Excavator Daily Inspection Checklist: Pre-Start Checks

Frequency	Completed by	Approved by	The checklist
Daily	Excavator operator	Site supervisor or plant manager	39 checks · 6 sections

INSPECTION DETAILS

Site / work area: _____ Make and model: _____

Machine number, plate or serial number: _____ Machine type: _____

Attachment fitted (bucket, breaker, grapple...): _____ Hour meter reading (h): _____

Date and time: _____

Operator and documents

1.	The operator is trained and authorised to operate this excavator, and the operator certificate is valid **CRITICAL** Ref.: [1] [2] [3] [4] [8]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
2.	The periodic control or thorough examination is in date and the last report allows the machine to be used **CRITICAL** Türkiye: at least yearly for hydraulic excavators, and the last report travels with a mobile machine used off the premises. UK: a quick hitch is thoroughly examined under LOLER every 12 months if it stays on the machine, every 6 months if it does not. Ref.: [1] [2] [8] [9]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
3.	The operating instructions are kept with the machine Ref.: [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A

Walk-round (engine off)

Machine parked on level ground, bucket or attachment lowered to the ground.

4.	No oil, fuel or coolant is leaking under the machine or in the engine and pump compartments Ref.: [14] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A

5.	Hydraulic hoses, pipes and connections are undamaged, and the boom, arm and bucket cylinders show no leaks or damage **CRITICAL** Look for cuts, bulges, rubbing and wet fittings. Never feel for a leak with your hand. Ref.: [14] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
6.	The boom and arm have no cracks, bends or damaged welds **CRITICAL** Ref.: [14] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
7.	The bucket or attachment, its linkage and pins are secure, undamaged and free of packed dirt and stones Check tooth and cutting edge wear against the limits in the manual. Ref.: [14] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
8.	The quick hitch is fully locked onto the attachment and, where the hitch uses one, the manufacturer's retaining pin is in place **CRITICAL** Check from the ground if you cannot see the hitch clearly from the cab. Never replace the pin with a bolt, wire or other substitute. Repeat after every attachment change. Mark N/A if no quick hitch is fitted. Ref.: [9] [8]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
9.	Tracks, shoes and track drive (or tyres and wheel nuts) are undamaged, with no loose or missing bolts Check track tension or tyre pressure as the manual describes. Ref.: [14] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
10.	The frame, superstructure and counterweight are undamaged, and doors, covers and guards are in place and closed Ref.: [14] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
11.	Engine oil is between the minimum and maximum marks, and the other levels the manual lists for the daily check are in range Drain the fuel water separator if the display shows it is full, and check that the radiator and coolers are not clogged. Ref.: [14] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
12.	Steps, handholds and walkways are secure and free of mud, oil and ice Ref.: [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A

Cab and safety devices

13.	Cab windows are clean and free of cracks or damage that block or distort the view Ref.: [5] [10] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
14.	Mirrors and cameras are fitted, clean, undamaged and adjusted, and the camera screen works **CRITICAL** Ref.: [8] [10] [11] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A

15.	The cab and its protective structure are undamaged The cab protects the operator if the machine rolls over or an object falls on it. Ref.: [2] [1] [11]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
16.	The seat belt is fitted, undamaged and latches securely Ref.: [14] [11] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
17.	With the safety (hydraulic lock) lever in the locked position, the boom, arm, bucket, swing and travel controls do not move the machine CRITICAL Ref.: [14] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
18.	The horn works and can be heard over the site noise Ref.: [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
19.	The travel or reversing alarm and the warning beacon work In Türkiye, audible and visual reversing warnings must work during reversing. OSHA's earthmoving equipment rule asks for a reverse alarm or a signaller when the view to the rear is obstructed. Ref.: [2] [1] [6] [12]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
20.	Work lights and travel lights work Mark N/A only if the machine works in daylight and has no lights fitted. Ref.: [1] [10] [11]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
21.	A fire extinguisher is on the machine or close to where it works, charged and within its service date Ref.: [1] [11]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
22.	The machine cannot be started without its key or code Ref.: [1] [11]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A

Function test (engine running)

Make sure nobody is near the machine before you start the engine.

