

Improper lifting from manual handling is the leading cause of back injury. If mechanical handling methods are not possible, utilize the following guidelines:

Lifting

- Know your capabilities, only begin lifts that you can handle.
- Can you handle the load yourself or do you need assistance?
- Is there a clear walkway with good lighting to the work area?
- Wear gloves to protect against cuts and punctures.
- Wear safety boots or shoes to protect from falling loads.
- Carry out a trial lift by rocking the load from side to side and try to lift a small amount to get the “feel” for it

Good Handling Technique

- Get as close to the load as possible, and keep it close to you while lifting, carrying, and lowering it. Stand with your feet hip-width apart, one foot slightly forward pointing in the direction you are going.
- If the object is small enough to fit between your feet, bend your knees and keep your back straight.
- Get a secure grip on the load.
- Breathe in before lifting as this helps to support the spine.
- Do not lift a load that will obscure your vision.
- Lift slowly and smoothly.
- Keep your face forward.
- Avoid twisting your body when lifting or carrying a load.
- When lifting to a height from the floor, lift in two stages
- When two or more people lift a load, one person must take control to coordinate the lift.

Questions for Discussion

- Name two hazards when lifting and carrying?
- Why is it important to not rotate with a heavy object?

Presenter tips

- Pre-read the Toolbox Talk. Your comfort level and confidence will be higher if you know your topic.
- Discuss related tasks, work areas or events that make the Toolbox Talk relevant to your job site.
- Involve the workers by asking questions and input that drives discussion.