



MANUAL HANDLING GUIDELINES FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS

This summary outlines general and **IMPORTANT** points in any manual handling technique.

No manual handling activity is risk free and where practical such activities should be avoided or minimised. If it is necessary to proceed with the activity the following points should be considered. **It is highly important to conduct a risk assessment in the manual handling before any attempts are made to move an item that you are unsure of. For a risk assessment use the following link:**

<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/health-safety/workplace-safety/managing-health-safety-risk/>.

1. ASSESS THE SITUATION

Assess the weight, shape and note any sharp edges. Is the load stable and the weight evenly distributed? Can you lift this load safely or is it a two person lift? How far do you have to carry the load? Is your path clear? Can the load be broken into smaller pieces?

2. SIZE UP THE LOAD

Test the weight by lifting up one corner before trying to move it. If you feel the load is too heavy ask for help.

3. USE GOOD LIFTING TECHNIQUES

Stand close to the load facing in the direction you intend to travel, with your feet spread to create a firm base.

Bend your knees and keep your back in a natural line. Don't bend your knees fully as this may leave little power to lift.

Grasp the load firmly. The best grip is one in which the fingers are curled into a hook.

Raise your head.

Lift with your legs - Use your leverage, momentum, balance and timing for a smooth action. Move your feet as necessary.

Avoid twisting the body during lifting. Do not bend sideways.

Hold the load close to the centre of your body.

ALWAYS LIFT WITH YOUR KNEES AND NOT YOUR BACK. Never bend over to reach an object.

4. CARRYING A LOAD

Keep the load close to your body, with your arms and chin tucked in.

Avoid twisting your body, stooping, bending or leaning back. If you need to change direction move your feet.

Don't change your grip unless the load is sufficiently supported

Don't block your vision with the object you are carrying

Rest if you feel fatigue.

5. UNLOADING

Bend the knees keep the back straight to lower the object

Keep the weight close to the body

If the load is to be placed on a bench, **rest it on the edge and push it forward** with your arms and body

Be careful of fingers and toe

6. REFERENCES:

http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/Documents/safebusiness/pdf/manual_handling_resource_1306.pdf

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