

Terminal Tractor/Yard Spotter

Used Yard Spotter Idaho - 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. Tow tractors are responsible for moving multiple trailers in a train. Some are designed specifically to tow large aircraft in order to position them into and out of airport terminals and hangars. The tractive effort concept is how loads move from place to place. Tractive effort refers to the total amount of traction a vehicle deploys on the ground. Tractive effort says that the heavier the load, the more tractive effort is required. Based on this principle, the tow tractor works by lifting a part of the load it is towing while making sure the load's wheels remain on the ground. The tractive effort is increased by the unit's hydraulic mast. This has been engineered to produce downforce on the drive wheel directly under the mast. The tow tractor is capable of transporting very heavy and large loads thanks to the traction it provides. Types of Tow Tractors Two types of towing tractors include heavy-duty tow tractors and load carriers. 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. Tow tugs or load carrier tow tractors are excellent for these jobs as they can maneuver single items stacked on wheeled platforms for streamlined transport. The category that load carrier tow tractor models fall into includes forklift trucks, cranes and pallet jacks. These units only transport loads at ground level and do not lift or lower items from shelving or off the ground. In order to be ready for transport, items must be secured on a wheeled platform or already on wheels to use the tow tractor. Wheeled platforms are called skates, trollies and bogies. The tow tug is attached to the trolley similar to train cars being attached to a locomotive. Usually, the tow tug has a male-end steel coupling that couples to the female-end fixed to the front of the trolley. 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. These machines can transport a variety of items in varying 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. Load carrier tow tractors deliver a clear view for the operator which can be better than relying on forklifts. Load carrier tow tractors transport trollies in a forward direction which decreases the safety concerns common with reverse forklift operations. This design is excellent for locations that have a high level of safety such as manufacturing locations 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. No license is necessary since these units do not lift loads up from the ground like cranes, and forklifts that require licensing. 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. These machines are simple to use, extremely maneuverable and very compact. Stand-in Tow Tractors The most common design for businesses that rely on horizontal manufacturing transport and order picking are stand-in tow tractors. Stand-in tow tractors feature a tinier footprint compared to rider-seated editions and they offer a safe driver platform. Rider-Seated Tow Tractors Similar to stand-in tow tractors, rider-seated units have a seated operator platform. 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 refers to the process of pushing an aircraft back from an airport terminal by some means other than the aircraft's own power.

Pushback is achieved by employing pushback tugs or pushback tractors. Pushback tugs feature a low-profile enabling them to travel under the aircraft's nose for easy attachment. Enough ground friction is required to move the weighted aircraft, so these models need to be heavy themselves. A common tractor for moving large aircraft can weigh in up to fifty-four tons. Their driver's cab has the ability to be lowered and raised for increased visibility during reversing. The unit is called a pushback tow tractor or pushback tug but it is additionally used to move aircraft in situations where taxiing is not safe or practical including into and outside of aircraft maintenance. There are two subtypes of pushback tow tractors: 1. Conventional; and 2. Towbarless. Conventional Pushback Tow Tractors Conventional tugs use a tow bar to connect the tug to the nose landing gear of 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. The tow bar is able to pivot vertically and laterally at the end that connects to the tug. The tow bar functions as a sizeable lever to facilitate nose landing gear rotation. Each aircraft type has a unique tow fitting so the towbar also acts as an adapter between the standard-sized tow pin on the tug and the type-specific fitting on the aircraft's landing gear. On heavy towbars for large aircrafts, the towbar rides on its own wheels when not connected to an aircraft. 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 do not use a towbar; they scoop up the nose landing gear and lift it off the ground, allowing the tug to maneuver the aircraft. This offers better control and higher speeds while eliminating the requirement of having a worker stationed in the cockpit to put the brakes on. As there is no need to maintain numerous towbars, simplicity is the main advantage of this unit. By connecting the tug directly to the aircraft's landing gear tug operators have better control and responsiveness when maneuvering.