

# Manual Handling

## Non-clinical staff

Physiotherapy & Manual Handling Team  
Occupational Health

(Revised Oct, 2018)



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# This training covers the following:

- Legislation, policies and guidance
- Organisational responsibility and best practice
- Employee responsibilities
- Recognising risk factors
- Safer moving and handling practices
- The importance of posture/position
- Display screen equipment and computer workstations
- Risk assessments
- Controlling risk
- The importance of good communication and a team approach



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# Why do I need manual handling training?

- Manual handling is an everyday activity for employees
- Manual handling accounts for 40% of work related sickness absence in health and social care
- Each year around 5000 manual handling injuries are reported in health services
- The NHS spends around £1 billion a year treating injuries resulting from manual handling



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# The Law

Manual handling is an important issue and there is a significant amount of legislation and guidance available:

- **Health & Safety at Work, etc. Act (1974)**
- **Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992 – amended 2004)**

The aim of legislation and guidance is to protect employers, employees and the public.



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# Employer responsibility

## ASSESS

Manual handling activities that cannot be avoided

## AVOID

Manual handling activities that carry a risk injury

## REDUCE

The risk of injury to employees as far as reasonably practicable

## REVIEW

Risk assessments regularly



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# Employer responsibility - promoting a safer workforce

As an organisation we need to:

- Implement and make available organisational policies and guidance
- Introduce specialist roles to lead & coordinate systems and procedures e.g. Manual Handling Advisors
- Undertake risk assessments, monitor, complete regular audits, act upon findings & ensure they are disseminated
- Provide employees with training and guidance
- Provide specialist equipment to support safer moving and handling activities
- Provide support services e.g. Occupational Health



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# Employee responsibilities:

As an employee working in our organisation you must:

- Tell your manager or supervisor as soon as possible if you identify a manual handling risk with a potential to cause harm
- Follow prescribed safe systems of work
- Understand the organisations manual handling policy
- Use equipment provided properly
- Do not misuse or interfere with equipment provided for your safety
- Co-operate with your employer on manual handling matters
- Tell your employer if you identify hazardous handling activities or any defects in equipment
- Ensure your activities or omissions don't put yourself or others at risk



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# Definition of manual handling

**“ ...any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or bodily force”**

**“A load is defined as an object, a person or an animal”**

(MHOR, 1992)



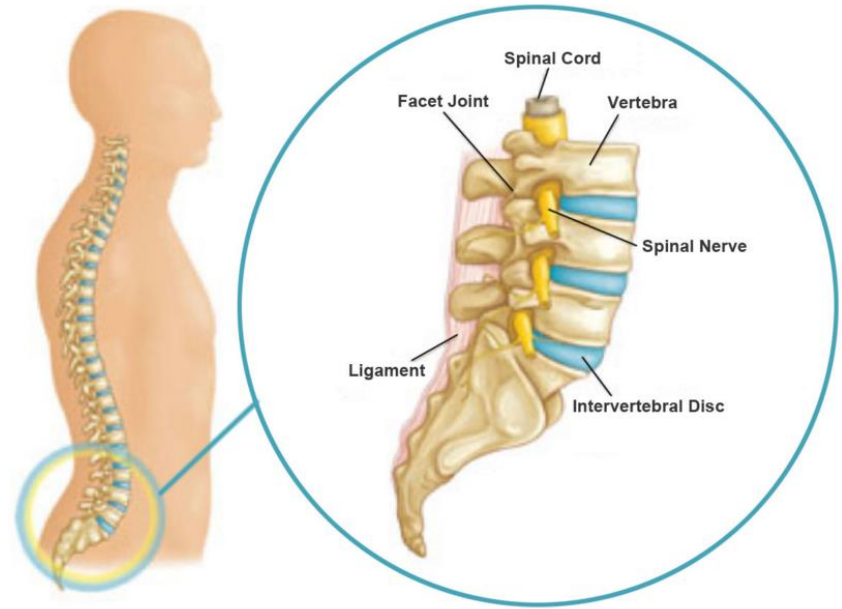
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# The spine

The spine consists of:

- Spinal cord
- Vertebrae
- Intervertebral discs
- Ligaments
- Tendons
- Muscles



**Ensuring good musculoskeletal health is essential to enable safer manual handling**



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# Common injuries

Musculoskeletal disorders to the back and limbs involve the following structures:

- Joints
- Muscles
- Tendons
- Ligaments
- Intervertebral discs
- Hernias
- Abrasions/bruises
- Fractures



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# Promoting good musculoskeletal health

## Key activities include:

- Always ensure a comfortable posture
- Try to use a comfortable supportive chair
- The health and safety executive recommends a sit to stand every 20 minutes
- Stay physically active and exercise regularly
- Focus on strengthening abdominal and back muscles
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Quit smoking
- Reduce stress

(NHS Choices)



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# Ergonomic approach to assessment of risk

**Fit the job to the person rather than the person to the job**

## **T.I.L.E.**

- Task
- Individual capability
- Load
- Environment



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# The task

- Why am I moving the person/load?
- Can the move be avoided or reduced?
- Where am I going to and from?
- How often will I perform this task?
- What is the most effective/safer way of fulfilling the task?



