



GOALS

This safety session should teach employees to:

- Discuss the hazards of lifting large or awkward loads.
- Follow safe lifting techniques.

Applicable Regulations: General Duty Clause 5(a)(1)



1. Improper lifting can cause back injuries.

Back injuries are a major cause of work-related disability and lost work days; only the common cold results in more days away from work.

- Many back injuries result from lifting too heavy a load or lifting improperly.
- Reaching, bending, or twisting while lifting are common factors that contribute to back injuries.

2. Correct lifting means the legs, not the back, do the work.

Lift with your knees bent and your back straight.

3. Careful planning means safer lifting.

- Determine whether you can safely lift a load alone or should get help or use a dolly or other material-handling aid.
- Carry the load over the straightest, flattest route; remove any obstructions.
- Decide the safest way to handle lifts that are especially awkward.
- Determine whether a hand truck or other lifting equipment can help with the lift.

4. Use two-person lifts for large or awkward loads.

For a safe, correct, two-person lift:

- Work with a person who is capable of helping with the load.
- Decide in advance which person will direct the move.
- Keeping knees bent and back straight, lift and raise the load together.
- Move smoothly together as you carry, keeping the load at the same level.
- Unload at the same time, keeping knees bent.

5. Grip properly to lift objects with awkward shapes.

- Squat next to the object, with your feet spread shoulder width apart.
- Grip the object at the top outside corner and the bottom inside corner.
- Lift properly and slowly, with knees bent and back straight.



6. Get in position to lift from a hard-to-get-at location.

- Stand as close as possible to the object.
- Bend forward slightly at the hips.
- Bend your knees, keeping your back straight and stomach muscles tight.
- Grip the object firmly.
- Lift so your legs, stomach, and buttock muscles do the work—not your back.

7. Use a platform for handling loads in racks or other raised surfaces.

- Stand on a sturdy platform, never on boxes or chairs.
- Don't stretch, or overreach when lifting.
- Push up on the load to judge its weight and stability.
- If possible, divide the load into smaller segments before lifting.
- Slide the load as close to your body as possible.
- Make sure you have good footing and a good grip.
- Slide the load down, letting your arms and legs, not your back, do the work.
- Get help if you need it.

8. Lift only small objects to overhead storage areas.

- Stand on a sturdy platform; don't stretch.
- Be sure the objects you lift up are as small a size as possible.
- Bend your knees, lift the object, and then straighten up.
- Lift the object to your waist and rest it on your hip or a low shelf.



DISCUSSION POINTS:

Have two participants demonstrate the proper way to perform a two-person lift.



CONCLUSION:

- Planning and caution can save your back in special lifting situations.
- For any lift, your legs, not your back, should do the work. For awkward and other special lifts, plan before you lift to minimize strain and maximize safety.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:

Have your employees take the Special Lifting Situations quiz. By testing their knowledge, you can judge their ability to handle these lifts safely and whether they need to review this important topic again soon.



Techniques for Special Lifting Situations

With another person:

- Work with someone who's capable of handling the load.
- Decide who will direct the move.
- Lift and raise together, knees bent and back straight.
- Move smoothly together, with load level.
- Unload together, knees bent.

Awkwardly shaped object:

- Squat next to it, feet spread.
- Grip the top outside corner and bottom inside corner.
- Lift slowly, knees bent and back straight.

Hard-to-get-at location:

- Stand as close as possible to the object.
- Bend forward slightly at hips; push buttocks out behind.
- Bend knees, with back straight and stomach muscles tight.
- Grip object firmly.
- Let legs, stomach, and buttocks muscles lift, not your back.

From overhead or racks and other raised surfaces:

- Stand on a sturdy platform. Don't stretch or stand on boxes or chairs.
- Push up on the load to judge weight and stability.
- Divide load into smaller segments, if possible.
- Slide the load close to your body.
- Grip firmly and get solid footing.
- Slide load down, letting arms and legs, not your back, do the work.
- Get help if necessary.