

Terminal Tractor/Yard Spotter

Used Yard Spotter Rhode Island - Tow tractors, sometimes call towing tractors or tow tugs, are vehicles used in transporting loads horizontally in warehouses, manufacturing plants, airports, arenas and other large facilities. Tow tractors are responsible for moving multiple trailers in a train. Tow tractors can move aircraft into and outside of airport locations such as terminals and hangars. The tractive effort concept is how loads move from place to place. The complete amount of traction a vehicle utilizes on the ground. Tractive effort says that the heavier the load, the more tractive effort is required. 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 tow tractor is capable of transporting very heavy and large loads thanks to the traction it provides. 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. These load carrier tow tractors fall under the material handling equipment industry which includes other machines such as pallet jacks, forklifts and cranes. 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. Therefore, the load must already be on wheels or on a wheeled platform, ready to be transported. 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. Trollies move in a train-like system thanks to the male-end steel coupling on the back which can connect to numerous units and allow a single tug to transport them. Tow tractors are capable of moving many machines in a variety of conditions. Different trolley types are on the market to facilitate better transportation customization. Most trollies types are compatible with each other, meaning they can be connected together. Different kinds of trollies can be maneuvered in a single train, creating flexible transport options. A key benefit of using a load carrier tow tractor is that operators can enjoy a clear view instead of relying on forklifts. Further, load carrier tow tractors tow their trollies behind them in a forward-only direction which decreases the safety concerns created by forklifts operating in reverse. 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 simple to move and provide a safe transport option. The operator doesn't require a license, which is another benefit compared to forklifts. 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 Pedestrian tow tractors go by many names including electric tow tractor, electric tug, or electric tugger. These units are walk-behind models that move wheeled loads. These compact machines are simple to use and can maneuver easily. Stand-in Tow Tractors Stand-in tow tractors are the most popular design for industries that involve order picking and horizontal transport in manufacturing. 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 models are commonly used for transporting loads over farther distances such as moving checked baggage from the airport check-in to the aircraft at the terminal. Reducing rider fatigue, the rider-seated models deliver more efficiency. 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. 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. Enough ground friction is required to move the weighted aircraft, so these models need to be heavy themselves. A typical tractor for large aircraft weighs up to 54 tons. They usually have a driver's cab that can be raised and lowered to increase visibility when 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 These units use a tow bar to attach the tug to the nose landing gear on the aircraft. The tow bar is fixed laterally at the nose landing gear, but may move slightly vertically for height adjustment. The tow bar is able to pivot vertically and laterally at the end that connects to the tug. 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. On heavy towbars for large aircrafts, the towbar rides on its own wheels when not connected to an aircraft. Attached to the wheels, the hydraulic jacking mechanism allows the towbar to lift to the proper height to mate with the aircraft and tug. The same mechanism is employed in reverse to raise the towbar wheels off the ground for pushback. 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. Simplicity is the main advantage of the towbarless tugs since it is not necessary to maintain a variety of towbars. Greater control and responsiveness while moving the aircraft is achieved with this direct connection of the tug to the landing gear.