



Healthy Working Lives

Moving & Handling Guidance



[Click here to begin](#)



Fire Workplace Health Projects Safety Support Training
Education
Advice Campaigns Information Guidance Assessments Occupational Health
Fire Health Projects Safety Training Programmes Interventions
Guidance Support Workplace Programmes Assessments Education Occupational Health

Moving & Handling Guidance

WHAT IS MANUAL HANDLING?

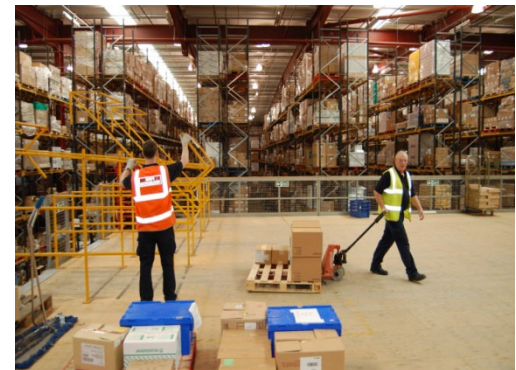
Any action which involves a Force, an Object and Movement!

Pushing and Pulling

Throwing

Lifting and lowering

Holding and Carrying



Moving & Handling Guidance

Manual Handling Contract

On a day to day basis **YOU** need to decide for yourself how to carry out any handling tasks you undertake

You need to recognise your own limitations

You must put this into practice, both at work and at home!

Never be afraid to ask for help!



Legal requirements

- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

What are my **EMPLOYER** duties?

- **AVOID** the need for hazardous manual handling, as far as reasonably practicable
- **ASSESS** the risk of injury from any hazardous manual handling that can't be avoided
- **REDUCE** the risk of injury from hazardous manual handling, as far as reasonably practicable
- **CARRY OUT** appropriate Risk Assessments
- Provide **INFORMATION & TRAINING** on the safe systems of work

Moving & Handling Guidance

What are **MY** duties?

- Follow appropriate systems of work laid down for my safety
- Put training principles into practice
- Make proper use of equipment provided for my safety
- Co-operate with my employer on health and safety matters
- Inform the employer if I identify any hazardous handling activities
- Take care to ensure that my activities do not put others at risk



Moving & Handling Guidance

54 million working days are lost annually in the UK due to

- Pain
- Strain
- Injuries to the back

Back pain can happen in many different ways, but more often happens when we do:

- Heavy manual labour, and handling tasks
- Lift and move items in awkward places
- Repetitive tasks, such as manually packing goods and equipment
- Sitting at workstations for long periods of time and if the workstation is not correctly arranged or adjusted to fit the person.



H&S statistics

11% of manual handling injuries involve pushing/pulling
= back injuries

45-54 year olds have higher instances of back injuries

16-34 year olds have lower rates of upper limb disorders

Highest risk workers for musculoskeletal disorders are

Postal workers

Builders

Health care staff

Factory workers

Moving & Handling Guidance

Why should I learn to **RIGHT** Way to move and lift things?

Strains and Sprains : Muscles and joints can be injured by over-exertion

Fractures : Dropping a heavy load can break bones

Wounds : Handling sharp, rough surfaces can cut and bruise skin

Hernias : The strain of lifting can cause painful ruptures in the abdominal wall

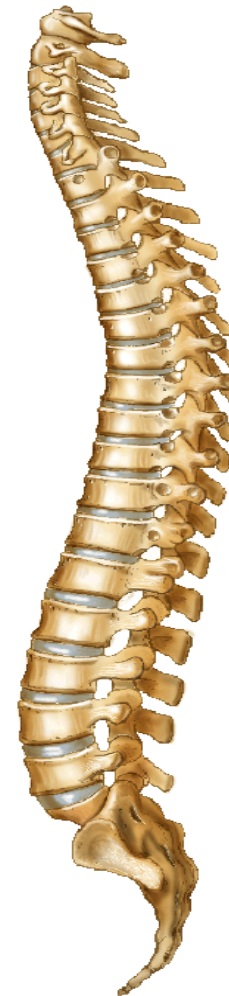
Many different physical activities can aggravate back pain or be more difficult:

- Stooping, bending and crouching
- Lifting heavy objects
- Pushing and pulling excessive loads
- Stretching, twisting and reaching

