



SAFETY ADVICE DESIGNED TO KEEP YOUR STAFF SAFE AND YOUR BUSINESS COMPLIANT



Manual Handling (General)

Manual Handling is an activity we all undertaken daily, whether it involves lifting heavy boxes, moving equipment or using a fire extinguisher there is a risk of injury if care is not taken. Here are some practical tips, for safe manual handling.

Action Points

In the following notes a basic lifting operation is taken as an example

Think before lifting/handling.

Plan the lift. Can handling aids be used? Where is the load going to be placed? Will help be needed with the load? Remove obstructions such as discarded wrapping materials. For a long lift, consider resting the load midway on a table or bench to change grip.

Keep the load close to the waist.

Keep the load close to the body for as long as possible while lifting. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the body. If a close approach to the load is not possible, try to slide it towards the body before attempting to lift it.

Adopt a stable position.

The feet should be apart with one leg slightly forward to maintain balance (alongside the load, if it is on the ground). The worker should be prepared to move their feet during the lift to maintain their stability. Avoid tight clothing or unsuitable footwear, which may make this difficult.

Get a good hold.

Where possible the load should be hugged as close as possible to the body. This may be better than gripping it tightly with hands only

Start in a good posture.

At the start of the lift, slight bending of the back, hips and knees is preferable to fully flexing the back (stooping) or fully flexing the hips and knees (squatting).

Don't flex

Don't flex the back any further while lifting. This can happen if the legs begin to straighten before starting to raise the load

Avoid twisting

Avoid twisting the back or leaning sideways. Especially while the back is bent. Shoulders should be kept level and facing in the same direction as the hips. Turning by moving the feet is better than twisting and lifting at the same time.

Keep the head up when handling.

Look ahead, not down at the load, once it has been held securely.

Move smoothly.

The load should not be jerked or snatched as this can make it harder to keep control and can increase the risk of injury.

Don't lift or handle more than can be easily managed.

There is a difference between what people can lift and what they can safely lift. If in doubt, seek advice or get help.

Put down, and then adjust.

If precise positioning of the load is necessary, put it down first, then slide it into the desired position.

Discussion Points

Questions

What is Manual Handling?

How can you reduce the risks associated with manual handling?

Have you been provided adequate training and know how to lift loads safely?

Have you got aids such as trolleys, sack barrows and pallet trucks for repetitive lifting?

What are your responsibilities?

Talk to Atlas about Safety Management for your business



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