



Safe Tractor Operation

No one deliberately has a tractor accident. Recent studies show that tractors accounted for two out of every five accidents.

Overturns have the highest fatality rate for tractor accidents occurring on the farm. Operators should receive training in nine areas of safe tractor operation outlined here. Such training shall be given at the time of initial assignment and at least annually thereafter. The purpose of this guide is to assist employers and employees in this training.

This material should be reviewed with anyone who operates a farm tractor.

Safe operation

The most important point of tractor safety is to know your tractor. Know how the tractor handles and be alert to meet all potential emergencies. A good operator has read the tractor manual to become proficient in tractor operation. Next, he practices these safety habits:

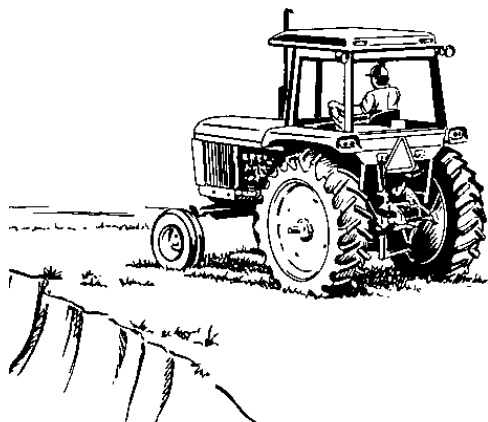


1. Securely fasten your seat belt, if the tractor has a roll-over protective structure.

If your tractor is not equipped with a ROPS, contact your dealer, retrofit systems are available for most newer tractors.

The seat belt is intended to hold you within the safety zone of the ROPS frame, or ROPS structure, if an upset occurs. The belt is there so that you will not be thrown from the tractor and crushed or receive additional injury. The ROPS Structure is designed to take the total impact of upset and at the same time protect you, the operator.

Don't wear a seat belt if your tractor is not equipped with a protective structure. If you do, you lose your chance of being thrown clear of the tractor in case of an upset. Buckle up and stay inside.

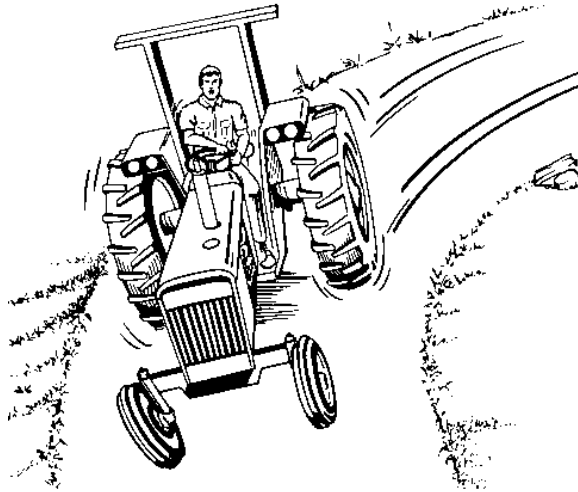


2. Where possible, avoid operating the tractor near ditches, embankments, and holes.

Avoid holes and depressions that are likely to cause a sideways upset.

Reduce speed to minimize the possibility of sideways upset. To assure safety around ditches and river embankments, just stay away. If you must operate near a ditch or riverbank, stay as far away from the ditch as it is deep. When operating around a ditch, look ahead for holes, gullies, and wash-outs.

Stay away from ditches and river banks where possible. If you can't, look and think ahead.

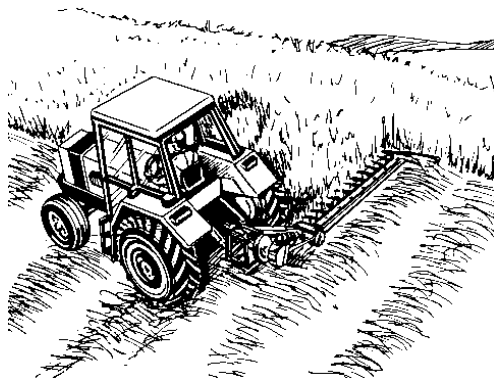


3. Reduce speed when turning, crossing slopes, and on rough, slick, or muddy surfaces.

Slow down before making any turn. Centrifugal force is one of the major causes in tractor upsets. The centrifugal force tries to keep the tractor going in a straight line. As you double the speed of a tractor while turning, the danger of upsetting is increased four times.

Reduce speed when turning with a loader. As you turn with a raised loader, you increase the possibilities of a tractor overturn. Keep the bucket as low as possible, and watch for ditches, holes, and rocks that might cause an upset.

If a tractor begins to slide sideways to the direction of travel, you may tip over in a ditch or run into an obstacle and upset.



4. Stay off slopes too steep for safe operation.

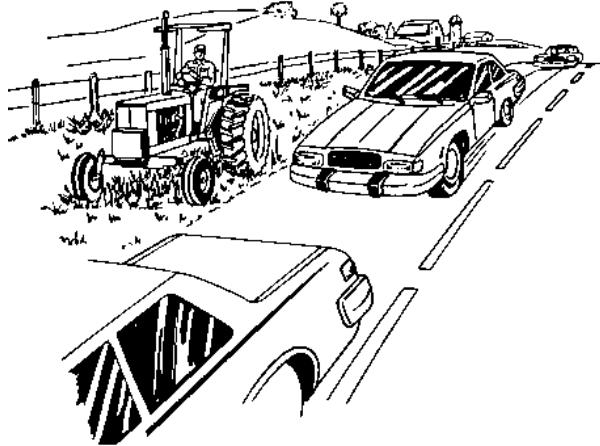
A tractor's stability is greatly reduced on steep slopes. To increase stability, set the wheels at the widest setting suitable for the job you are doing. Drive slowly, avoid quick uphill turns, and watch out for holes and depressions on the downhill side and for bumps on the uphill side. If you are using side-mounted equipment, keep it on the uphill side of the tractor.