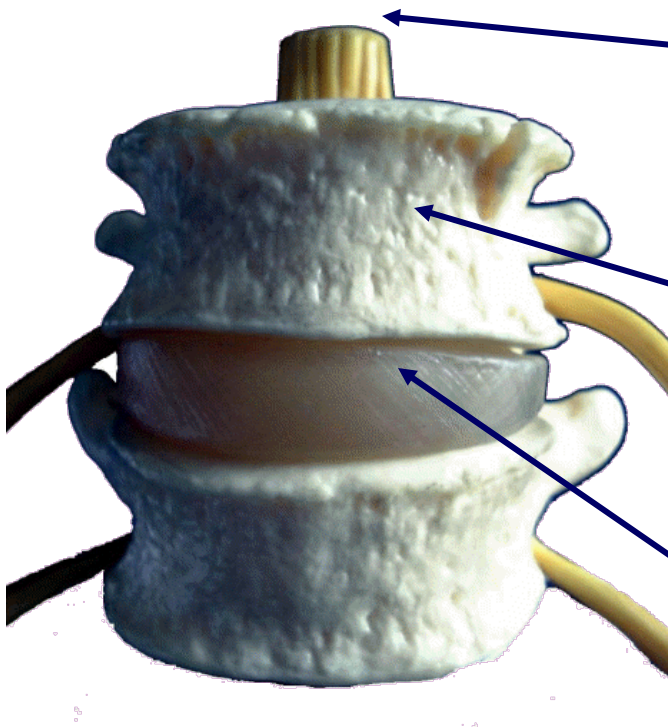


Moving & Handling Guidance

- **Skeleton – bones and joints**
- **33 Vertebrae**
- **Cartilage or discs**
- **Muscles, ligaments**
- **Nerves**



Moving & Handling Guidance



Spinal Cord – Nerves for movement & sensation,

Vertebra - vary in size & shape depending on the need for movement & weight carried

Intervertebral Disc

- shock absorbers and spacers



Risk Assessment

Manual Handling Risk Assessment process for moving and handling is broken down into a 4 step process:

Task

Individual

Load

Environment



Moving & Handling Guidance

STEP 1: THE TASK

Does the task involve:

- Holding loads at a distance from the body/trunk?
- Twisting of the body?
- Stooping, reaching upwards?
- Lifting, lowering, carrying for long distances?
- Pushing or pulling of loads
- Risk of sudden movement of loads?
- Repetitive handling?
- Insufficient rest or recovery time?
- A work rate imposed by a process?

Can you:

- Improve workplace layout to improve efficiency?
- Reduce the amount of twisting and stooping?
- Avoid lifting from the floor level or above shoulder height?
- Reduce carrying distances?
- Avoid repetitive handling?
- Vary the work, allowing one set of muscles to rest while another is used?



Moving & Handling Guidance

STEP 2: THE INDIVIDUAL – YOU!

Does the job:

- Require unusual capability?
- Endanger those with a health problem?
- Endanger pregnant women?
- Call for special information or training?

Can you:

- Take better care of those who have a physical weakness or are pregnant?
- Give the employees more information, e.g. about the range of tasks they are likely to face?
- Provide training that covers:
 - How to recognise harmful manual handling
 - Appropriate systems of work
 - Use of mechanical aids
 - Good handling techniques



Moving & Handling Guidance

STEP 3: THE LOAD

Is the load:

- Heavy, bulky or unwieldy?
- Difficult to grasp?
- Unstable or with contents likely to shift?
- Sharp, hot or otherwise potentially damaging?

Can you make the load:

- Lighter or less bulky?
- Easier to grasp?
- More stable?
- Less damaging to hold?

Have you asked suppliers to help?



Moving & Handling Guidance

STEP 4: THE ENVIRONMENT

Are there:

- Constraints on posture?
- Poor floors?
- Variations in levels?
- Hot/cold/humid conditions?
- Strong air movements?
- Poor lighting conditions?
- Restrictions on movement or posture from clothing or personal protective equipment?

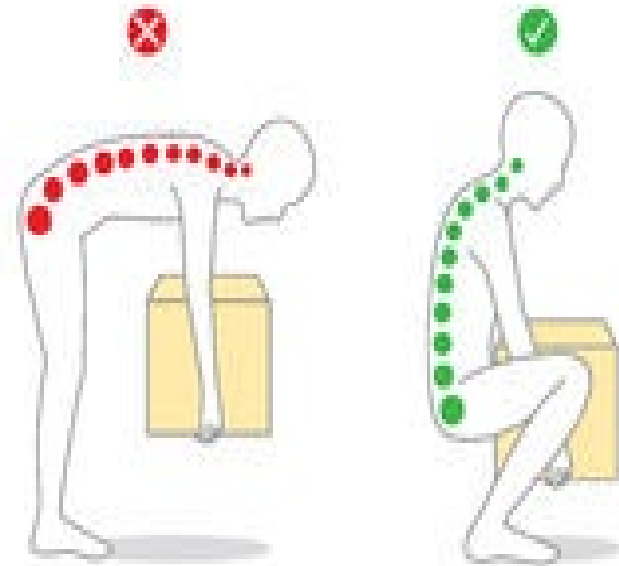
Can You:

- Remove obstructions to free movement?
- Provide better flooring?
- Avoid steps and steep ramps?
- Prevent extremes of hot and cold?
- Improve lighting?
- Consider less restrictive clothing or personal protective equipment?



