



Manual Handling

Improper lifting technique can lead to back, leg and arm pain. Poor technique can cause both acute injury, and serious chronic effects. Learning the right way to lift will help you avoid these problems.

Here's how:

Plan ahead before lifting.

Knowing what you're doing and where you're going will prevent you from making awkward movements while holding something heavy. Clear a path, and if lifting something with another person, make sure both of you agree on the plan.

Lift close to your body.

You will be a stronger, and more stable lifter if the object is held close to your body rather than at the end of your reach. Make sure you have a firm hold on the object you are lifting, and keep it balanced close to your body.

Feet shoulder width apart.

A solid base of support is important while lifting. Holding your feet too close together will be unstable, too far apart will hinder movement. Keep the feet about shoulder width apart and take short steps.

Bend your knees and keep your back straight.

Practice the lifting motion before you lift the object, and think about your motion before you lift. Focus on keeping your spine straight--raise and lower to the ground by bending your knees.

Tighten your stomach muscles.

Tightening your abdominal muscles will hold your back in a good lifting position and will help prevent excessive force on the spine.

Lift with your legs.

Your legs are many times stronger than your back muscles--let your strength work in your favor. Again, lower to the ground by bending your knees, not your back. Keeping your eyes focused upwards helps to keep your back straight.

If you're straining, get help.

If an object is too heavy, or awkward in shape, make sure you have someone around who can help you lift.

Tips:

Never bend your back to pick something up.

It's just not worth the damage that improper lifting technique can cause.



NO JOB TOO SMALL

- ✚ **Hold the object close to your body.**
You are a much more stable lifter if you're not reaching for an object.
- ✚ **Don't twist or bend.**
Face in the direction you are walking. If you need to turn, stop, turn in small steps, and then continue walking.
- ✚ **Keep your eyes up.**
Looking slightly upwards will help you maintain a better position of the spine.

Correct lifting technique

- ✚ **Position the body and feet** – Face the direction you intend to travel. Turning and twisting with a load increases the risk of injury. Your feet should be as close to the load as possible, separated and with one foot in front of the other. Bend your knees to lower your body, keep your back straight and head up





- ✚ **Get a good grip** – Use your palms for gripping, not your fingers. Your fingers should be extended, and assisting the hold, but should not be carrying the weight. Hands should be diagonally opposite each other





NO JOB TOO SMALL

- ✚ **Lift with the legs** – Once you are comfortable with stance and grip, focus on the lift, this is where injury is most likely to occur. Check your back is straight and head is up (keeping your chin into your chest will help this). Lift the load by straightening the legs, using your thigh muscles. Come fully upright, but remain flexible, that is, keep elbows and knees slightly bent. Do not lean forward. Keep the load close to you and walk carefully to your destination.



Name of Employee:

Signature:

Date :