

## Tips on Lifting

### Loss Control Bulletin

Safe lifting should be integrated in all workplaces. Mechanical lifting devices are preferred to manual material handling, but many times lifting can't be avoided.

Most people just want to finish the job quickly, even if that means moving heavy objects in unsafe ways. In doing so, workers can become injured and miss work for extended periods of time.

- Get help if the load is too heavy.
- Make certain that the path is clear.
- Place your feet about shoulder width apart.
- Bend the knees and crouch next to the load. Keep the load as close to the body as possible during the lift. This directs the leg movement into alignment with the lift.
- Get a firm and secure grip with your hands. Bulky objects may require that one hand be lower than the other and at the opposite corner of the load. It may be necessary to tilt the load for a better grip that can be held throughout the lift and carry.
- Keep the back straight with the muscles locked so that the back is rigid. It is desirable to have the back vertical where possible.
- When ready and in position, start the lift slowly by pressing with the feet and then following through with the large leg muscles.
- To complete the lift, straighten the legs and come erect by bringing the back into a completely vertical position. Throughout the lift, do not hold your breath. To avoid internal abdominal pressures and to gather momentum behind the lift, exhale as the force of the legs is applied. To lower a heavy object to the ground once it has been picked up by hand, merely reverse the lifting process and remember to always keep the back straight.
- To change direction, do not twist. Lift the object to carrying position, then turn the whole body, including feet.
- If object is wet or greasy, wipe it dry. If object has sharp edges or slivers, wear gloves. Do not wear gloves near conveyors or belts where risk of catching exists.
- Grasp boxes and cartons at opposite top and bottom corners and draw corner between the legs.
- Sacked materials should be grasped by opposite corners. When in erect position, rest sack against hip or stomach, then shift to shoulder so it rests on side.
- Do not adjust grip after raising object to carrying position, unless the end of object is rested upon a support.
- With two-wheeled trucks the center of gravity of the load should be placed well forward so the weight lies on the axle and not on the handles. In raising the truck to traveling position follow safe lifting practices. Avoid jamming hands against door frames or other obstructions.



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Backs may be injured by twists or sudden stresses, that can tear delicate body tissue. But back strains (and also hernias) can be avoided through safe lifting practices such as these. The large muscles of the legs are many times stronger than the small ones which move the back. Big muscles should be applied to heavy loads.

Remember—the back you save may be your own.

The guidelines provided in this bulletin are only intended to provide an overview of some of the more important steps that can be taken by management to establish a safe workplace. The guidelines are not considered exhaustive of all measures and controls that can be implemented by management to address all potential loss or injury producing causes. Ultimately it is the responsibility of management to take the necessary steps to provide for employee and customer safety. It is not intended as an offer to write insurance for such conditions or exposures. The liability of Republic Indemnity Company of America and its affiliated insurers is limited to the terms, limits and conditions of the insurance policies underwritten by any of them. © 2022 Republic Indemnity of America, 4500 Park Granada, Suite 300, Calabasas, CA 91302.