GOOD MANUAL HANDLING TECHNIQUES

- Head erect
- Chin up
- Back straight
- Elbows in
- Knees bent
- Feet slightly apart



Moving & Handling Guidance

How do I prevent pain, injuries and damage to myself?

- **EXAMINE THE OBJECT**

Determine its weight and look for sharp edges, all loads which are heavy or awkward should be marked. Check to see if the load is stable and equally distributed.

- **PLAN THE JOB**

Check if there is a safe system of work for the task. Plan a route that's free from tripping and slipping hazards. Know where the object will be unloaded and plan "rest stops" along the way.

- **GET A GOOD GRIP**

Decide in advance how to hold the object. Protect your hands and feet by grasping the load firmly. If you wear gloves to prevent cuts or burns, make sure they fit properly.



PLAN THE LIFT

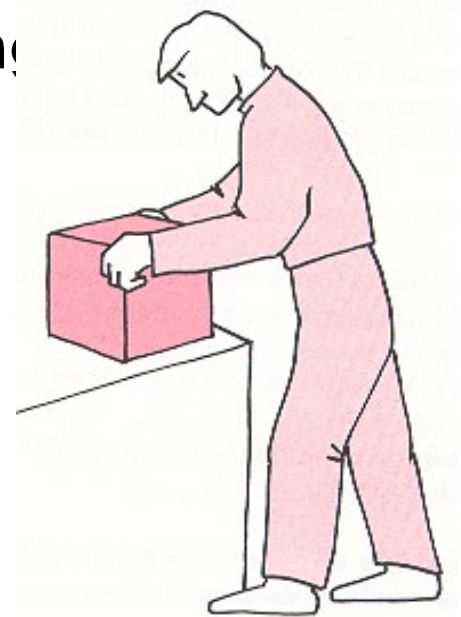
Prior to carrying out any manual handling task stop & think ... plan the lift.....

- Are **handling aids** available to prevent/reduce manual handling?
- **Where** is the load going?
- Do you need **help**.
- Remove **obstructions**.
- Is the **way clear** of slip hazards?
- Do you need **rest** stops?



ASSESS THE LOAD

- Look at the position of the load
Slide it towards you rather than reaching
- Determine the weight.
- Look for sharp edges.
- See if weight is evenly distributed
- Keep heaviest side to body.
- Decide how to hold the load.
- If it is too heavy use a trolley or get assistance.



PICKING UP THE LOAD

Part 1 – position yourself correctly next to the load

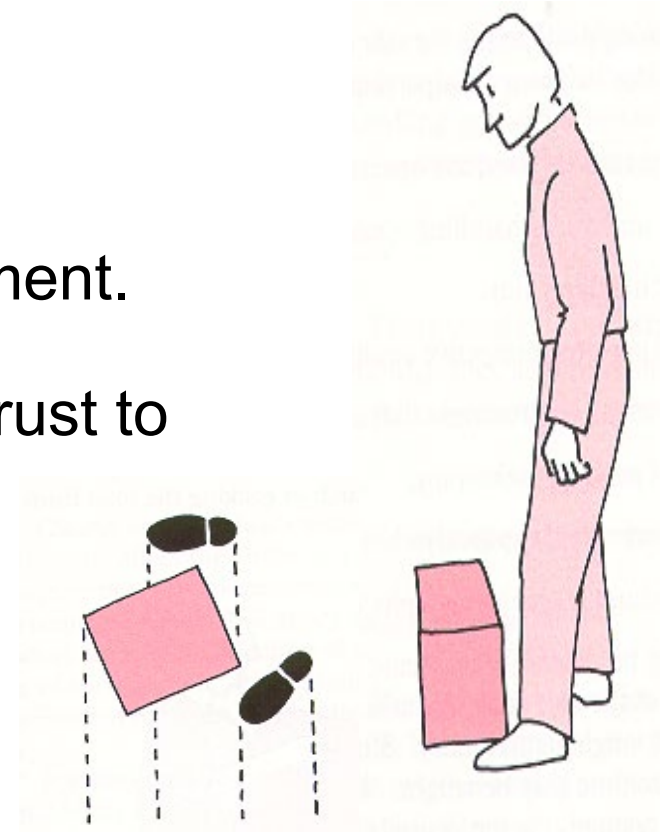
Correct Positioning of Feet:

Comfortably apart.

