The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

It's not just about lifting!

**Manual Handling Injuries - the massive cost**

Every year over a third of all accidents reported to the HSE or local authorities are due to manual handling - the transporting or supporting of loads by hand or bodily force. The majority of such accidents cause back injury and lead to, on average, 20 days off work. In some cases the victim never recovers.

This massive human and economic cost is not just caused by the handling of heavy loads. Many injuries arise through the repetitive movement of light or difficult to handle loads.

At the beginning of 1993, the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 came into force to help prevent many of these injuries.

**Basic lifting**

![Diagram showing basic lifting steps]

1. Stop and think
2. Position feet
3. Adopt a good posture
4. Get a good grip
5. Keep load close
6. Don’t jerk
7. Move feet
8. Put the load down

**What do the Regulations say?**

**The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992** require an employer to:

- **Avoid** the need for hazardous manual handling lifting, pushing, pulling etc, as far as reasonably practicable
- **Assess** the risk of injury from any hazardous manual handling that cannot be avoided
- **Reduce** the risk of injury from hazardous manual handling as far as reasonably practicable.

For more information - [http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/manualhandling.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/manualhandling.htm)

Employees (that’s you) have their own responsibilities and **must** follow any systems of work that have been laid down to avoid potential injury; make proper use of equipment provided for their safety and co-operate with their employer on health and safety matters.

The most common injuries are spinal damage (i.e. slipped disks etc, these can be severe and cause long term disability) and ruptures. A rupture is a tear in the muscle wall (often in the groin area) that often requires painful surgery to put right.
The basics of safe lifting

1. Take a good look at the load, does it have sharp edges, blades that can trap your fingers, loose bits that could fall out/off and hurt your feet etc.

2. If you can, use a machine to move the load (a wheel barrow etc.).

3. Do not lift more than you can manage

4. Do not be afraid to ask for help

5. If in doubt do not even try!

6. Keep the load close to your body (the further you reach the heavier the item becomes).

7. Always get a good grip

8. Make sure you can see where you walking

9. Make sure you can put it down without trapping your fingers!

10. Make sure you are wearing safety gear (steel toe capped boots).

11. Use to powerful muscles in your legs to lift with

12. Do not reach up with heavy loads (get a step ladder).

13. Consider the surface you are walking on (is it icy etc.).

14. Do not twist your body, try to keep your back straight