23.	Gauges and the display show normal readings, with no warning light or fault message Ref.: [14] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
24.	The boom, arm, bucket and swing respond smoothly to the controls and stop when the controls are released CRITICAL Stop if a movement is jerky, slow or creeps. Ref.: [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
25.	The machine travels and steers in both directions and the brakes stop and hold it CRITICAL Test on a clear, level area with nobody nearby. Ref.: [1] [6] [10] [11]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A

26.	There is no unusual noise, vibration, smoke or smell from the engine or hydraulics Ref.: [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A

Work area and lifting

27.	Underground cables, gas, water and sewer lines in the digging area have been located and marked CRITICAL Ref.: [2] [7]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
28.	Overhead power lines near the work have been identified and the machine is kept at a safe distance by barriers or warning signs CRITICAL Allow for the full reach of the boom and for wire sway in wind. US: at least 10 feet (3.05 m) from lines rated 50 kV or below (OSHA 1926.600(a)(6)). The Turkish regulation gives no figure; get the distance from the line operator. Mark N/A if there are no lines. Ref.: [2] [5]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
29.	The ground can carry the machine, and the machine is kept back from excavation edges, slopes and water CRITICAL Where the operator cannot see the edge clearly, use barricades, stop logs or a signaller. Ref.: [2] [1] [7]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
30.	People are kept out of the excavator's working and slewing area by barriers, signs or a marked exclusion zone CRITICAL Ref.: [8] [2] [1] [3]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
31.	There is clear space between the slewing superstructure and any wall, vehicle or other fixed obstruction HSE asks for a clearance of over 0.5 m between any part of the machine, particularly the counterweight, and the nearest obstruction. Fence the gap off where this cannot be kept. Ref.: [8] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
32.	Where the operator's view is restricted, a trained signaller is in place and the signals are agreed The signaller stands in a safe position where the operator can see them. Mark N/A if the operator has a clear view of the whole working area. Ref.: [2] [1] [8] [12] [6]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
33.	Nobody works or stands under the bucket, the attachment or a lifted load CRITICAL Ref.: [7] [9] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
34.	Only the operator is in the cab, and nobody rides on the machine or in the bucket Ref.: [2] [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A

35.	If the excavator will lift loads, the maximum load for this configuration is marked on the machine and the lift is planned and supervised **CRITICAL** Mark N/A if the machine will not be used for lifting today. Ref.: [1]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A
36.	Slings, shackles and other lifting accessories are marked with their capacity, undamaged and within their examination date UK (LOLER): lifting accessories are thoroughly examined every 6 months unless an examination scheme says otherwise. Türkiye: at least yearly. Mark N/A if no lifting is planned. Ref.: [1] [13]	◯ Pass ◯ Fail ◯ N/A

Result

37.	All defects found have been written down and reported to the supervisor Ref.: [8] [3] [1]	◯ Yes ◯ No ◯ N/A
38.	If a critical check failed, the excavator was taken out of service: key removed, machine tagged and not used until repaired **CRITICAL** Ref.: [1] [8] [4]	◯ Yes ◯ No ◯ N/A
39.	Notes and defects found	Note: _____

Critical check: if it fails, stop and correct it before work continues.

SIGN-OFF

Operator

Name: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

Supervisor

Name: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

Legal basis and references

[1] Türkiye: İş Ekipmanlarının Kullanımında Sağlık ve Güvenlik Şartları Yönetmeliği (Resmî Gazete, 25.04.2013, 28628; son değişiklik 23.12.2025, 33116) — Annex III 1.3–1.3.2: operator check before each start of work, daily visual and function check, recorded; cracked or badly worn equipment out of use. Annex III 1.9, 2.6 and Table 6: periodic control of hydraulic excavators at most yearly. Annex I 2.1–2.17, 3.1.4, 3.1.6, 3.1.7, 3.2.2; Annex II 1.1, 2.1–2.4, 3.1.1, 3.1.3, 3.2.5; Articles 7, 8, 10, 11.