One foot positioned in direction of movement.

Other foot where it can give maximum thrust to the body.

- To maintain good balance feet should never be too close together on the ground.



PICKING UP THE LOAD

Part 2– Bending down to pick up the load

With a straight back:

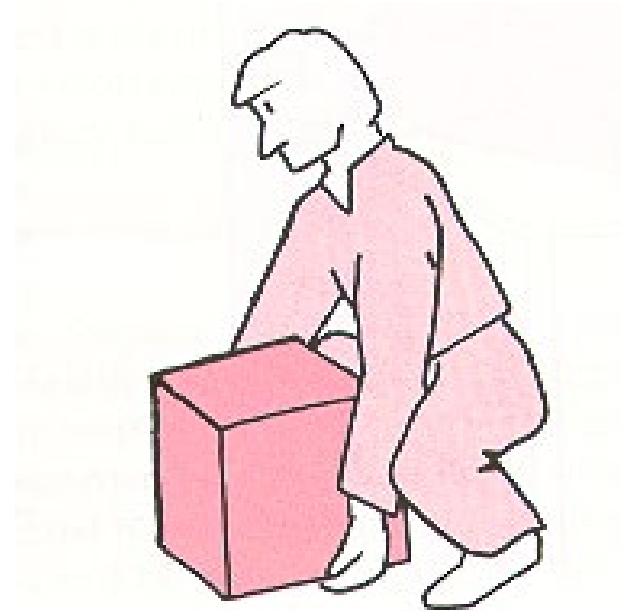
Lower the body by relaxing
the knees.

Keep your back naturally straight

Keep load close to body.

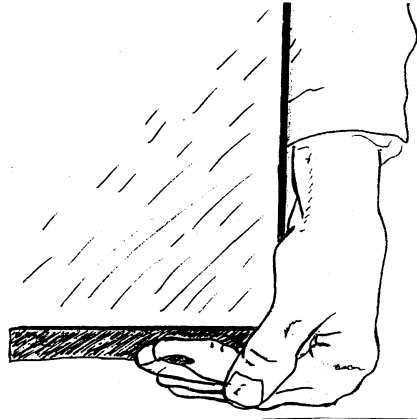
Keep chin in and head back.

Lean over the load to get a firm
grip.



