

GENERAL LIFTING REMINDERS

It is impossible to eliminate all lifting from the workplace. The following are examples of lifting activities that may put your back at risk of being injured:

- Lifting objects over your head puts extra strain on your lower back and neck
- Twisting when lifting an object puts extra strain on your lower back and increases your risk of pulling a muscle
- Reaching over an obstacle to lift a load puts extra strain on your lower back



Poor Lifting/Pushing Techniques

Lifting Preparation

Prior to lifting an object, it is important to plan your lift and the path you are going to take:

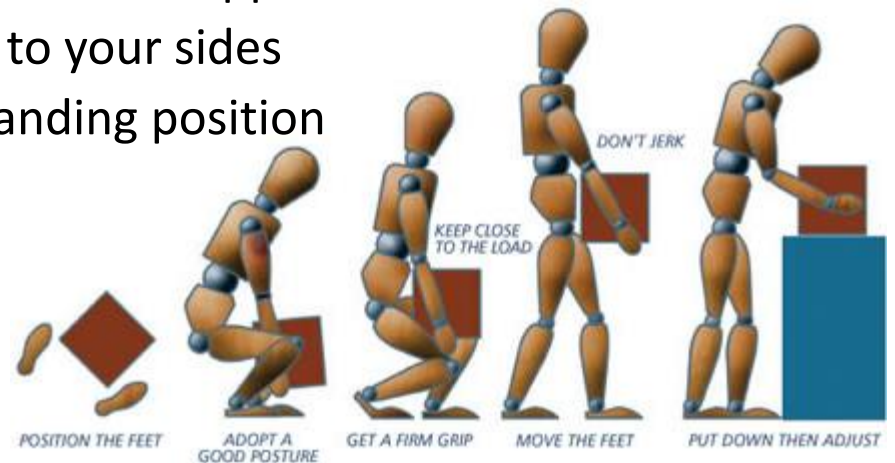
- Choose the straightest, flattest and clearest path to your destination
- Clear the path of all movable objects
- Check the path for rough or slippery surfaces
- Check the weight and stability of the object to make sure you can lift it



Lifting the Load

Lifting the load is what causes most of the back injuries in the workplace. The following are steps to lifting a load a safely:

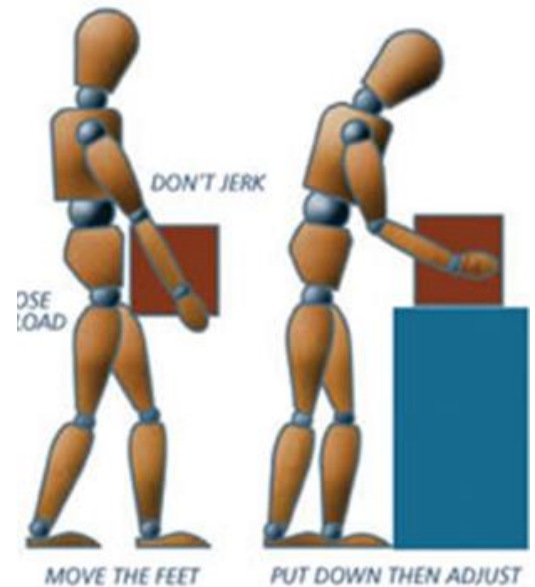
- Stand close to the load
- Balance yourself with both feet firmly on the floor, shoulder-width apart
- Squat down, bending your knees
- Keep the natural curvature of your spine
- Grip the object firmly with both hands on opposite corners
- Tuck your arms and elbows close to your sides
- Use your legs to bring you to a standing position
- Lift smoothly and under control



Carrying the Load

Once you have lifted the load, it is important to carry it properly:

- Hold the load as close to your body as possible
- When lowering the load, bend your knees-not your waist
- Move smoothly and under control



Lifting Alternatives



Prior to lifting an object, consider how you can eliminate the lift or do as little lifting as possible. The following are some examples of alternatives to lifting:

- Ask a co-worker for help
- Use equipment such as a hand truck, hoist or pushcart.



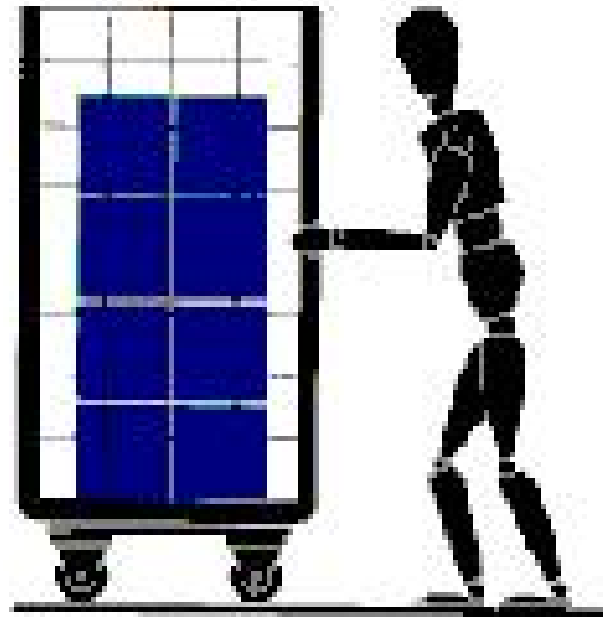
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Pushing the Load

Pushing a load is easier on your back than pulling. When pushing a load, keep these things in mind:

- Stay close to the load
- Walk upright
- Use both arms



Pulling the Load

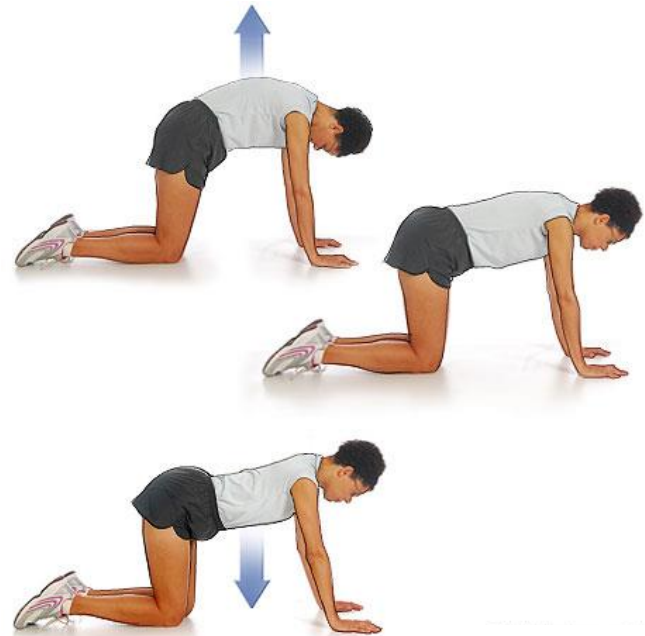
If you have no other alternative than to pull a load, keep these things in mind:

- Face the object
- Keep your back straight
- Bend your knees slightly
- Pull with one smooth motion



Exercise

- A strong back is important to keeping your back healthy and injury free.
- Make an appointment with one of the Y's Wellness Coaches for advice on strengthening your back and core.



Things to Remember



- Practice good lifting techniques
- Use a lifting alternative whenever possible
- Push rather than pull a load whenever possible