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# Individual capability

- Does the task need unusual capabilities?
- Am I the best person to do this?
- Does my physical and/or mental health affect my ability?
- Do I require specific information/training?
- Does the task require a team approach?
- Do I require protective clothing and will this hinder me?



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# The load

- Heavy?
- Bulky or unwieldy?
- An odd shape?
- Difficult to grasp?
- Unstable or unpredictable?
- Hot or cold?
- Sharp?
- Slippery?
- Can it be split into a smaller more manageable size/weight?



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# The environment

Consider the following:

- Sufficient space to move
- High or low work surfaces
- Uneven or slippery floors
- Steps
- Inadequate lighting
- Temperature – cold/hot/humid
- Obstructions



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# Other possible risk factors

- Previous or existing musculoskeletal conditions, disorders or injuries
- Stress
- Psycho-social factors
- Availability of equipment
- Use of protective clothing



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# Principles of safer handling

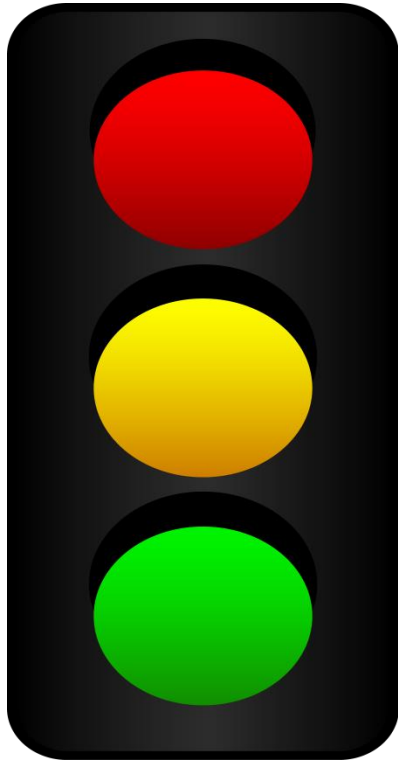
You are expected to be aware of and use the below principles of safer handling to reduce risk and ensure safety to yourself and others:

- Stop and think
- Wide stable base
- Assess the load
- Prepare the area
- Spine in neutral
- Firm hold
- Keep the load close to the body
- Lead with the head up
- Clear commands
- Move smoothly



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# Assessment leads to a plan



**STOP**

**THINK**

**PROBLEM SOLVE**



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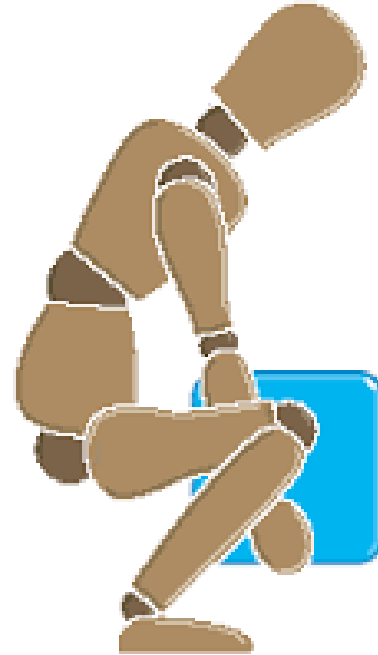
# Position your feet correctly

- Position your feet apart in a stable walking stance
- Place the leading leg as far forward as is comfortable
- Try to position the leading leg in the direction you intend to go
- Wear suitable footwear



# Adopt a good posture

- Keep your spine in a neutral
- Maintain normal curves
- Bend (slacken) your knees
- Don't over-flex your joints
- Keep your shoulders level
- Raise your head
- Face same direction as the hips



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# Get a good hold

- Keep arms within the boundary formed by your legs
- Keep the load as close to your centre of gravity as possible
- Maintain a firm grip
- Is the load hot or cold?
- Do you need gloves?



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# Use equipment to move objects

