

General Lifting Guidelines: Plan Ahead

- Check the pathway you are taking:
 - Any obstacles?
 - Slip hazards?
 - Is the walking surface solid?
 - Are doors open?

- Visualize the lift in your mind:
 - Posture,
 - Coupling points,
 - One- or two-person job?

- Test the load:
 - Too heavy or bulky for one person?
 - Is object stable and balanced?
 - Can it be divided into smaller loads?

- Are mechanical aids available?
 - Dolly,
 - Hand truck,
 - Cart, etc.

- Any twisting involved?

- Avoid loads that are too heavy:
 - Get help.
 - Divide the load.
 - Use mechanical aids.

- Establish proper footing:
 - Feet at least shoulder width apart.
 - One foot slightly ahead of the other (karate stance).
 - Firm footing (surface condition, type of footwear).
 - Are you positioned as close to the object as possible?

- Bend at the knees rather than at the waist:
 - Use the larger leg muscles to give strength to the lift.
 - Maintain neutral posture.
 - Lead with the head and torso.
 - Sustain smooth continuous motion.
 - Do not rush the lift.
 - Use the strong leg muscles.
 - Tighten your abdomen (contract stomach muscles).

**TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE
DISTANCE OF OBJECT FROM BODY
AND THE LOCATION OF THE
FINAL RESTING POINT.**

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- Keep the load as close as possible to the body:
 - Avoid a negative “leverage.”
 - Put yourself at a biomechanical advantage.
- Avoid twisting:
 - Move your feet – take small steps and pivot instead.
 - Reposition the object if possible.
- Push rather than pull the load:
 - Let your large leg muscles do most of the work.
 - Stay close to the load.
 - Don’t lean forward.
 - Use both arms.
 - Keep your stomach muscles tight.
- If you must pull the load:
 - Face the load squarely (one foot at least 12” in front of the other)
 - Keep your back in neutral position.
 - Bend your knees slightly.
 - Pull with one smooth motion.
- Avoid lifting outside the “safe zone”:
 - Don’t lift above the shoulders.
 - Don’t lift from below the knees.
 - Don’t reach over an object to lift a load; instead,
 - ↳ Move the object, or
 - ↳ Go around it.
- Minimize the frequency of lifts. Consider:
 - The weight of the object.
 - The distance to travel with the object.
 - The height to which the object is raised/elevated.
- Develop specific procedures for common lifting tasks:
 - Consider using Ergonomic Interventions.
- Identify, reduce, and/or eliminate risk factors:
 - Engineering Controls,
 - Administrative Controls,
 - Work Methods.