

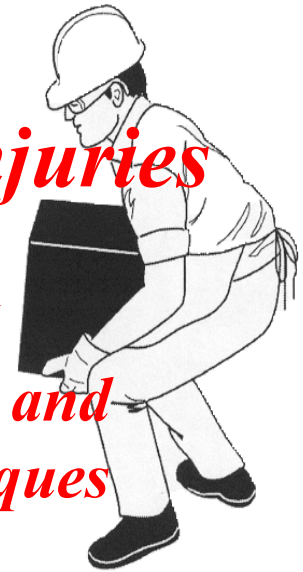
Tips to Protect Your Back

- Review the lifting information inside this bulletin. Think through the job, and take enough time to do it safely.
- Keep objects close to your body as you move them. As a load moves away from your body, the stress on your back increases dramatically.
- Wear comfortable shoes and clothing that won't interfere with good body mechanics.
- Know your limits. To judge the weight of an object, pick up one corner. Don't lift something if you can't do so comfortably.
- If you need help, let your supervisor know. For heavier objects, always ask for assistance. If no one is available to lend a hand, delay that part of the job.
- If someone asks *you* for help, don't take on a task that may exceed your capabilities. Find others to assist.
- Avoid lifting objects off the floor. Plan with others to have objects that will need lifting later to be placed at approximately waist-level.
- When possible break a load into smaller parts.
- Use a cart for heavier objects, and for not-so-heavy objects being moved a distance. Plan so that the cart and the surfaces being moved from and to are at about waist-height.
- Do not place heavy objects into car trunks or other locations where use of good body mechanics will be difficult.
- DHS Safety & Health Services does not recommend the use of lifting belts. The National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health (<http://cdc.gov/niosh/beltfind.html>) has not found them to be effective. Instead, ask your health care provider for some back-strengthening exercises.

This information is available in alternative formats.

Call DHS Safety and Health, 503-945-6380.

Prevent Back Injuries with *Planning and Safe Lifting Techniques*



The use of correct lifting techniques will help prevent painful and potentially permanent injuries to your back or other body parts.

Without the use of correct body mechanics, injuries can occur, whether you're picking up a pen from the floor or lifting a box.

This brochure will provide you with steps for safely lifting objects, and contains tips on other actions you should take to prevent injuries.

Visit the DHS Safety & Health website's Training page at <http://personnel.hr.state.or.us/sh/swell.htm> for information on a video that describes lifting of different objects at home and in the workplace.

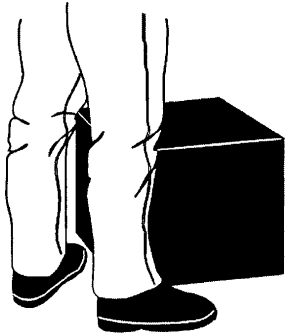


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How to lift safely

Before lifting, take a moment to think about what you're about to do. Examine the object for sharp corners, slippery spots or other potential hazards. Know your limit and don't try to exceed it. Ask for help if needed, or if possible divide the load to make it lighter. Know where you are going to set the item down and make sure it and your path are free of obstructions. Then follow these steps.



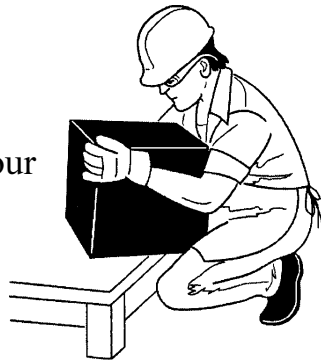
1. Stand close to the load with your feet spread apart about shoulder width, with one foot slightly in front of the other for balance.

2. Squat down, bending at the knees (not your waist). Keep your back as vertical as possible.



3. Get a firm grasp of the object before beginning to lift.

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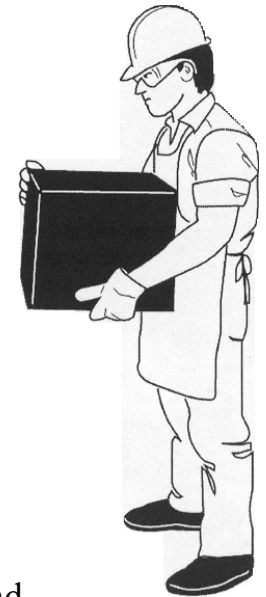


4. Begin slowly lifting with your LEGS by straightening them. Use your arms to support the load and your legs to lift the load. Never twist your body during this step.

5. Once the lift is complete, keep the object as close to the body as possible. As the load's center of gravity moves away from the body, there is a dramatic increase in stress to the lumbar region of the back.

If you must turn while carrying the load, turn using your feet, not your torso.

To place the object below the level of your waist, follow the same procedures in reverse order. Remember, keep your back as vertical as possible and bend at the knees.



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