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

- **Any twisting involved?**

- **Avoid loads that are too heavy:**
  (Take into consideration the distance of object from body and the location of the final resting point.)
  - 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)

General Lifting Guidelines: Plan Ahead

- **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 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