

Manual Handling Policy



Our policy is to eliminate the need for manual handling as far as it is reasonably practicable. Manual Handling is defined as “any transporting or moving of a load, including lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving of a load”. Where it is not practical to avoid moving loads, we will carry out risk assessments and, where reasonably practicable, use lifting aids, including trolleys, lifts, and hoists, in accordance with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (hse.gov.uk/pubns/price/l23.pdf).

ASSESSING RISK ASSOCIATED WITH MANUAL HANDLING

The acronym **TILE** is a mnemonic for the points to consider when assessing the risk associated with manual handling.

Task How much work are you about to commence?

Bending and stooping to lift a load significantly increases the risk of back injury. Items should ideally be lifted from no lower than knee height and no higher than shoulder height. Outside this range, lifting capacity decreases and the risk of injury increases.

If items must be lifted from above shoulder height, a stand or suitable means of access should be used. Items which are pushed or pulled should be as close to waist level as possible. Pushing is preferable, particularly where the back can rest against a fixed object to give leverage.

Carrying distances should be minimised, especially if the task is repeated. Repetitive tasks should be avoided where possible. Tasks that involve lifting and carrying should be designed to allow for sufficient rest breaks to avoid fatigue. Avoid tasks that require twisting the body where possible.

Individual Who will be carrying out the task? Do they have any medical or physical constraints?

Consideration must be given to age, body weight and physical fitness. Regard must also be given to personal limitations; volunteers must not attempt to handle tasks beyond their capabilities. Assistance must be sought when necessary.

Allowances should be made for people with genuine physical or clinical reasons for avoiding lifting. Pregnant women and very recent mothers should not undertake lifting or carrying tasks.

Sufficient knowledge and understanding of the work are important factors in reducing the risk of injury. Individuals undertaking lifting or carrying will be provided with appropriate instructions and information to perform the task with minimal risk.

Load What is it that is being moved? Is the load stable, or does it have heavier areas? Is it awkward to carry?

The load should be kept as close as possible to the body's trunk to reduce strain and

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should not be of such size as to obscure vision.

Unstable loads should be handled with particular caution. The change in centre of gravity is likely to result in overbalancing. Ensure there is a secure handhold, using gloves where necessary to protect against sharp edges or splinters. Where possible, avoid carrying unstable loads.

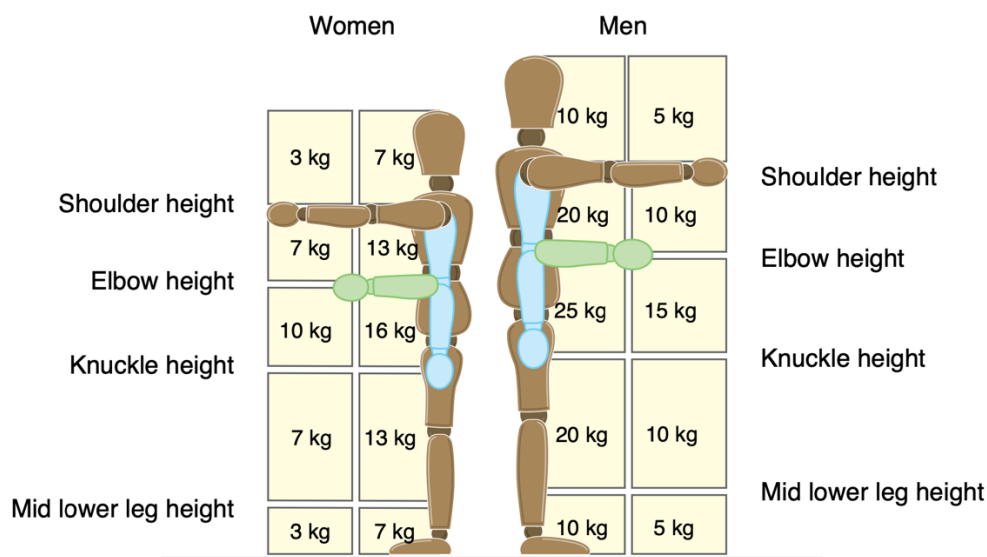
Environment Walk the route. Is the floor even? Are there doors that need to be wedged open? Are there stairs? Are there rest points along the way?

There must be adequate space to enable the activity to be safely conducted, and the transportation route must be free of obstructions. Lighting, heating and weather conditions must be considered. Floors and other working surfaces must be free from slipping and tripping hazards, and adequate ventilation is required, particularly when natural ventilation is lacking.

GUIDANCE ON MANUAL HANDLING

This guidance is given to help mitigate injuries resulting from manual handling.

The diagram below shows the weight extremes associated with lifting for men and women, the lift height, and the lift reach.



Data source: Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, HSE.

The principle in this diagram is: the closer the load is to the body or waist, the safer the lift is, and the heavier the load may be. It should be remembered that these are 'guidelines' and individuals differ greatly.

With this technique in action, the maximum weight limits are:

- 25 kg for men
- 16 kg for women

Items that are heavier than the above, or awkward to carry, should be lifted and carried by two or more people.

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MANUAL HANDLING TECHNIQUES

1. Plan the lift
 - Can handling aids, such as trolleys or sack barrows, be used?
 - Where should the load go when you arrive at your destination?
 - Remove all obstructions and potential trip hazards, and wedge open any doors before the lift commences.
 - Plan to use rest points during the lift if required
2. Keep the load close to the body
 - Keep the load close to the body throughout the lift
 - Keep the heaviest side of the load closest to the body during the lift
 - Keep the load at waist height as much as possible throughout the lift
3. Adopt a stable position
 - Stand with feet apart, with one foot forward, alongside the load
 - Be prepared to move your feet during the lift to maintain stability
 - Avoid tight clothing and unsuitable footwear. Remove ties and other impediments that may become tangled during the lift
4. Get a good hold
 - Make sure you hold the load securely. If you feel that the load is becoming unstable, put it down and reposition your grip
5. Start as you mean to go on
 - A slight bending of the knees, hips and back is preferable to stooping or squatting to pick up the load

GOOD manual handling practices involve:

- Looking ahead - keep your head up throughout the lift
- Moving and carrying the load smoothly
- Putting the load down if you need to reposition your grip during the lift
- Keeping your shoulders level and facing the same direction as your hips throughout the lift
- Turning your feet rather than twisting your trunk if you need to change direction during the lift

POOR manual handling practices involve:

- Flexing your back whilst lifting
- Jerking or snatching at the load as this may increase the risk of injury and can make the load harder to control and less stable
- Twisting your back or leaning sideways during the lift
- Looking down at the load during the lift once it is securely held
- Attempting to lift more than can be easily managed