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Lifting and Your Back

Preventing Back Injury



Plan the Lift

Before lifting or moving something heavy:

Step back and analyze

Think about how heavy, how far, where to? Cumbersome? Object shape?

Obstructions to be moved prior to lifting? Easily manipulated? 2-person job?

Proceed as follows.

(See Figure 1)



Figure 1

Lift With the Legs - NOT THE BACK.

Leg muscles are stronger than back muscles. Lift with the legs, until they are straightened. Avoid jerky movements. Keep the natural curve in the spine; Don't bend at the waist. To turn, move the feet around by pivoting on the toes, not by twisting at the stomach.

(See Figure 4)



Figure 3

Correct Positioning

Stand in front of load. Feet shoulder width apart. One foot in front of the other. Bend Knees. Tighten Stomach Muscles. Use Both Hands. Grasp Object Firmly. Pull Object Close to You.

(See Figure 2 and 3)



Figure 2

It is very important to set the load down correctly. Reverse the procedures for lifting to minimize back strain. If load will be set on the floor, bend knees and position the load in front of you. If at table height, set it down and keep in contact with load until it is secure on table.



Figure 4