

National Health & Safety Function, WHWU.

Principles of Safer Manual Handling

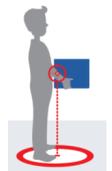
Fast Fact FF:023:00 January 2018

- **Think before you lift**

Before you start the task you should assess the load. Establish how heavy it is and how you will handle it. Do you need any equipment and where will you put the load?

- **Keep the load close to your waist**

Keep the load's centre of gravity close to your own centre of gravity when it is safe to do so as this will keep you more stable when handling loads and will reduce the physical effort required.



- **Stand in a stable position**

Stand in a comfortable position with your feet a hip-width apart and one leg slightly forward to keep your balance (Your feet and the whole area between them forms your base of support).

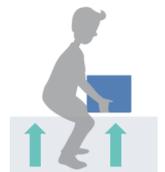
- **Make sure you have a good, secure hold on the load.**

Keep the load as close to your body as possible. Grip the load firmly with the palms of your hands (this is known as a palmar grip).

- **At the start of the lift, use moderate flexion (slight bending) of your back, hips and knees.**

- **Don't flex/bend your spine any further as you lift.**

Push up slowly and smoothly using your legs. Keep your spine in its natural S shaped curve.

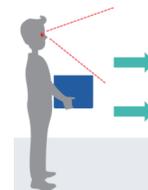


- **Avoid twisting your trunk or leaning sideways, especially while your back is bent.**

Avoid twisting – use your feet to change direction. Look ahead and keep your shoulders level and facing in the same direction as your hips. If you have to change direction, move your feet not your body.

- **Keep your head up while handling.**

Look ahead in the direction you are going and not down at the load.



- **Move smoothly.**

Lift and handle the load slowly and smoothly, without jerking.

- **Don't lift more than you can easily manage.**

If in doubt, seek help or assistance.

- **Put the load down, then adjust it if necessary.**

Place the load down first and then slide the load into the position you need.