handling.
- **Mobility.**
Skids are easier to drag and pull, making them suitable for moving heavy equipment.
- **Durability.**
Pallets, because of the top and bottom deck, generally have greater strength and durability for long-term use.
- **Cost.**
Skids can be less expensive due to fewer materials used in their construction.



Safe Handling and Stacking

- **Inspections.**
 - Check for splinters, loose nails, and other defects.
 - Look out for pests in outdoor-stored units such as wasps and snakes.
- **Personal protection.**
 - Use leather work gloves and safety shoes.
- **Lifting techniques.**
 - Work in pairs when lifting heavy skids.
 - Bend at the knees and use leg muscles.
 - Keep the back straight and stay close to the object.
- **Stacking.**
 - Stack no higher than 4 feet for stability.
 - Keep stacks flat, never on end.
 - For separate skid runners and platforms, use a rack and stack no more than 32 units high.
 - Consider floor weight capacity and crush strength of units.
 - Be cautious with cardboard units, especially in humid conditions.
- **Placement.**
 - Keep away from aisles, doorways, and emergency equipment.
 - Avoid obstructing exits, switch boxes, and fire extinguishers.
 - Ensure pallets do not protrude into walkways.
- **Maintenance.**
 - Set aside and mark unsafe units for repair or discard.
 - Use trucks or dollies for moving scrapped units over distances.
- **Work area.**
 - Maintain a clear, clean work area.

By understanding the differences between skids and pallets and following these safety guidelines, you can ensure efficient safe material handling in construction and industrial settings.



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