

Pallet Quality Sorting: A, B, and Broken Core Procedure

1.0 Objective & Scope

The objective of this procedure is to standardize the sorting of wooden pallets into A, B, and Broken Core categories to maintain inventory accuracy, maximize pallet reuse, and minimize waste. This procedure applies to all warehouse personnel involved in receiving, shipping, and pallet handling, including Receivers, Inventory Clerks, and Material Handlers.

Proper pallet sorting ensures that only structurally sound pallets are used for shipping and storage, reducing product damage and safety risks. Broken Core pallets are identified for repair or disposal, preventing them from entering the active inventory.

2.0 Required Systems, Tools & Materials

- Access to the SupplyGrid WMS Dashboard on a handheld device or workstation
- Mobile Barcode Scanner (Zebra or equivalent)
- Pallet inspection checklist (paper or digital form)
- Colour-coded tags or spray paint (Green for A, Yellow for B, Red for Broken Core)
- Stretch wrap or banding for unstable pallets
- Forklift or pallet jack for moving pallets
- Designated sorting area with clearly marked zones (A, B, Broken Core)
- Clipboard and pen for manual record-keeping

3.0 Safety & Handling Precautions

- Wear steel-toed boots, high-visibility vest, and safety gloves at all times in the sorting area.
- Inspect pallets for protruding nails or splinters before handling; use gloves and report hazards.
- Use forklift or pallet jack for moving heavy or stacked pallets; never manually lift pallets over 25 kg.
- Keep sorting zones clear of debris and maintain clear aisleways for forklift traffic.
- Do not stack pallets more than 6 feet high in the sorting area to prevent tip-overs.
- Report any damaged or unstable pallets immediately to the supervisor.

4.0 Step-by-Step Procedure

1. Log into the SupplyGrid WMS Dashboard and navigate to the 'Pallet Sorting' module. Select the 'Start New Sort' task.
2. Using a forklift or pallet jack, transport a stack of unsorted pallets to the designated sorting area. Ensure the area is clean and free of obstructions.
3. Visually inspect each pallet individually. Check for structural integrity: broken boards, missing blocks, cracks, splits, or warping. Also check for protruding nails, staples, or other fasteners.
4. Classify the pallet as Grade A if it is structurally sound with no broken boards, no missing blocks, minimal wear, and no protruding fasteners. Grade A pallets are suitable for shipping and high-rack storage.

5. Classify the pallet as Grade B if it has minor damage such as one or two cracked boards (less than 6 inches long), slight warping, or missing small chunks. Grade B pallets are acceptable for internal use or low-rack storage.
6. Classify the pallet as Broken Core if it has significant structural damage: broken or missing stringers, multiple broken boards, severe warping, or any condition that compromises load stability. Broken Core pallets must be removed from active inventory.
7. Apply the appropriate colour-coded tag or spray paint mark to each pallet: Green for Grade A, Yellow for Grade B, Red for Broken Core. Place the tag on a visible side board.
8. Move the sorted pallet to the corresponding zone: Grade A pallets to the A Zone, Grade B to the B Zone, Broken Core to the Broken Core holding area. Use the forklift or pallet jack to transport.
9. Scan the barcode on each pallet (if available) or manually enter the pallet ID into the WMS. Update the pallet status to 'Grade A', 'Grade B', or 'Broken Core' in the system.
10. For Broken Core pallets, attach a red 'Quarantine' tag and log the damage details in the WMS (e.g., 'Broken stringer, missing block'). This triggers a review for repair or disposal.
11. Repeat steps 3 through 10 for each pallet in the stack. When the stack is complete, close the sort task in the WMS and record the total counts per grade on the inspection checklist.
12. If any pallet is too unstable to move safely, do not attempt to move it. Mark it as 'Unsafe' in the WMS and notify the supervisor for special handling.

5.0 Verification & Discrepancy Reporting

1. After sorting, the Inventory Clerk must reconcile the physical count of pallets in each zone against the WMS report. Any discrepancy greater than 2% must be investigated immediately.
2. If a pallet is misclassified (e.g., a Grade B pallet found in the A Zone), move it to the correct zone and update the WMS. Document the error on the inspection checklist.
3. For Broken Core pallets, the Inventory Clerk must verify that each pallet has a red quarantine tag and that the damage description in the WMS matches the physical condition. If not, correct the record.
4. If a pallet is found to be unsafe for handling (e.g., collapsing), do not move it. Tag it with a red 'Unsafe' tag, take a photo, and report it to the Warehouse Manager for disposal coordination.
5. All discrepancies, including misclassification, missing tags, or system errors, must be reported to the Inventory Manager via email or the WMS escalation feature within 1 hour of discovery.
6. The Warehouse Manager will review Broken Core pallets weekly to determine if any can be repaired. Repairable pallets are moved to a repair station; non-repairable pallets are sent to disposal.

Regulatory Disclaimer: This document is a generic operational template provided for educational purposes. The end-user assumes all liability for reviewing, adapting, and validating all step sequences and material handling protocols against local shop capabilities.