

Manual handling: lift smart

Strains and sprains of the back, shoulders and arms are among the most common work injuries. They usually develop from repeated loading, awkward postures and force, not a single lift.

Key points

- Employers must identify and assess risk factors for musculoskeletal injury (MSI) and eliminate or minimize them.
- Workers must be educated on how to recognize risk factors and early signs of MSI, and trained in the controls for their work.
- Change the task before you change the technique: use a cart, hoist, lift assist or a team lift, and store heavy items between knee and shoulder height.
- Test the load before you lift. If it is too heavy, bulky or awkward, get help or equipment.
- Keep the load close, avoid twisting, and move your feet to turn.
- Report discomfort, pain or numbness early. Early reporting can prevent a long-term injury.

Ask the crew

- Which task here do we lift or carry the most?
- What equipment could take the load for us?
- Have you noticed any aches that come from a particular task?

Where this comes from

OHS Regulation, ss. 4.46 to 4.53 (musculoskeletal injury risk), including 4.51 on education and training (Part 4 General Conditions)
<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/occupational-health-safety/searchable-ohs-regulation/ohs-regulation/part-04-general-conditions>
 Your site's own procedures and the equipment manufacturer's instructions always apply. This sheet is general information, not legal advice.

Sign-off sheet

Date: _____ Location: _____ Presented by: _____

Name (print)	Signature	Date