

VI. LIFTING

A. General

Even with mechanical lifting aids, certain things must be lifted manually. In order to avoid back strains, items must be lifted properly.

Many lifting injuries are caused by **INCORRECT LIFTING**.

The employee must **THINK BEFORE LIFTING**.

Solid footing is essential whenever an object of any substantial weight is lifted.

If the load is too heavy, help should be obtained.

B. Lifting Procedures

1. The employee should **STAND CLOSE TO THE LOAD** to eliminate excessive strain on the back muscles. The direction the load will be moved after lifting, and the feet should be positioned to allow this movement **without twisting the trunk of the body**.
2. The employee should place one foot alongside the object to be lifted and the other slightly behind the object with the heels flat, not raised. This provides a wider, more stable base from which to lift.
3. The employee should bend his/her knees and squat down, keeping the back erect.
4. The employee should take a firm grip from underneath the object. Hands, gloves, or the surface of the object should not be slippery. The employee should keep arms straight allowing his/her shoulder muscles to help lift the load.
5. The employee should straighten his/her legs gradually from the squatting to an erect position. **JERKING** when lifting is as dangerous as setting down a load **TOO QUICKLY**.
6. The employee should carry the load close to his/her body, as near the center of balance as possible. The **BACK** should be kept **ERECT**. Loads should be carried in such a way as to permit an unobstructed view ahead.
7. If the employee should have to turn, he/she should do so with his/her whole frame, not just with the trunk. The employee should **avoid twisting the body** because this motion places the load outside the center of balance and puts a terrific strain on muscles not normally used in lifting.

8. To set the load down, the employee should simply reverse the lifting operation. With the back erect, legs should be bent at the knees to a squatting position and the hands should be withdrawn from the object.
9. When two or more lifting together, one person--and only one person--should give the directions for the team. Efforts should be completely coordinated. The load should be well balanced and, as far as possible, distributed evenly. For a team, the lifting procedure is the same as it is for just one person: squatting position, firm grip, erect body, lifting with the legs, and reversing the technique to set the load down.
10. When raising an object shoulder height or higher, the employee should first lift to about the waist height, rest one end of the object on a bench or ledge and then, if necessary, shift the position of the hands to accomplish the lift to the higher level. The process should be reversed when lowering objects.
11. The employee should **KEEP HIS/HER CHIN UP**. If the chin is up, the back is likely to be straight and the chance of avoiding back injury while lifting is greatly improved.