

TOOLBOX TALK

PLEASE NOTE: THIS TOOL BOX TALK IS DESIGNED TO REFRESH KNOWLEDGE AND PROVIDE INFORMATION. IT IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR MANUAL HANDLING TRAINING AND DOES NOT QUALIFY ATTENDEE'S WITH A FORMAL QUALIFICATION.

LOCATION

DATE

PRESENTED BY

INTRODUCTION & HAZARDS

This talk will cover: considerations and good techniques for manual handling.

Manual handling refers to the transporting or supporting of a load, this includes lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling and carrying. We class a load as any moveable object.

If any of these tasks are not carried out correctly there is a risk of injury. Such as:

- Work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) for example pain and injuries to arms, legs and joints
- Repetitive strain injuries (RSIs)

The degree that someone is affected by a manual handling injury can vary greatly. Some people are able to continue with their normal work and home life with minimal discomfort, others may require adjustments to their workplace and could require time away from work to recover. In extreme cases, some people may be unable to continue with their chosen career or have to drastically change their lifestyle and work activities.

CONTROL MEASURES

To help prevent manual handling injuries in the workplace, you should avoid such tasks as far as possible. However, where it is not possible to avoid handling a load, employers must look at the risks of that task and put sensible health and safety measures in place to prevent and avoid injury.



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CONTROL MEASURES (CONTINUED)

When possible use mechanical handling methods or lifting equipment to reduce your exposure to manual handling hazards. For example, trolleys, skates and pallet trucks.

Lifting and handling aids don't eliminate the requirement for manual handling, however using them requires less physical energy which can reduce the risk of injury.

If you are required to undertake a manual handling task you must first consider the task, individual, load, and the environment. We remember this by the acronym TILE.

TASK

This means considering the manual handling activity itself. What is involved, how risky it is and how might it affect your own health and safety as well as anyone else who may be affected.

When assessing the task you should consider if it involves:

- Large amounts of effort to start / stop the load moving or to keep it moving
- Twisting of the trunk
- Stooping or poor posture
- Reaching upwards
- Holding or manoeuvring loads away from the trunk of the body
- Excessive carrying of loads
- Excessive lifting or lowering
- Excessive pushing or pulling
- Push or pulling the load with only one hand
- Repetitive pushing and pulling without sufficient recovery time
- Prolonged physical effort
- Insufficient rest and recovery

INDIVIDUAL

Different people have different capabilities, consider the person who will be carrying out the manual handling activity. For example, a tall worker may have to adopt an awkward posture to push a trolley with low handles, while a shorter worker may have difficulty seeing over the load.

Assess how strong, fit or able the person is. Are they capable of manual handling alone? Do they need assistance? Do they have an existing injury? Are they trained?



TOOLBOX TALK

CONTROL MEASURES (CONTINUED)

LOAD

This is the object or person that is being handled or moved. The load must be thoroughly assessed – including identifying its contents to check for further hazards.

When assessing the load consider

- Load contents
- Weight & size. Will it reduce visibility?
- Stability
- Does the load have sharp edges?
- How the load will be moved, can it be carried or held safely?

ENVIRONMENT

Consider the area in which the load is being moved and looking at how this could make the manual handling task unsafe. The environment can have a significant impact on the risk level of the task.

For example, is the flooring slippery or uneven creating slip or trip hazards? Are space restrictions preventing good posture?

Planning your route when undertaking manual handling tasks is a vital control measure. Environmental factors such as poor lighting, steep slopes, closed doors and stairs that you are required to negotiate should all be part of your assessment.

SAFE LIFTING TECHNIQUES

1: PLAN YOUR LIFT

Remember the acronym TILE – Consider the Task, Individual, Load & Environment

2: ADOPT A STABLE POSITION

Stand reasonably close to the load. If the load is being picked up from the floor, your feet should be hip width apart, with one leg slightly forward to maintain balance. Standing with your feet apart gives you a firm base to start your lift.

3: GET A GOOD HOLD

Keep your arms within the boundary created by your legs. A hooked grip is less strenuous than keeping your fingers straight.

4: LIFT SMOOTHLY

Grasp the load firmly and use your leg muscles to lift the load into a standing position. Keep your back straight and the load close to your body. Keep your head up and positioned straight forward.

Where possible, the load should be hugged as close as possible to the body. Injuries are more likely to happen if your arms are extended



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SAFE LIFTING TECHNIQUES (CONTINUED)

5: Direction

If traveling with load, always set off in the direction you are facing. If you do need to turn while carrying the load avoid twisting the back or leaning sideways. Your shoulders should be kept level and facing in the same direction as the hips. Turning by moving the feet is better than twisting.

6: Putting down the load

Placing the item down is the reverse of the pick-up. Ensure you lower smoothly from your knees, keeping your back straight and head up. If precise positioning is required, place the load down then slide into desired position.

REMEMBER

If you are unsure whether it is safe to carry out a manual handling operation, stop. Refer to your manager and ask for assistance or guidance.

NOTES



