

HOW TO LIFT AN OBJECT SAFELY

Poor lifting techniques can lead to injuries or make existing injuries worse. Taking care of your back is one of the most important things you can do for your body!

Almost 80% of the population will suffer from back pain at least once during their lifetime (Source: WebMD). Prevent yourself from becoming a statistic! Follow the simple steps below to reduce stress on the back when lifting objects:

1. Warm up and stretch out before lifting heavy loads. This includes at the beginning of shifts and after extended breaks.



2. Size up the load before lifting and get help if necessary. Ensure path is clear.
3. Use a wide, balanced stance with one foot slightly ahead of the other and with your heels on the floor. Feet should be about shoulder width apart. Get as close to the load as possible.
4. Grasp the load firmly by using your palms, not just your fingers.
5. Tighten stomach muscles as lift begins lifting with your legs. Keep the load close to your body and your back as straight as possible. Lower loads in the same way.
6. Always carry a load as close to your body as possible. A 10-pound object held an arm's length away from your body equals 100 pounds of stress on your back.



7. Always know where you are going and what is ahead of you.



8. Use material handling equipment whenever possible.
9. Prevent lifting heavy objects above shoulder height or lighter loads repetitively above shoulder height.



10. When you need to change direction while carrying a load, pivot with your feet versus twisting at your back. Your back is not designed to twist and turn while holding a load.
11. Always push an object instead of pulling it. This allows your legs to do the work, not your back.