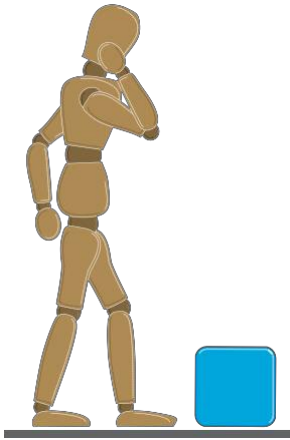


# Manual Handling Employee HANDOUT

Obviously some of the loads you normally handle won't always be a perfect square box shape - the idea is that the handling principles are the same and that whoever is doing the task will have to adapt to using them to best effect in the situation they are faced with - or get help.

## Good handling technique for lifting

Here are some practical tips, suitable for use in training people in safe manual handling.



**Think before lifting/handling.** Plan the lift. Can handling aids be used? Where is the load going to be placed? Will help be needed with the load? Remove obstructions such as discarded wrapping materials. For a long lift, consider resting the load midway on a table or bench to change grip.



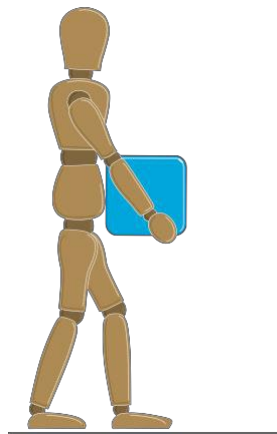
**Adopt a stable position.** The feet should be apart with one leg slightly forward to maintain balance (alongside the load, if it is on the ground). The employee should be prepared to move their feet during the lift to maintain their stability. Avoid tight clothing or unsuitable footwear, which may make this difficult.



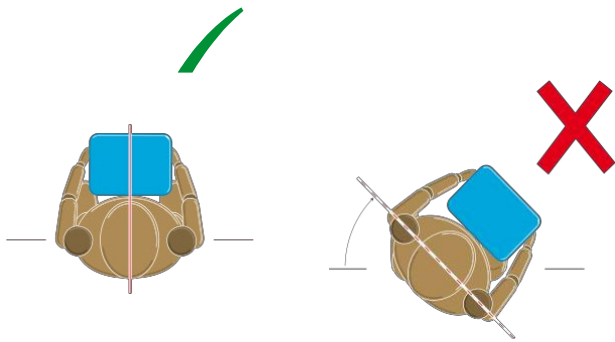
**Get a good hold.** Where possible, the load should be hugged as close as possible to the body. This may be better than gripping it tightly with hands only.

**Start in a good posture.** At the start of the lift, slight bending of the back, hips and knees is preferable to fully flexing the back (stooping) or fully flexing the hips and knees (squatting).

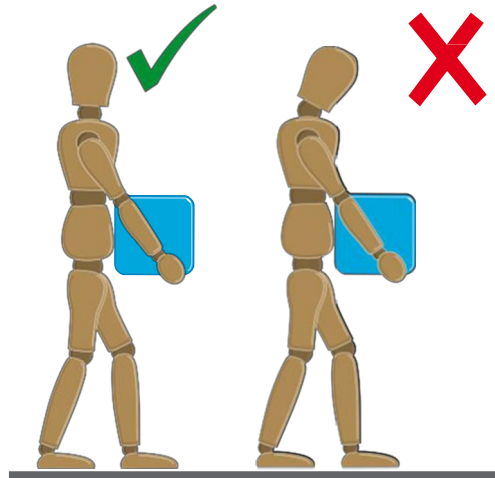
**Don't flex the back any further while lifting.** This can happen if the legs begin to straighten before starting to raise the load.



**Keep the load close to the waist.** Keep the load close to the body for as long as possible while lifting. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the body. If a close approach to the load is not possible, try to slide it towards the body before attempting to lift it.



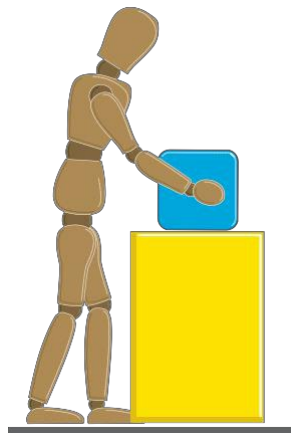
**Avoid twisting the back or leaning sideways,** especially while the back is bent. Shoulders should be kept level and facing in the same direction as the hips. Turning by moving the feet is better than twisting and lifting at the same time.



**Keep the head up when handling.** Look ahead, not down at the load, once it has been held securely.

**Move smoothly.** The load should not be jerked or snatched as this can make it harder to keep control and can increase the risk of injury.

**Don't lift or handle more than can be easily managed.** There is a difference between what people can lift and what they can safely lift. If in doubt, seek advice or get help.



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

## Good handling technique for pushing and pulling

Here are some practical points to remember when loads are pushed or pulled.

**Handling devices:** Aids such as barrows and trolleys should have handle heights that are between the shoulder and waist - make sure you use them and let your manager know if they don't run smoothly or if there are any other problems with manoeuvring the loads.

**Force:** Try to push rather than pull when moving a load as this is generally a more efficient use of muscular effort. However, make sure first that you can see over the load and control both the steering and stopping of it.

**Slopes:** Get help from another employee whenever necessary e.g. when you have to negotiate a slope or ramp, as pushing and pulling forces can be very high when moving heavily-laden trolleys/trucks.

**Uneven surfaces:** Wherever possible choose a path that is firm, smooth and level as moving an object over soft or uneven surfaces requires much higher forces and can often displace the load.

**Stance and pace:** To make it easier to push or pull, keep your feet well away from the load and go no faster than walking speed.