

# Manual Handling

Moving loads using physical force is called manual handling. It causes nearly a third of all reportable accidents. Manual handling activities should be avoided where possible and risk assessments done wherever they have to be carried out. Any manual handling should be made safer by adopting suitable controls.

## What is manual handling?

Manual handling is the use of the body to lift, carry, push or pull a load.

List any significant manual handling tasks here:

You should complete the manual handling assessment form on the following pages for each identified task.

## What injuries are caused by manual handling?

Manual handling can cause injury in the short term through accidents, or longer term damage from bad handling techniques.

Short term injuries include bruises, cuts, hernias, sprained and inflamed tendons, sprained ligaments, ruptured discs, trapped nerves, and crushed fingers and feet and broken bones.

Longer term damage often leads to persistent back injuries.

## How do I plan effective manual handling procedures?

You need to consider four factors:

1. the nature of the **task** itself;
2. the weight and type of **load** being moved;
3. the ability of the **individual** person carrying out the task;
4. the **environment** in which the activity is being carried out.

## How can we prevent injuries from occurring?

**AVOID** – The most effective way of preventing injuries is to remove the hazard— i.e. remove the need to carry out any manual handling. For example you may be able to use an automated aid such as a trolley or lift. Any alternative means of moving objects must also be assessed and controlled to ensure that they do not cause any new significant hazards.

**ASSESS** – Any manual handling tasks that cannot be avoided must be properly assessed to ensure that remaining risk factors are all reduced by using adequate controls. You can photocopy the Activity assessment sheets for each task identified.

**REDUCE** – Can loads be made smaller, can lifting distances or heights be reduced, should some tasks be done by two people, what action can you take to lessen manual handling tasks?

# MANUAL HANDLING ASSESSMENT FORM

Activity assessment

Describe the Manual Handling activity here:

## TASK

DOES IT INVOLVE:

	Yes	No
Holding away from the body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Twisting stooping or reaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Large vertical movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Long distance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strenuous effort	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Repetition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are there rest breaks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CAN YOU:

	Yes	No
Use a lifting aid	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improve the workplace layout	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduce the amount of twisting etc	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Avoid lifting from the floor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reduce carrying distance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Avoid repetition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vary the work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Push rather than pull	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide rest periods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## LOAD

The size, weight and stability of the load and the frequency of handling are key risk factors.

Description

Weight

1. Reduce the size and weight of the loads to make handling easier. Ask your suppliers if they can provide items in smaller quantities.
2. Make loads easier to grasp by providing straps under the load, or handles. Increase the stability of the loads which may move suddenly and unpredictably by using baffles in container of liquids, or additional packing / stiffening around awkwardly shaped items in packing boxes.
3. Wear suitable personal protective equipment such as non-slip gloves, safety footwear or overalls.
4. Make sure that any carrying equipment is designed to the maximum working load's weight.

How do you make sure that staff are aware of the weight of the load carried for this particular activity?

How do you ensure the load is stable?

What measures do you use to make the load easier to carry ?

- Handles
- Smaller loads
- Personal protective clothing:

#### ENVIRONMENT

This is the area where the manual handling task is carried out, including the space available, the floor condition, lighting, changes in levels and weather conditions.

#### **Before you lift any load:**

1. Check the surrounding area. Ensure the flooring is level and free from slip/trip hazards, there is adequate lighting and the temperature/humidity is suitable.
2. Remove any obstructions and ensure that there is enough space.

Describe the immediate area that the activity takes place in:

List the checks on the immediate environment that staff make prior to undertaking this manual handling activity:

Safety point	Why?	What do you do?
<p>The ability to carry out manual handling safely varies between individuals.</p> <p>1. Do not allow staff to carry out manual handling tasks unless they have been adequately trained.</p>	<p>Employees who are unfit are more likely to suffer from a back injury when carrying out manual handling tasks. Some staff may have medical conditions such as long standing back ache, arthritic knees and hips etc., or be unfit making them unable to perform manual handling techniques correctly.</p>	<p>How do you make sure that individuals are able to carry out the manual handling activities required by their role?</p> <div data-bbox="807 315 1465 831" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 230px;"></div>
<p>2. Ensure employees know they must inform you of their capabilities. For example if they have a health problem or are pregnant they will be at higher risk of injury.</p>		<p>How do staff report health or capability issues to you?</p> <div data-bbox="807 954 1465 1167" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 95px;"></div>
<p>You must train staff on the safe systems you have developed for carrying out all significant manual handling activities in your workplace.</p>	<p>The instruction and training should be related to the specific tasks in the employees' job and should include supervised practice in the workplace.</p>	<p>What training on manual handling tasks do you provide?</p> <div data-bbox="807 1267 1465 1473" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 92px;"></div>
<p>All staff including Senior Managers should attend practical manual handling training even if they do not do 'hands on' work themselves.</p>	<p>This is because they are responsible for the manual handling systems and proper supervision of staff practice.</p>	<p>What training do senior and supervising staff receive?</p> <div data-bbox="807 1581 1465 1776" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 87px;"></div> <p>Where do you keep records of manual handling training?</p> <div data-bbox="807 1868 1465 2114" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 110px;"></div>