



MANUAL TASKS {HANDLING}



Not just lifting - Manual tasks defined

Manual tasks are those workplace activities requiring the use of force exerted by a person to grasp, manipulate, strike, throw, carry, move (lift, lower, push, pull), hold or restrain an object, load or body part.

What is a hazardous manual task?

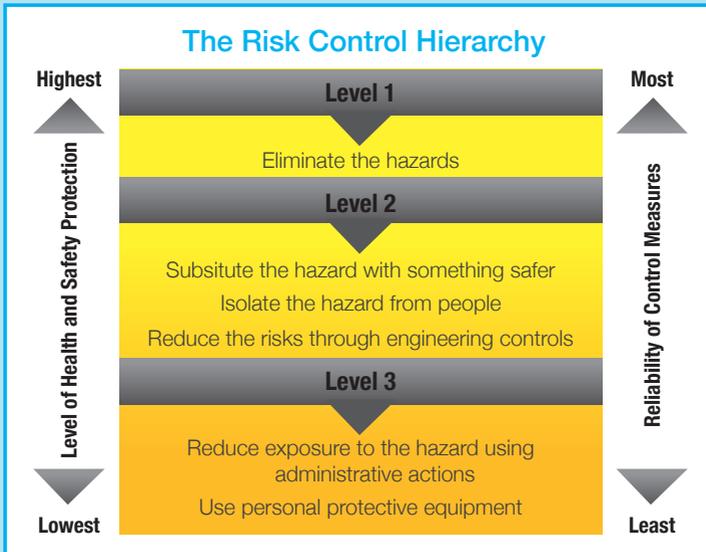
A hazardous manual task, as defined in the WHS Regulations, means a task that requires a person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person, animal or thing involving one or more of the 5 following characteristics:

1. Repetitive or sustained force
2. Sustained or awkward posture
3. High or sudden force
4. Repetitive movement
5. Exposure to vibration

These factors (known as characteristics of a hazardous manual task) directly stress the body and can lead to injury.

You can provide valuable information about discomfort, muscular aches and pains that can signal potential hazards. For example, think about and identify tasks that:

- are difficult to do (or appear harder than they should be)
- are very tiring (muscle fatigue reduces work capacity)
- are awkward or dangerous (for example, difficulty controlling loads)
- cause you discomfort.



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TIPS FOR HANDLING



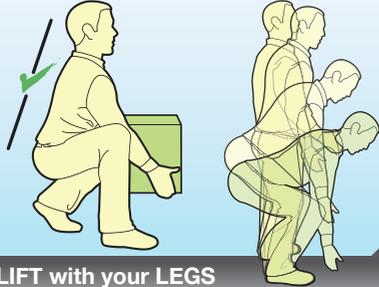
ASSESS your object and your task BEFORE you lift

Have a plan of attack. Plan your route before you lift. Clear any obstacles from your path, and be sure you know what is in your way if you cannot see your path well.



Avoid STOOPING

Keep your back neutral. You are less likely to injure your back if you keep your back neutral during lifting.



LIFT with your LEGS

Bend at the knees and hips not your back - Your leg muscles are stronger than your back and can withstand greater force. This is known as the Semi Squat Technique (Frog lift).



HOLD the object at waist level and close to the body

Your arms and your back are better equipped to lift a heavy object at waist level and close to your body than at any other height and/or far from your body.

AVOID lifting overhead or from below knee height

The risk of injury increases when objects are lifted from overhead or below knee height. Avoid storing objects above head height or below knee height when possible.



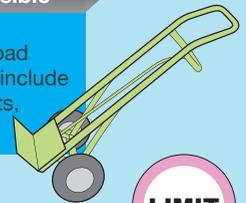
Don't BEND or TWIST while you are lifting or carrying

Any improper bending or twisting could throw you off balance or injure your back.



Use lifting aids when possible

Use mechanical aids or get help to lift or carry a heavy load whenever possible. Options include wheelbarrows, conveyor belts, trolleys, cranes or forklifts.



REDUCE the size of the load when possible

When possible reduce the size of the load or object or make smaller but more frequent trips, for example, repack a heavy load into smaller parcels.



Two person lifts

When lifting with two or more people ALWAYS ensure people of same size and strength for manual handling tasks.



KNOW your limits!

Ask for help. If you cannot lift an object, don't. Even if the object is not heavy, if it is awkwardly large or unstable, it can be difficult to lift and could cause you pain. It is better to wait and ask for assistance than to try to lift something that could potentially injure your back.

