



## HSE ALERT # 165

### SAFE LIFTING TECHNIQUES

Lifting and carrying a load is a common cause of injury at work workplace. Good manual handling techniques can significantly reduce the risk of injury. Almost all staff at some time gets involved in manual handling in office, whether they are carrying a pile of files, shifting a computer or moving equipment.

*This guidance describes the basic techniques of good lifting practice to help you avoid unnecessary injury.*

#### ***Principles of safe lifting practice***

##### **Think about what you are going to do**

- Where is the load going?
- Does it need more than one person to lift it safely?
- Is there enough room?

##### **Think about you**

- Are you dressed for the job? Tight clothing can restrict movement. High heels are never suitable.
- Do you have a health problem that might make you vulnerable to injury
- If you are not sure of how heavy a load is, check it out before you try to lift it
- Remove any obstructions/ tripping hazards from the route
- Work out where and how to take a rest if moving a heavy load over a long distance
- Are there any sharp edges? If so, then you may need to wear gloves.

##### **Lifting technique**

- Place you feet apart to make a stable base for lifting
- Placing one leg forward in front of the other will help improve balance and control
- If you have to reach out to the load, try sliding it towards you before attempting to lift it

*If lifting from a low height, bend your knees, NOT your back*

- Stand correctly, keeping your back straight and your chin tucked in
- Lift smoothly, avoiding jerking movements
- Lift your head first – your back then straightens automatically
- Grip the load with your palms, rather than just your fingers.
- Keep your arms close to your body to help support the load
- Do not allow the load to obstruct your view – seek assistance if it is too large.

##### **Moving the load**

- When carrying, keep the load as close to the body as possible
- Keep the heaviest side of the load closest to your body
- When pulling, keep your back straight and your arms as close to your body centre line as possible
- Avoid twisting your body when turning

