

## Dock Plate and Dock Board Sizing

Dock board and dock plate width is determined by the size of equipment used to load and unload and the width of the largest load. When in doubt, choose the wider board or plate to ensure safer operation. Side curbs reduce the usable width of boards and must be considered in choosing the correct width.

Dock board and dock plate length is determined by the desired maximum slope of the ramp into and out of the truck from the dock. Each board type has characteristics to consider relative to the maximum desired slope.



## Determining Dock Board or Dock Plate

Consult the table below to determine the correct truck dock board or dock plate and correct capacity to use based upon the equipment to be used in loading and unloading:

### Dock Board and Plate Selection

<u>Equipment Used</u>	<u>Type of Board</u>	<u>Capacity of Board / Plate</u>
Foot traffic, hand truck, pallet truck	Aluminum plate or A.P. with side curbs	(Operator + equipment + load) x 2
Four wheeled forklift or powered lift truck	Aluminum board with side curb or steel Board w locking leg, 2 or 4 pin	Fork lift capacity x 3
Three wheeled forklift	Steel truck board w/ locking leg, 2 or 4 pin	Fork lift capacity x 4.5

### Choosing Truck Dock Board & Dock Plate

<u>Equipment Used</u>	<u>Board Width</u> (at least 12" - 18" wider than the Widest load or fork truck)	<u>Board Length</u> (Long enough to minimize steepness of incline into the truck)
Foot traffic, hand truck, pallet truck	36" or 48" for pedestrian traffic; 48" for pallet trucks	Approximately 9" per inch of height difference - dock surface to trailer floor ( <b>usual minimum length: 36"</b> )
Three & four wheeled fork lift	Recommended minimum: 60"	Approximately 7 - 8" per inch of height difference - dock surface to trailer floor ( <b>usual minimum: 36"</b> )
	<b>Note:</b> Most popular widths: Plates: 36" & 48" Boards: 60" & 72"	<b>Note:</b> Most popular lengths: Plates: 36", 48" & 60" Boards: 48", 60" & 72"

### Advantages and Disadvantages of Dock Boards and Dock Plates

<u>Type of Board/Plate</u>	<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Disadvantages</u>
Aluminum Dock Plate	Light weight Usually moved by hand Relatively inexpensive	Damages easily if overloaded Not suitable for motorized traffic
Aluminum Dock Board	Relatively light weight Moved by hand/lifting chains Higher capacity than plates	Bends easily if overloaded or hit May shift with heavy use
2-Pin Steel Truck Board	Stronger than aluminum plates Greater longevity than aluminum Lays flat on dock when idle	Heavy, requires fork lift to move Unsuitable for truck angle parking
4-Pin Steel Truck Board	Suitable for truck angle parking Greater longevity than aluminum Best board for OTR trailers Lays flat on dock when idle	Heavy – Requires fork lift to move Requires time to set lock pins