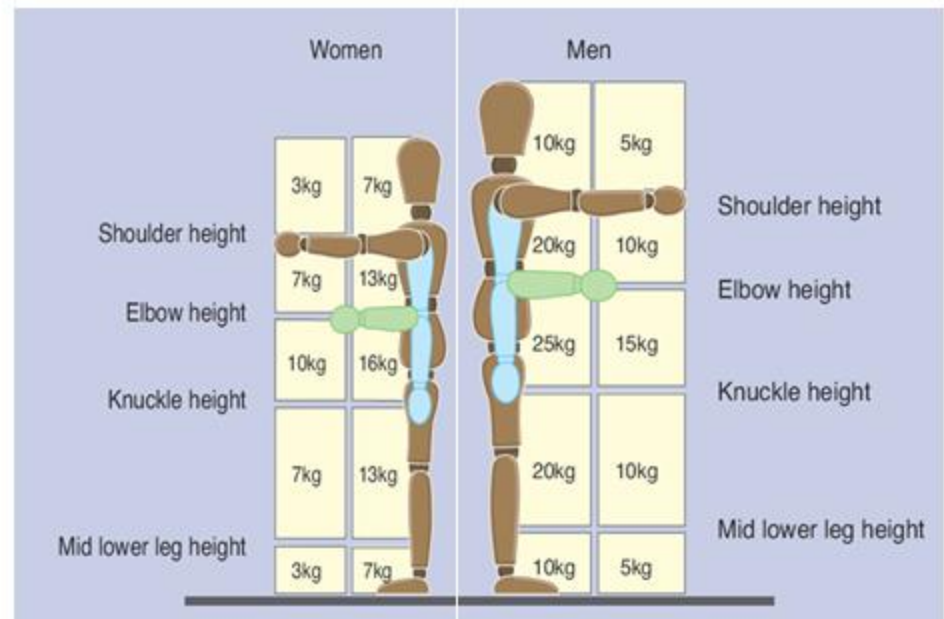
- You must be trained to use any handling equipment
- Equipment should always be checked prior to use
- Report any concerns regarding damage
- **Consider: Is it suitable for the task?**



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# HSE: Numerical guidelines for lifting and lowering loads

Weights to be lifted may need to be reduced below the guideline values if there are any factors that could affect the moving and handling activity



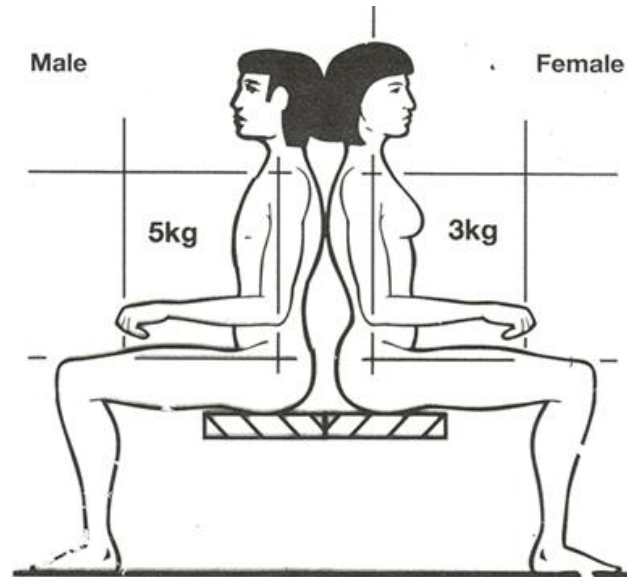
Source: HSE , Manual Handling at Work Guide



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# Guidelines for handling whilst seated



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# Pushing and pulling guidelines

Assuming force applied with hands between knuckles and shoulder height, the figures below highlight the recommended maximum amount of force that needs to be applied to push/pull a load

	Male	Female
Guidelines for stopping a load	20 Kgs	15 Kgs
Guidelines for keeping the load in motion	10 Kgs	7 Kgs

Over the stated guidelines a risk assessment has to be undertaken



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# Team handling

- Lifting as a team does not mean you can lift more weight!
- Two people cannot lift twice as much, only  $\frac{2}{3}$  the sum of their individual capabilities
- Three people cannot lift three times as much, only  $\frac{1}{2}$  the sum of their individual capabilities
- Think about the dignity and safety of everyone
- Identify a suitable lead to coordinate the move



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# Display screen equipment (DSE)

**DSE is a device or equipment that has an alphanumeric or graphic display screen, regardless of the display process involved; it includes both conventional display screens and those used in emerging technologies such as laptops, touch-screens , tablets and other similar devices.**

DSE can be associated with neck, shoulder, back or arm pain, as well as with fatigue and eyestrain.

Employers have a duty to comply with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.

These regulations only apply to employers whose workers regularly use DSE as a significant part of their normal work (daily, for continuous periods of an hour or more). These workers are known as DSE users.

These regulations do **not** apply to workers who use DSE infrequently or for short periods of time. However, the controls described in 'how to control the risk' may still be useful for these workers.



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# Employer responsibility for DSE users

If you have DSE users, you must:

- Analyse workstations to assess and reduce risks
- Make sure controls are in place
- Provide information and training
- Provide eye and eyesight tests on request, and special spectacles if needed
- Review the assessment when the user or DSE changes

The HSE leaflet explains this regulation and provides useful advice on desk set up:

[www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf)



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# Sources of information

- Physiotherapy & Manual Handling Team, Occupational Health
- Health & Safety Team
- Local ward/departmental risk assessor
- Trust intranet – Physiotherapy and Manual handling:
  - - <http://stas16/intranet/services-a-z/hr/occupational-health/physiotherapy-and-manual-handling/physiotherapy-occupational-health/>
- Health and Safety Executive:
  - [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
  - [www.hse.gov.uk/msd/manualhandling.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/manualhandling.htm)
- National Back Exchange:
  - [www.nationalbackexchange.org](http://www.nationalbackexchange.org)



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