Keep tractor in gear when going downhill. This allows the tractor engine to serve as a brake. If in doubt about what gear to use, select the lowest-speed gear and shift before you start downhill.

Some tractors freewheel and provide no engine braking in certain speed ranges, If your tractor is one of these, travel downhill using those positions that provide engine brake action. Check your operator's manual.

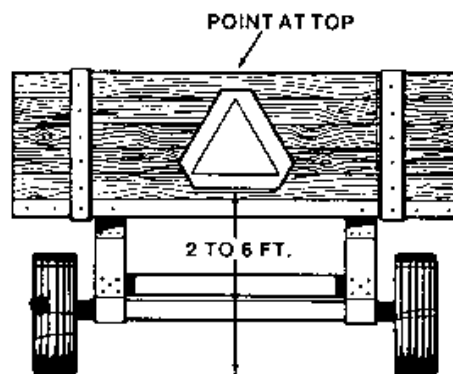
5. Watch where you are going, especially at row ends, on roads, and around trees.

When coming to the row ends, slow the equipment down. Be alert to fence rows and make as wide as a turn as possible. Apply a single brake in direction of the turn. But only do this at a very slow speed. Quick, short, brake-assisted turns can cause upsets.



When operating on highways, tractor operators must follow all rules of the road. All slow moving agricultural equipment must have a Slow Moving Vehicle emblem.

Driving practices for the highway

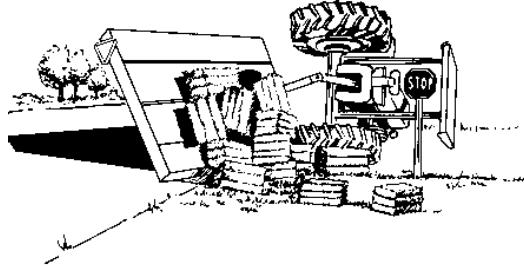


- * Maintain control of equipment.
- * Stay alert.
- * Wait for traffic to clear before entering highway.
- * Beware of blind intersections.
- * Keep approaching traffic lane clear.
- * Don't allow traffic build-up.
- * Use hand signals or turn signals.
- * Obey all traffic signs.



6. Don't permit others to ride.

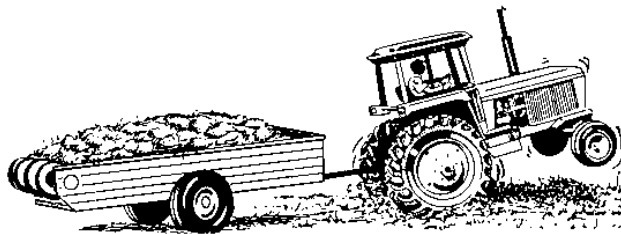
Tractors are designed for only one operator and not passengers. Children often plead for rides, but don't give in. If you must transport people, use a pick-up or auto. **REMEMBER - NO SEAT NO RIDER!**



7. Operate the tractor smoothly-no jerky turns, starts, or stops.

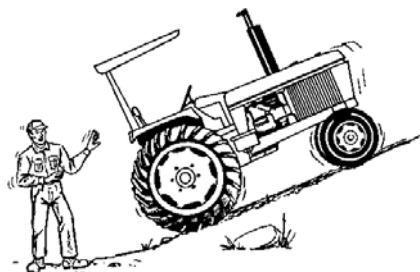
When starting tractor movement, make sure no people or obstructions are ahead or behind. As you begin to move, engage the clutch slowly and evenly. Engaging the clutch suddenly, or quickly shifting a hydraulic transmission to high speed, could tip the tractor over backwards, especially when towing a load or starting up a slope.

Slow down before stopping or attempting to make a turn. Fishtailing or severe braking at high speed can cause jackknifing and rollover. The safest procedure is to slow down by reducing engine speed before turning. Apply both brakes if braking action is required. Then turn as wide as you can with engine power pulling the load.



8. Hitch only to the drawbar and hitch points recommended by tractor manufacturers.

Hitching above the normal drawbar height may cause a tractor to tip over backwards. Any time you are pulling a load with a tractor, the load is trying to pull the tractor over backwards. The tractor tries to pivot around the point where the rear wheels touch the ground.



The hitch on the tractor has been designed to allow you to pull heavy loads without the risk of a backward upset. When the hitch point on a tractor is raised, the chance for a backward upset is greatly increased. Always hitch to the drawbar and keep it as low as possible.

Always use a safety-hitch pin for fastening a pulled implement to the drawbar of a tractor. The safety pin will not bounce out and let the implement loose, which could cause an accident.

9. When the tractor is stopped, set brakes securely and use the park lock if available.

If your tractor has a parking brake, use it. Don't depend on leaving the transmission in one of the driving gears to keep your tractor from rolling. If your tractor doesn't have a park brake, then shift the transmission lever to the park position. This locks the transmission with positive action, keeping the tractor stationary. Make this a habit everytime you leave the tractor seat. Shut off the tractor, set the parking brake or shift to park, and remove the key.

Daily maintenance check

Practicing the safety hints, reading the owner's manual, and performing a daily maintenance check will increase the probability of operating your tractor safely. Before you get on your tractor - walk around it - check for any obstructions or objects which you wouldn't be able to see from the operator's seat.