

2.14 Manual Handling

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Manual handling tasks while doing a wide range of activities may be the cause on painful injuries. These injuries include sprains, strains, back injuries, hernias and soft tissue damage.

Manual handling includes activities such as:

- Pushing.
- Pulling.
- Holding.
- Lifting.
- Carrying.
- Restraining.

One of the most common manual handling tasks is lifting. Before lifting the following safe work procedures should be followed.

Preparation

- Asses the item before lifting for weight and size.
- Obtain lifting equipment, trolleys or help if needed prior to attempting lift.
- If in doubt do not attempt to lift.

Procedure

- Minimise lifting and use trolley or lifting aids where possible.
- Plan the lift and know exactly where it needs to be taken before starting and check the route is clear.
- Avoid the need for twisting and bending.
- Do not lift items overhead height.
- If item is difficult to lift or heavy, stop, separate load or ask for help.
- When lifting always bend knees and keep back straight.
- Keep the item close to the body and maintain a firm grip.
- Tighten stomach muscles and keep head erect. Thighs and buttocks should take the bulk of the strain.
- Lift smoothly avoiding any jerky movements.
- If carrying items down stairs the amount carried should be much lighter than normal.
- Always ensure that you can see over the item being carried.