

# Manual Handling (Office)

Manual handling is – any operation transporting or supporting of a load including the lifting , lowering, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying and moving by hand or bodily force.

Picking up and carrying a ream of paper or a stationary box is manual handling.

Anything from the extremely light to something requiring maximum effort is included

Manual Handling accounts for a large number of accidents each year, many millions of sick days are due to back and other handling injuries .

Once the back has been weakened it can have a lasting effect for the rest of that persons life.

## Basic rules for manual handling

- If you don't need to lift it then don't, always use the lifting equipment provided
- Assess the load, is it heavy, awkward or large. Where is the centre of gravity, will you be able to lift it alone ?
- Make sure you have a firm grip on the load and that you can maintain your grip for the duration of the lift.
- Where necessary wear gloves to protect hands from sharp or rough edges
- Plan the route you are taking and ensure all obstacles are moved from it and that it is not slippery under foot. The load must not obscure your forward vision
- If in doubt get help, there is nothing funny about a spinal injury

## Lifting Technique

- Tuck the chin to the chest, this will keep the back as straight as possible and therefore far less vulnerable.
- Place the feet as close to the load as possible, hip width apart, one foot slightly in front of the other.

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- Bend the knees and crouch down.
- Take a full grip using the fingers and palms not just the fingertips
- Keep the elbows tucked in to the side of the body and straighten the legs lifting smoothly.
- Carry the load forwards at waist height.
- Change direction by turning the feet not twisting the body
- Put the load down in the same careful way.

## Questions

1. What should be used when ever it is available
2. When changing direction what should be adjusted