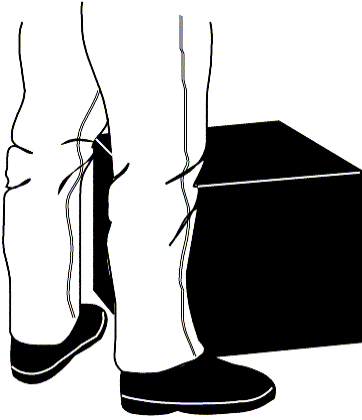


How to Lift Safely

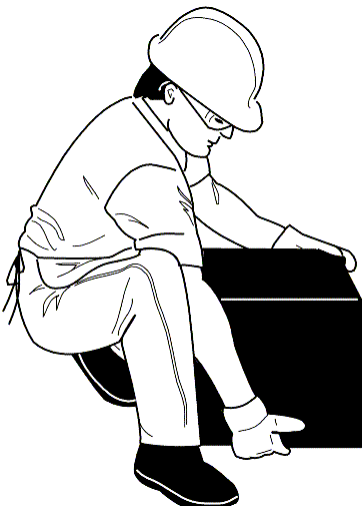
Before lifting, take a moment to think about what you're about to do. Examine the object for sharp corners, slippery spots or other potential hazards. Know your limit and don't try to exceed it. Ask for help if needed, or if possible, divide the load to make it lighter. **Use material handling aids whenever possible.** Know where you are going to set the item down and make sure it and your path are free of obstructions. Then follow these steps.



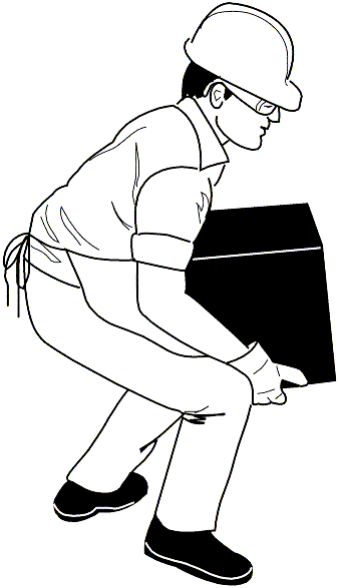
1. Stand close to the load with your feet spread apart about shoulder width, with one foot slightly in front of the other for balance.



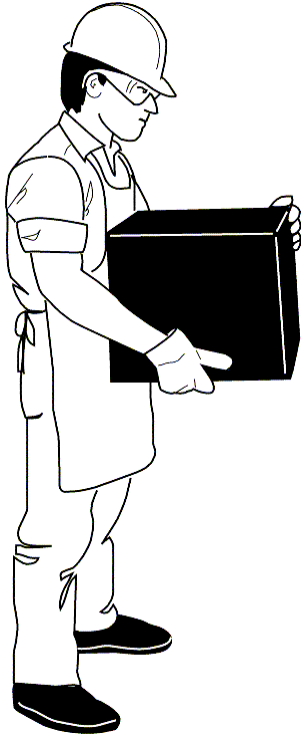
2. Squat down bending at the knees (not your waist). Tuck your chin while keeping your back as vertical as possible.



3. Get a firm grasp of the object before beginning the lift.



4. Begin slowly lifting with your LEGS by straightening them. Never twist your body during this step.



5. Once the lift is complete, keep the object as close to the body as possible. As the load's center of gravity moves away from the body, there is a dramatic increase in stress to the lumbar region of the back.

If you must turn while carrying the load, turn using your feet-not your torso.

To place the object below the level of your waist, follow the same procedures in reverse order. Remember, keep your back as vertical as possible and bend at the knees.

Conclusion

Using proper lifting techniques can help prevent downtime due to avoidable back injuries. With a little practice, precautionary methods such as these can become good daily habits that could help prevent back injuries-both on and off the job.