

Different Power Types

The forklift battery vs. other power type's debate is still going on. Is "filling up" better than "charging up?" It goes without saying that both types would undoubtedly be able to perform the same basic functions, but differences do arise in regards to optimal environmental and task conditions.

So how do you therefore decide on whether to go for the forklift battery option or the good old internal combustion engine option? Well below are the key points the ongoing debate seems to centre around:

- Costs and expenditure
- Engineering and mechanical costs
- Length of work shifts
- Operating and surrounding conditions and factors.
- Safety policies and Employee well-being
- Tasks to be performed
- Work group size (how many forklifts will be working)

Several distinct pros and cons can be drawn up for these two options. Once having gone through these one will be better suited and equipped to make the best decision.

Internal Combustion (IC) Option

The primary advantage that many people see is that the purchase price is lower, which makes this a very attractive option if you are just starting out. With regards to power output, IC provides increased acceleration and torque which is clearly visible when the forklift encounters steep gradients and slopes in the work place. In line with this the IC type is better suited to more challenging and rougher environmental conditions. No charging area is required and the vehicles can more easily cope with extended work cycles with only a quick refuel required. Unfortunately there are a couple of disadvantages. Firstly IC engines require continued maintenance and care. This is usually in the form of periodic overhauls and adds extra cost, not to mention the cost of down time. As we know IC provides more power, but with this is often accompanied by vibrations coursing through the vehicle which can take some getting used to. The sound created by the engine can be a draw back especially if the lift is operated in confined areas – it can be quite unpleasant for surrounding work groups and the operator himself. A final health concern is the emissions that accompany combustion such as carbon monoxide and lead – which are more harmful in confined unaired spaces. Then there are the basic disadvantages – such as the cost of fuel and general increased bulkiness of the lift (which does impact on the turning radius and maneuverability.)

Forklift Battery Option

The first thing that people click on to is that less time and money is spent on engineering and servicing as the need for overhauls is reduced. From this one can understand why the life span of these lifts is longer than its IC cousin. A major advantage (especially when it comes to other work groups and their productivity) is the near to none noise pollution as well as there being no emissions of harmful gasses such as carbon monoxide. The compactness of the electric motor means increased maneuverability and a greater turning circle. Another great benefit is the ability for the lifts to be programmed with different speeds which can be set to coincide with certain tasks. Then there is the obvious fact that it is very cheap to recharge the batteries.

However the bad has to come with the good. Initial purchase of an electric motor lift is considerably more costly than an IC one, and with weaker acceleration and torque electric lifts are not well suited to rough work conditions. Work cycles are usually shorter as power cells only last for a set period of time, and these deplete faster if the vehicle has to climb steep ramps and slopes. An area also has to be set aside for charging – and if you have a large fleet this can cause and space inconvenience.

This page has outlined the basic differences only, and it is advised that if you require any more information you contact Repolift.