

Manual Handling

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Introduction

1.1 Context

Injury caused by poor manual handling procedures can be painful and have serious long term effects. This policy details the principles and best practice guidance for safe lifting. This policy when used in conjunction with employee training and risk assessments will help minimise the risk of harm to employees.

1.2 Purpose

It is the policy of the company that no person is expected to lift a load that would be likely to cause him/her injury. Furthermore the company minimises the risk of injury to employees by meeting legal requirements in this area which includes the adherence to this policy.

1.3 Scope

This policy is applicable to all employees and managers within the company. The main points of this policy are included in the employee handbook. A separate manual handling e-learning module is available and must be completed by all employees on an annual basis. Your Health and Safety Coordinator may schedule additional training if required and you will notified of this training through your on-line Health and Safety system.

Procedure

2.1 Principle of T.I.L.E.

Every employee must be familiar with the correct lifting techniques. These are attached in diagram form but they may be summarised as follows:

Remember the acronym **T.I.L.E**

Task

Individual

Load

Environment & **E**quipment

Task

- Where is the load?
- Where do we want it and why?
- Does the load have to be moved?
- If the load is a person, do they consent to being moved?
- How will the move be achieved?
- Is this the safest way of achieving the manoeuvre?
- Are there existing systems of work for the task?
- Will the task involve moving across a variety of surfaces?

Individual

- Can they carry out the task alone?
- Are they competent to perform the task?
- Are they physically capable/fit?
- Are they dressed appropriately, including PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)?
- Are they familiar with the technique/equipment?
- Are they familiar with the patient?
- If performing the task with a colleague, who is the team leader and what are the words of command?

Load

- Questions regarding the load will depend partly on whether the load is a person or an object.
- Is the load marked indicating which way up it should be?
- Is the weight of the load known/marked?
- Is it suitably packaged?
- Is it an awkward shape?
- Is it bulky (i.e. of large dimensions)?
- Is it slippery or smooth in texture?
- Does it have grips or handles in good repair?
- Is it a hazardous substance?

Environment & Equipment

- Have you prepared the handling area?
- Have you removed any hazards from the route?
- Do you have enough space to carry out the MHO?
- Is the temperature/humidity appropriate?
- Is the equipment CE marked, serviced and fully charged?
- Is the equipment in full working order and undamaged?
- Is it appropriate equipment for the task?

The risk of injury from manual handling is further reduced by having each employee ensure that the working environment is maintained in a safe condition. This includes gangways and floors being kept in a good condition and free from obstruction.

2.2 Additional Precautions

- Only manually lift loads which you know you can lift easily, comfortably and safely. If in doubt ask a colleague for assistance.
- Examine the load before lifting. The obscure sides could contain exposed and dangerous staples, wire, and other objects which could cut or puncture the skin.
- Factors which could make manual lifting dangerous are as follows,

1. Characteristics of the load

The manual handling of a load may present a risk, particularly of back injury if it is:

- Too heavy or too large.
- Unwieldy or difficult to grasp.
- Unstable or has contents likely to shift.
- Positioned in a manner requiring it to be held or manipulated at a distance from the trunk, or with a bending or twisting of the trunk, or likely, because of its contours or consistency (or both) to result in injury to employees, particularly in the event of a collision.

2. Physical effort required

A physical effort may present a risk particularly of back injury if it is:

- Too strenuous.
- Only achieved by a twisting movement of the trunk.
- Likely to result in a sudden movement of the load.
- Made with the body in an unstable posture.

3. Characteristics of the Working Environment

The characteristics of the work environment may increase a risk, particularly of back injury if:

- There is not enough room, in particular vertically, to carry out the activity.
- The floor is uneven, thus presenting tripping hazards, or is slippery in relation to the employee's footwear.
- The place of work or the working environment prevents the handling of loads at a safe height or with a good posture by the employee.
- There are variations in the level of the floor or the working surface, requiring the load to be manipulated on different levels.
- The floor, or footrest, is unstable.
- The temperature, humidity or ventilation is unsuitable.

4. Requirements of the Activity

The activity may present a risk, particularly of back injury, if it entails one or more of the following requirements:

- Over-frequent or over-prolonged physical effort involving in particular the spine.
- An insufficient bodily rest or recovery period.
- Excessive lifting, lowering or carrying distances.
- A rate of work imposed by a process which cannot be altered by the employee.

5. Personal Factors

The employee may be at risk if he/she:

- Is physically unsuited to carry out the task in question.
- Is wearing unsuitable clothing, footwear or other personal effects.
- Does not have adequate or appropriate knowledge or training.

