



MANUAL HANDLING.

What is it?

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, as amended in 2002 ('the Regulations') apply to a wide range of manual handling activities, including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling or carrying. The load may be either inanimate - such as a box or a trolley, or animate - a person or an animal.

You will need to assess and reduce the risks associated with manual handling. The main area of the body affected by handling accidents is the back, but virtually any part of the body can suffer injury due to poor manual handling.

Who is responsible?

It is important to remember that health, safety and welfare is the responsibility of everybody in the setting not just the managements. It's your health, so you have a responsibility to look after it.

The settings duties are: -

- Assess risks to the health and safety of their employees and others who may be affected in order to identify the measures needed to comply with relevant Health and safety law. *Employers with 5 or more employees must record the significant findings of the risk assessment.*
- Make arrangements to implement the measures identified as being required by the risk assessment.
- Appoint competent people to help with implementation.
- Provide information to employees that can be understood, as well as adequate training and instruction.
- Work together with other employers sharing the same building
- Set up emergency procedures.

Employee duties: -

- Use equipment and dangerous substances in accordance with the training they have received
- Report dangerous situations and any shortcomings in their employers' health and safety arrangements.
- Take reasonable care not to endanger themselves or anybody else.

(Setting) Manual Handling Operations Regulations.

Employer duties:-

- Avoid hazardous Manual Handling operations as far as is reasonable practicable

- Make suitable and sufficient assessment of any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided.
- Reduce the risk of injury from those operations so far as is reasonably practicable

Employee duties: -

- Make full and proper use of any system of work provided for their use by their employer in compliance with regulations.

Principles of safer handling.

The simple steps below are not a guaranteed way of protecting you from manual handling injury. By following the steps below you are reducing the possibility of an accident and the injury that could result from it.

The basic principles are: -

- **Avoid manual handling whenever possible.**
- **Use equipment (*if available*)**
- **Assess the task (*consider use of equipment or breaking it down into easy stages*)**
- **Assess the load (*try a test lift*)**
- **Know your own limitations and don't be afraid to ask for assistance if required.**
- **Prepare the area, remember that whatever you pick up must be put down at some point (*and vice versa*)**
- **Position yourself correctly**
- **Perform the task applying safer lifting techniques**
- **Evaluate the task (*how could it be made easier next time?*)**

The key message when performing manual handling is THINK before you do it.

Performing a safer lift

When performing the task there are accepted practices that should be used to make any handling task safer. They are:

- **Think before handling/lifting**
- **Keep the load close to the waist**
- **Adopt a stable position**
- **Ensure a good hold on the load**
- **Moderate flexion (slight bending) of the back, hips and knees at the start of the lift.**
- **Don't flex the back any further while lifting.**
- **Avoid twisting the back or leaning sideways especially while the back is bent**
- **Keep the head up when handling**
- **Move smoothly**
- **Don't lift or handle more than can be easily managed.**

- Put down, then adjust

Remember the risk of injury is greatly reduced if the object being moved is picked up or put down at waist height.