[2] Türkiye: Yapı İşlerinde İş Sağlığı ve Güvenliği Yönetmeliği (Resmî Gazete, 05.10.2013, 28786) — Annex 4: item 15 (power lines), items 49–57 (excavation and material-handling machines: condition, trained users, periodic control, ground, signaller, movement areas, reversing warnings, falling into the excavation, cab protection, operator only), items 62(b), 68 and 71 (buried services, distance from the edge, workers kept out of the machines' movement area).

[3] Türkiye: ÇSGB İş Sağlığı ve Güvenliği Genel Müdürlüğü, Güvenli İnşaat Bilgi Kartı 1: Ekskavatör, Temel Hususlar — Operators hold an operator certificate and are trained; the limits of the working area are known and unauthorised entry is prevented with barriers and signs; operators are encouraged to report faults.

[4] United States: OSHA 29 CFR 1926.20, General safety and health provisions — (b)(2) frequent and regular inspections of equipment by competent persons; (b)(3) unsafe machinery tagged or locked out of use, or removed; (b)(4) only employees qualified by training or experience operate equipment.

[5] United States: OSHA 29 CFR 1926.600, Equipment — (a)(3) buckets and similar equipment lowered or blocked when not in use, parking brake set; (a)(5) cab glass with no visible distortion; (a)(6) clearance from power lines, 10 feet for lines rated 50 kV or below.

[6] United States: OSHA 29 CFR 1926.602, Material handling equipment — Rules for earthmoving equipment (the list in (a)(1) ends with "and similar equipment" and does not name excavators): (a)(4) service brakes able to stop and hold the equipment; (a)(9)(ii) reverse signal alarm or a signaller where the view to the rear is obstructed.

[7] United States: OSHA 29 CFR 1926.651, Specific excavation requirements — (b) underground utility installations located before digging; (e) no employee underneath loads handled by lifting or digging equipment; (f) warning system where mobile equipment works next to an excavation edge the operator cannot see.

[8] United Kingdom: HSE, Excavators: Overview — Exclusion with barriers, clearance of over 0.5 m when slewing, visibility aids, plant and vehicle marshaller, bucket attachment; trained, competent and authorised drivers; daily visual checks, defect reporting, safety-critical defects take the excavator out of service.

[9] United Kingdom: HSE, Industry guidance on quick hitches — Retaining pin available and checked before work; check from the ground if the hitch cannot be seen from the cab; no substitute pins; nobody working below the bucket; LOLER thorough examination every 12 months for a hitch that stays on the machine, 6 months otherwise.

[10] United Kingdom: HSE, Inspection of work equipment (PUWER regulation 6) — Quick checks before use, such as functional testing of brakes and lights on mobile machinery; the condition of windows, mirrors and CCTV on mobile plant; who can inspect; when records are needed.

[11] United Kingdom: HSE, Mobile work equipment (PUWER Part III) — Roll-over risk, restraint systems, preventing start-up by unauthorised people, braking and stopping device, devices for improving driver vision, lighting, fire-fighting equipment.

[12] United Kingdom: HSE, Traffic management on site — Mirrors, CCTV cameras and reversing alarms as aids for drivers; trained plant and vehicle marshallers; signallers trained and authorised.

[13] United Kingdom: HSE, Thorough examinations and inspections of lifting equipment (LOLER) — Thorough examination every 6 months for lifting accessories and 12 months for other lifting equipment unless an examination scheme says otherwise; simple pre-use checks by users.

[14] International: Volvo Construction Equipment, Keep Your Excavators Running Their Best with This Prestart Checklist (2020) — Manufacturer guidance, used as good practice: engine oil level, water separator, leaks, hydraulic lines and cylinder mountings, boom and arm cracks, bucket linkage, track chain and shoes, frame and covers, coolers, mirrors and cameras, seat belt, safety lever. Your machine's own manual comes first.

Fill in this checklist on your phone. Scan to download FindRisk: run the checklist, add photos, score risks and share a PDF report in minutes.

Version 1 · Updated November 26, 2026 · findrisk.net/checklists/excavator-daily-inspection-checklist/