

# Safety Facts: Manual Lifting\*



We lift, handle, and carry objects as part of work and our daily living. There is no legal threshold limiting what weight you can lift. At what point have you decided that lifting a specific item by yourself would NOT be a good idea? Have you ever been taught the right way to lift a load? Do you know the dos and don'ts for lifting?

## Why is it important?

WorkSafeBC reports that from 2016 to 2020, there were 20,501 claims related to lifting injuries.

Improper lifting techniques or lifting too heavy of a load can lead to an injury. It could be a simple back strain that will be better in a couple of days. It could be a disabling injury that significantly affects your mobility for a long time or permanently. Let's prevent back injuries by working smarter, not harder.

## Preventive next steps

Before lifting, you need to assess the object and yourself.

Ask yourself these questions regarding the object you wish to lift:

- How heavy is the load?
- Can you get a good grip on the load?
- Is the load bulky or awkwardly shaped?

Then these questions about yourself before you lift a load:

- How am I feeling today? Are my muscles stiff or my back sore?
- Am I physically able to lift this kind of load?
- How comfortable do I feel with lifting this load?

Before you attempt to lift the load, consider the following:

- What does the lift require, e.g., what height and distance is the lift, what frequency of lift (just once or multiple times)?
- Is this a lift that two or more people should do?
- Is there a mechanical aid, e.g., forklift, crane, etc., better suited for the job?
- Have I consulted the lift/lower calculator from WorkSafeBC to help access this lift?

If you have determined that the load is safe to lift, consider this lifting technique:

- Get a firm footing and good grip on the load
- Bend your knees
- Tighten your stomach muscles
- Keep the load close to your body
- Lift with legs while keeping your back upright

Some tips for lifting:

- Do some warmup stretching before attempting to lift
- Turn with your legs when turning or lowering the load, don't twist at your waist
- Do use equipment to lift and carry loads such as a hand cart or hand truck
- Don't lift bulky loads alone – get help or use a mechanical aid



## For additional resources visit:

[Lift/Lower Calculator](#) | WorkSafeBC

[Lifting & handling](#) | WorkSafeBC

[Lifting, pushing, pulling](#) | CCOHS

[Occupational Health and Safety Regulations](#) | WorkSafeBC

# Manual Lifting Toolbox Talk

Name of Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Employee feedback/questions/recommendations

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### Workers who attended

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### Key Talking Points (Facilitator Notes)

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