

Manual handling

This guidance can be followed when developing safe systems of work for manual handling. The acronym **TILE** has been used to highlight key areas that need to be considered for any manual handling task in the workplace:

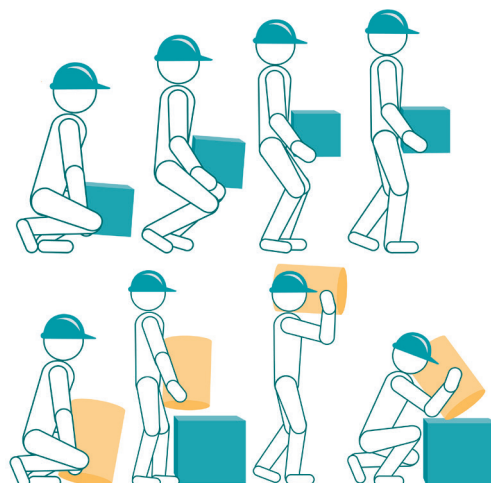
Task

Individual

Load

Environment

This guidance can be used as a starting point to develop specific task-related risk assessments.



Good practice methods for kinetic lifting (top) and lifting/placing a load (bottom)

Task
The first stage to consider is the type of manual handling activity being undertaken, and how it might affect an individual's health and safety. For example, does the task involve repetitive or strenuous movements, long distances or uneven weight distribution? The below areas should be considered.
Individual
Many factors need to be considered regarding the capability of the individual conducting the task, including: ● Are they pregnant? If yes, then they should not carry out any manual handling activities. ● Do they have any disabilities that need to be taken into consideration? ● Do they have any health problems that could be triggered by exertion? ● Are they physically able to conduct the task? How strong, fit or able are they? Are they capable of manual handling alone? ● Is the clothing suitable, and has appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) been issued and worn? ● Are they competent? Have they been trained in the correct manual handling techniques, and are they aware of the symptoms of musculoskeletal disorders? ● Have you ensured that a programme of toolbox talks focusing on manual handling is in place? ● Is there any additional support or assistance needed for the individual? ● Is adequate supervision in place where necessary?
Load
Many factors need to be considered in terms of the load (an object or a person) and how it may affect health and safety. ● The weight of the load – are any of the loads excessively heavy? ● The form of the load – is it bulky, soft, or hard? ● Could it be difficult to grasp – is it an awkward shape? Does it have sharp edges or a slippery surface? Is it made up of unstable pieces, and so might move when in transit? ● Is it hot or cold? ● Are loads being deposited or stacked safely and securely?
Environment
You need to think about the area where the load is being moved. Consider the following: ● Is the route clear, suitable and safe? ● Is the area small, which could result in space constraints that need to be overcome? ● Does the area allow for safe height and good posture to be maintained? ● Is the ground surface uneven, slippery or unstable, and is there any variation in floor level? ● Is there sufficient lighting in place? ● Are there any trip hazards that need removing? ● Is the individual's movement or posture obstructed by PPE or clothing?

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