If you have reason to believe that any of these factors are relevant in any circumstance, refer the matter to your line manager before attempting to complete a lift.

2.3 Safe Lifting

- Use only certified lifting equipment.
- Do not lift a load if you doubt its weight.
- Before lifting an unbalanced load find out its centre of gravity. Raise it slightly off the ground and pause – there will be little harm if it drops.
- Take care to avoid snatch or sudden loads, particularly in cold weather.
- Make sure that people or loads can't fall from a high level when using ladders / kickstools.

2.4 Safe Stacking / Storage

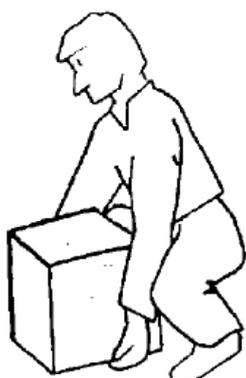
- Check objects which may roll, such as drums and keep heavy articles near floor level.
- Inspect pallets, containers and racks regularly for damage.
- "Key" stacked packages of uniform size like a brick wall so no tier is independent of another.
- Use a properly constructed rack where possible – and secure it to a wall or floor.
- Do not allow items to protrude from stacks or bins into aisles.
- Never climb racks to reach upper shelves – use a ladder or steps.
- Never de-stack by throwing down from the top or pulling out from the bottom.

2.5 Lifting Best Practice

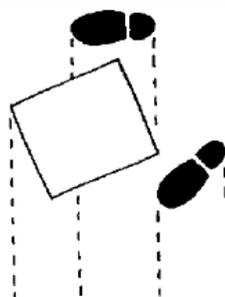


2. Place the feet. Feet apart, giving a balanced and stable base for lifting (tight skirts and unsuitable footwear made this difficult). Leading as far forward as is comfortable.

3. Adopt a good posture. Bend the knees so that the hands when grasping the load are as nearly level with the waist as possible. But do not kneel or overflex the knees. Keep the back straight (tucking in the chin helps). Lean forward a little over the load if necessary to get a good grip. Keep shoulders level and facing in the same direction as the hips.

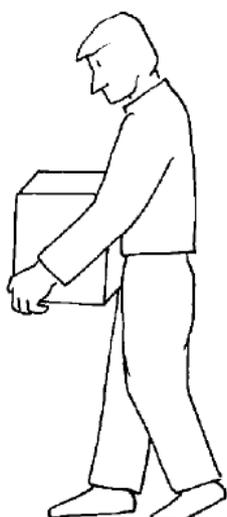


1. Stop and think. Plan the lift. Where is the load going to be placed? Use appropriate handling aids if possible. Do you need help with the load? Remove obstructions such as discarded wrapping materials. For a long lift – such as floor to shoulder height – consider resting the load mid-way on a table or bench in order to change grip.



4. Get a firm grip. Try to keep the arms within the boundary formed by the legs. The optimum position and nature of the grip depends on the circumstances and individual preference, but it must be secure. A hook grip is less fatiguing than keeping the fingers straight. If it is necessary to vary the grip as the lift proceeds, do this as smoothly as possible.

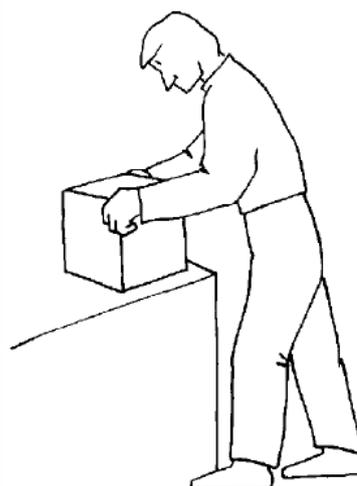
5. Don't jerk. Carry out the lifting movement smoothly, keeping control of the load.



5. Move the feet. Don't twist the trunk when turning to the side.

6. Keep close to the load. Keep the load close to the trunk for as long as possible. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the trunk. If a close approach to the load is not possible try sliding it towards you before attempting to lift it.

7. Put down, then adjust. If precise positioning of the load is necessary, put it down first, then slide it into the desired position.



2.6 Training

All employees must complete the on-line manual handling training module. Practical training requirements will be identified and scheduled through your Health and Safety Co-ordinator.

2.7 Additional Support

Additional support for managers and employees is available through the following:

- Business Manager
- Health & Safety Coordinator
- Human Resources Department