

Terminal Tractor/Yard Spotter

Used Yard Spotter Sunnyvale - Tow tractors, also called tow tugs or towing tractors are popular for moving loads horizontally in airports, arenas, warehouses, manufacturing plants and other large buildings. These machines can tow numerous trailers in a train or snake-like formation. Certain tow tractors can transport helicopters and giant airplanes for the purpose of positioning inside and outside airport hangars and terminals. The tractive effort concept is how loads move from place to place. The complete amount of traction a vehicle utilizes on the ground. The heavier the load is, the more tractive effort is needed. The tow tractor lifts a portion of the load during towing while ensuring the wheels on the load still remain on the ground. The hydraulic mast on the tow tractor is responsible for lifting the load. It produces downforce on the drive wheel underneath to increase the tractive effort. The traction created by this process enables the tow tractor to pull very large and heavy loads.

Types of Tow Tractors There are two basic types of tow tractors: 1. Load carriers; and 2. Heavy-duty tow tractors; Load Carriers Industries such as e-commerce, manufacturing, and airport baggage and parcel systems must regularly move many individual and varying sized items to or from a single location. Load carrier tow tractors or tow tugs are especially useful for these types of applications because they allow the single items to be gathered and stacked on the wheeled platforms, ready to be attached for tow and transport by the tow tractor. The category that load carrier tow tractor models fall into includes forklift trucks, cranes and pallet jacks. Load carrier tow tugs transport loads at ground level only, rather than lifting or lowering off the ground or from shelving or other hard to reach areas. In order to be ready for transport, items must be secured on a wheeled platform or already on wheels to use the tow tractor. Bogies, skates and trollies are other names for wheeled platforms. The tow tug is attached to the trolley similar to train cars being attached to a locomotive. Generally, the steel coupling on the tow tug's male-end joins to the front trolley's female-end. The back of the trolley has a male-end steel coupling that can then be used to attach multiple trollies onto a single tow tug, transporting all the trollies in a train-like formation. Tow tractors are capable of moving many machines in a variety of conditions. The availability of many different types of trollies also allows for greater customization in transporting items. Many trollies can be connected since they are compatible with one another. Since multiple trolley types can be utilized in a single train, there is flexibility. A key benefit of using a load carrier tow tractor is that operators can enjoy a clear view instead of relying on forklifts. Additionally, load carrier tow tractors move their units in a forward-only way and this drastically decreases safety concerns associated with forklifts traveling in reverse. These safety considerations are of special importance in busy areas such as manufacturing floors and airports. Towing solutions are a good alternative to traditional forklifts to handle many single items. Tugs are easy to move and safe to use. One benefit of these tow tugs is that an operator usually does not require a license. This is because the load is not lifted from the ground so it does not fall under the usual restrictions and licensing required of standard forklifts, cranes and other load lifting equipment. There are three subtypes of load carrier tow tractors: 1. Pedestrian; 2. Stand-in; and 3. Rider-seated.

Pedestrian Tow Tractors A pedestrian tow tractor, also referred to as an electric tug, electric tugger, electric hand tug or tow tractor, is a walk-behind machine designed for easy movement of wheeled loads. It is compact, maneuverable and easy to use.

Stand-in Tow Tractors Popular for industries that conduct order picking and horizontal transport for manufacturing, the stand-in tow tractors are the best design. They provide a secure platform for the driver to operate while still having a smaller footprint than that of the rider-seated tow tractors.

Rider-Seated Tow Tractors The rider-seated tow tractors are similar to the stand-in tow tractors with the exception they provide a seated platform for the driver. These types of load carrier tow tractors are popular where loads are transported over longer distances, such as airport baggage systems where checked baggage is transported from the check-in counter at the front of an airport to the aircraft at the terminal, often a great distance from one another. Rider fatigue is decreased with sit-down units for more

efficiency and productivity. Heavy Duty Tow Tractors Aviation relies on the pushback concept for moving big passenger and cargo aircraft. Pushback is the process of pushing an aircraft back from the terminal by means not originating from the aircraft's personal power. Heavy-duty tow tractors are known as pushback tugs or pushback tractors complete this task. Pushback tractors are designed with a low profile design to enable them to move under the aircraft's nose in order to attach to the aircraft. Because of the added heavy weight of the aircraft, these tow tractors must be heavy enough to retain enough traction on the ground in order to move the aircraft. Large aircraft tractors can weigh as much as fifty-four tons. These models have a driver's cab that has the option of being raised or lowered during reverse for better visibility. While the vehicle is referred to as a pushback tug or pushback tow tractor, it is also used to tow aircraft in areas where taxiing the aircraft is not practical or safe, such as moving large aircraft in and out of maintenance hangars. The pushback tow tractors come in two subtypes, the towbarless and the conventional.

Conventional Pushback Tow Tractors These units use a tow bar to attach the tug to the nose landing gear on the aircraft. The tow bar is laterally fixed at the nose landing gear; however, it is possible to make height adjustments with slight vertical movements. At the end that attaches to the tug, the tow bar may pivot freely laterally and vertically. In this manner, the tow bar acts as a large lever to rotate the nose landing gear. Every aircraft has a special tow fitting and the towbar functions as an adapter between the fitting on the landing gear and the standard-sized tow pin. Heavy-duty towbars required for sizeable aircraft ride on their own wheels when they are disconnected from the machine. The hydraulic jacking mechanism is attached to the wheels, allowing the towbar to lift to the correct height in order to mate with the tug and the aircraft. The same means are used in reverse during the pushback process to raise the towbar wheels from the ground. The towbar is capable of being connected at the tractor's rear or front, depending on if the machine needs to be pulled or pushed. Depending on whether the aircraft needs to be pushed or pulled, the towbar can be attached to the front or rear of the tractor.

Towbarless Pushback Tow Tractors Towbarless tractors work without a towbar and scoop up the aircrafts' nose landing gear to lift it off of the ground instead. This design facilitates higher speeds greater aircraft control and can eliminate the necessity of having a worker inside of the cockpit to apply the brakes. As there is no need to maintain numerous towbars, simplicity is the main advantage of this unit. Directly connecting the tug to the landing gear allows operators to have better responsiveness and control while moving the aircraft.