

RULES OF GOOD BODY MECHANICS

Lifting
*Keep the object
close to your
"center of gravity"
and use your
legs and hips to
lift - not your
back and neck.*



1. **TEST THE LOAD**

Prior to lifting or moving an object, test the weight of the load to make sure it can be lifted/moved safely. Use an assistive device if necessary (i.e. forklift, loader, hoist, cart, or hand truck).

2. **PLAN THE MOVE**

Check the planned path of travel to make sure it is clear. Clear the path before picking up the load.

3. **USE A WIDE, BALANCED STANCE WITH ONE FOOT AHEAD OF THE OTHER.**

A solid base of support reduces the likelihood of slipping and jerking movements.

4. **KEEP THE LOWER BACK IN its NORMAL ARCHED POSITION WHILE LIFTING.**

Bend at the knees or hips. With the back arched, forces are more evenly distributed on support structures.

5. **BRING THE LOAD AS CLOSE TO THE BODY AS POSSIBLE.**

This keeps your back from acting as the fulcrum and reduces stress. Plan to keep the load in your "power zone" (between the hips and chest) during the lift/move.

6. **KEEP THE HEAD AND SHOULDERS UP AS THE LIFTING MOTION BEGINS.**

This helps to keep the arch in the lower back.

7. **TIGHTEN THE STOMACH MUSCLES AS THE LIFT BEGINS.**

This causes the abdominal cavity to become a weight bearing structure, thus unloading the spine.

8. **LIFT WITH THE LEGS AND STAND UP IN A SMOOTH, EVEN MOTION.**

Using leg strength to straighten the knees and hips when lifting decreases lower back stress.

9. **MOVE THE FEET (PIVOT) IF A DIRECTION CHANGE IS NECESSARY.**

This eliminates the need to twist at the waist, significantly reducing stress on support structures of the back.

10. **COMMUNICATE IF TWO OR MORE INDIVIDUALS ARE INVOLVED IN THE MOVEMENT.**

This reduces the likelihood of an error which could result in sudden or jerking movements.