



Manual Handling Policy

December 2025

Review: December 2026 (or when required)

- think about the task to be performed and plan the lift
- consider what you will be lifting, where you will put it, how far you are going to move it and how you are going to get there
- never attempt manual handling unless you have read the correct techniques and understood how to use them
- ensure that you are capable of undertaking the task – people with health problems and pregnant women may be particularly at risk of injury
- assess the size, weight and centre of gravity of the load to make sure that you can maintain a firm grip and see where you are going
- remove any unnecessary packaging, if this will make the task safer
- reduce the size and weight of loads to make handling easier. This could involve suppliers packing items into smaller consignments before delivery or unpacking packages before moving them
- assess whether you can lift the load safely without help. If not, get help or use specialist moving equipment e.g. a trolley. Bear in mind that it may be too dangerous to attempt to lift some loads
- if more than one person is involved, plan the lift first and agree who will lead and give instructions
- plan your route and remove any obstructions. Check for any hazards such as uneven/slippery flooring
- lighting should be adequate
- control harmful loads – for instance, by covering sharp edges or by insulating hot containers
- avoid lifting unsafe loads, such as damaged glass or badly packed chemicals
- check whether you need any personal protective equipment (PPE) and obtain the necessary items, if appropriate. Check the equipment before use and check that it fits you
- ensure that you are wearing the correct clothing, avoiding tight clothing and unsuitable footwear consider a resting point before moving a heavy load or carrying something any distance.

Position

- stand in front of the load with your feet apart and your leading leg forward. Your weight should be even over both feet.
- Position yourself (or turn the load around) so that the heaviest part is next to you. If the load is too far away, move toward it or bring it nearer before starting the lift. Do not twist your body to pick it up.

Lifting

Always lift using the correct posture:

- bend the knees slowly, keeping the back straight
- tuck the chin in on the way down
- lean slightly forward if necessary and get a good grip
- keep the shoulders level, without twisting or turning from the hips
- try to grip with the hands around the base of the load
- bring the load to waist height, keeping the lift as smooth as possible.

Moving the Load

- move the feet, keeping the load close to the body
- proceed carefully, making sure that you can see where you are going
- lower the load, reversing the procedure for lifting
- avoid crushing fingers or toes as you put the load down
- position and secure the load after putting it down. Make sure that it is rested on a stable base
- report any problems immediately, for example, strains and sprains.
- Where there are changes, for example to the activity or the load, the task must be reassessed.