CARRYING THE LOAD

Part 1 - Ensure the load is gripped correctly

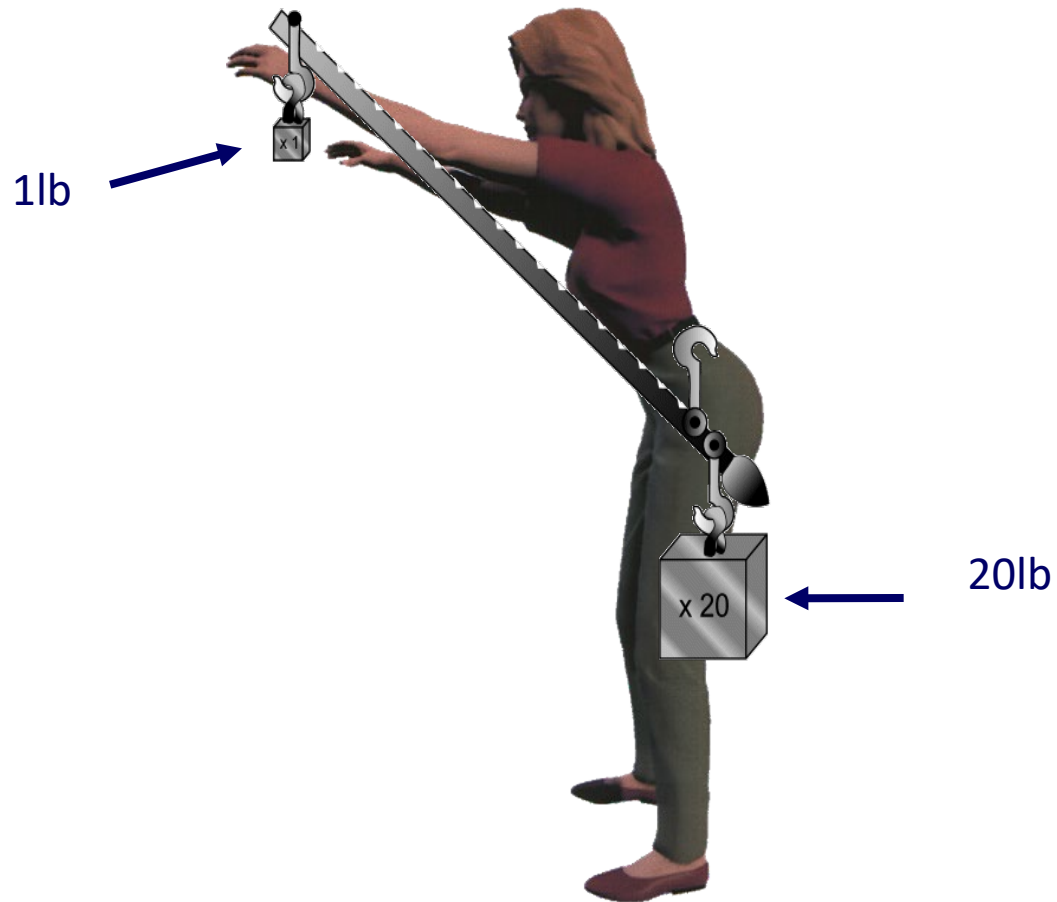


Take a firm grip by using the palms of the hands and roots of fingers.

Taking weight on finger tips will create pressure at the end of fingers and could strain muscles and tendons in the arms.

A full palm grip will reduce muscle stress to the arms and decrease the possibility of the load slipping.

Lifting at arm reach



Moving & Handling Guidance

If you practice these moves in whatever lifting task you complete then you can reduce your risk of injury:

THINK before doing anything!

GRASP the load securely

HOLD the load close to the centre of your body

LIFT with your legs. Use your leverage, momentum, balance and timing for a smooth action.



RAISE your head as you start to lift

STAND as close to the load as possible. Create a stable base – preferably a diagonally opposite stance.

BEND your knees and keep your back in the “S” shape. Don’t bend your knees fully, as you will need power to lift.

MOVE your feet



Moving & Handling Guidance

ALTERNATIVE LIFT

when you can't bend your knees or get close to the object:

STAND close to the object (or person) to be lifted

BEND at the hips, keeping your head and back in a straight line

BEND your knees if you can – or brace yourself by putting your knees against a solid object. Use an arm as a supporting strut if this helps.

LIFT gradually, using legs, buttocks and stomach muscles



Always make sure you have enough space in which to work!



Moving & Handling Guidance

PUSHING & PULLING

For either movement, remember:

- Stay close to the object
- Get a good grip
- Keep your back straight , stomach in, knees bent and elbows in
- Lean in the direction your pushing or pulling
- Watch out for obstructions
- Keep the strain off your back by using your body weight and legs do the work.



Moving & Handling Guidance

CARRYING

When carrying objects the way below you can help prevent injuries

Keep Close – take advantage of the mechanical leverage of your body

Keep your arms tucked in – to prevent injury or fatigue to your neck or muscles

If you need to change direction make sure you **move your feet**.



Don't block your vision by carrying a large load. Use a mechanical aid, or get someone to help.

Face the spot the load will be placed by turning your feet and whole body in that direction

Avoid twisting your body, stooping, bending or leaning back.



Moving & Handling Guidance

UNLOADING

Be careful putting down the load, use the same principles as lifting but in reverse

Bend your knees to lower the load, keeping your back straight and the load close to you

Be careful with your fingers and toes, don't trap them under the load



Be sure the load is secure wherever you leave it. Check that it won't fall, roll or move, be aware that someone won't fall over it or block someone's way or an exit

Slide the load into tight spaces – it's much easier and safer than trying to lift it

Place the load on a table or bench edge then pushing it forward with your arms and body



Moving & Handling Guidance

TEAM LIFTS

Work with someone of the similar height and build as you

Choose one person to give instructions

Lift from the hips at the same time, raise the load to the right level

Move slowly and together



Moving & Handling Guidance

LIFTING TO A HIGH PLACE - OVERHEAD LIFTS

Lighten the load if you can by dividing into smaller loads

Stand on something sturdy, such as a step stool (not a chair)

Stand with one foot in front of the other, unless you are using a Stepladder

Use a mechanical aid or get help if the load is awkward or heavy



CHANGING CULTURES

- People are often injured because of either a lack of **knowledge** or an unwillingness to get **help**.
- Don't be a manual handling hero!



- Remember: your wellbeing rests on your ability to do your job safely - **get help, get it right.**