

## Proper Lifting

In our daily lives, both at work and at home, we are always lifting or moving something. Quite often we think that we can lift or move something that is way too heavy or bulky and that is what puts us at a high risk of injury. Back strains and strained muscles are among the most common injuries affecting our work and social lives so it is important to refresh ourselves on how to properly lift objects.

### Proper Lifting Techniques

Before you lift a heavy object, think through your task. Decide where you're going to place the object and how you'll get it there. If an object is too heavy to lift safely, ask someone to help you or make several trips carrying lighter weight. When lifting an object from the floor, stand as close to the object as possible. Then kneel, resting one knee on the floor. Don't lift from a standing position with your waist bent or your knees locked.

To avoid injury, follow these steps for proper lifting and material handling:

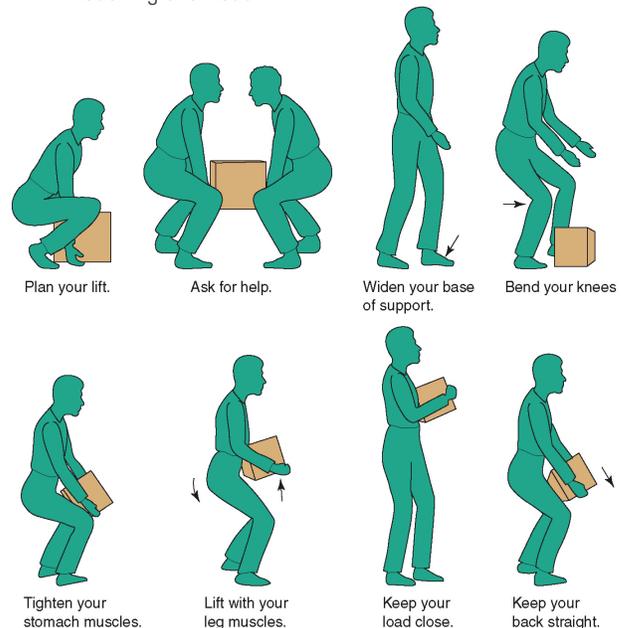
- **Warm Up:** Your muscles need good blood flow to perform properly. Consider simple exercises such as jumping jacks and stretches to get warmed up prior to lifting tasks.
- **Stand close to load:** The force exerted on your lower back is multiplied by the distance to the object. Stand as close to the load as possible when lifting.
- **Bend your knees:** Bending your knees and keeping your upper body upright allows you to use your legs to lift, rather than your back.
- **Grip the load:** Do not lift a load if you can't get a good grip. Some loads are not too heavy, but are simply too large to grip easily. Consider getting help when lifting such a load.

*Safety Share Courtesy of Oldcastle Materials Group*

- **Lower load in reverse:** You can just as easily injure your back putting something down as you did picking it up. Lower using your legs and keep the load close to your body.
- If the object you are lifting weighs more than 50 pounds ALWAYS use a team lift.

### Things to Avoid:

- Lifting and twisting at the same time
- Throwing bags or other materials
- Working while fatigued
- Rushing
- Reaching overhead



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