

Warehousing and Physical Stock Management

Common Terms in Warehousing

| | |
|--|--|
| Stock Keeping Unit (SKU) | A unique code or nomenclature that designates a single line item of a larger consignment. SKUs may be tied to a specific production run or expiration date, and may denote only a product of specific characteristics. A single storage facility with multiple SKUs will require very different handling procedures than a storage facility with few SKUs. |
| Inventory Unit | The lowest unit at which stored cargo items may be counted at. An inventory unit may be an individual item (example: blanket), storage container (example: bottle of pills) or kit. |
| Handling Unit | The lowest unit at which a stored cargo item is handled. In the context of a warehouse, the handling unit may be a carton that contains many inventory units. A handling unit may be a single unit, or an entire pallet. |
| Material Handling Equipment (MHE) | MHE is any form of mechanical equipment used to facilitate the loading and offloading of cargo, or the movement of cargo around an open space such as a port or a warehouse. MHE includes forklifts, cranes, pallet jacks, and more. |
| Pick Order | The order generated by a requestor and communicated to a warehouse indicating the quantity and type of SKUs to be pulled from inventory and shipped. |
| First In / First Out (FIFO) | An inventory and asset management system in which the oldest received inventory items on hand are the first removed from inventory. |
| First Expired / First Out (FEFO) | An inventory and asset management system that emphasizes and the movement of items based on their relative expiration dates. |
| Non-Food Item (NFI) | Any stored item that is not food in nature. In the humanitarian context, NFI items usually refer to durable, non-perishable items such as household and shelter materials. NFI management in humanitarian settings usually does not require advanced storage solutions, unlike storage of medicines or medical consumables which may require temperature controls. |