

ERGONOMICS AND PROPER LIFTING TECHNIQUES

Proper back safety ergonomics and techniques are important and must be part of ongoing training. Regularly scheduled training helps to prevent knowledge from fading and bad habits from recurring.

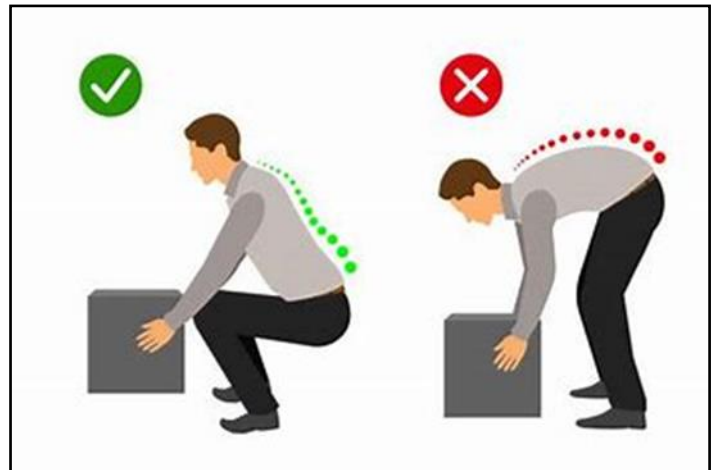
Manual material handling presents certain physical risk factors including:

- Awkward postures (i.e. bending, twisting)
- Repetitive motions (i.e. frequent reaching, lifting, carrying)
- Forceful exertions (i.e. carrying or lifting heavy loads)
- Pressure points (i.e. grasping or contact from loads, leaning against parts or surfaces that are hard or have sharp edges)
- Static postures (i.e. maintaining fixed positions for a long time)

Do you need help? Get help if needed!

Best practices:

- Plan your lift – make sure the pathway you will use is clear; remove any stumbling hazards and check for wet or slippery surfaces
- Know or test the weight of the load
- Get as close to the object as possible
- Ensure your footing is firm and stable
- When possible, place one foot slightly ahead and to the side of the object for good balance
- Back straight, buttocks pushed out, use only the legs and hips to lower down to the object
- Slide the object nearer to you (if possible)
- Tighten stomach muscles
- Lift with your legs only
- Keep your back upright
- Keep your eyes up - looking slightly upwards will help you maintain a better position of the spine and help you keep your back straight
- Keep the load close to your body while lifting
- Do not twist or reach to set the object down



Coaching and constant reinforcement of back safety ergonomics and techniques, along with immediate correction when supervisors encounter incorrect lifting practices, are imperative to building and maintaining proper practices.