

safety Retail Toolbox Talks matters

From your safety partners at **Crendon Insurance Brokers Ltd**

Lifting and Carrying Heavy Objects

When your work involves a substantial amount of carrying and transporting heavy or bulky objects, nothing is more important than safe lifting technique. Though a majority of the time heavy lifting is done with a machine or with the help of others, it only takes one mistake to cause a serious, chronic injury.

Lifting is an everyday activity for most, but if it is continually practised incorrectly with large objects, it could have a huge impact. Follow these tips to ensure your health and safety on the job:

- Check for tags on items indicating that it is especially heavy.
- Consider whether you will need a second person or a machine to help you with the load.
- Always plan your route in advance – determine if you will have to turn or change direction while carrying the load.
- Clear the route you plan to take with the load of obstructions and slip, trip or fall hazards before lifting the object(s).
- Make sure you have a back support belt when appropriate and that you are wearing it properly.

Ground-level Lifting:

- Get as close as possible to the load, keeping it against your body and lifting with your legs.
- Bend from the knees, not the back.
- Get a good grip on the object – grasping with the palm is more effective and stable than holding on with the fingers.

Overhead Lifting:

- Stand on a stable surface.

- Take the object off the shelf or support carefully, maintaining your balance.
- Bring the load down to waist level while maintaining control.
- Avoid reaching and lifting at the same time.

Carrying:

- Look ahead instead of down to make sure your path is clear.
- Always walk forward instead of backwards.
- Have someone else open doors, gates or other closed entries for you.
- Change direction by moving your feet, not your hips.
- Keep shoulders, hips and feet aligned – do not twist at the waist.
- Set the load down if it becomes too heavy or unstable.

Lift Smart

- Plan your workflow carefully to eliminate unnecessary lifting.
- If eliminating a lift is impossible, then minimise the distance the load must travel.
- When placing or arranging materials on shelves, the lightest items should go close to the floor and overhead while the heavier items should be placed in the centre.
- Alternate heavy lifting with less demanding tasks, and give yourself plenty of time to rest and recover after a strenuous task.

Lifting is an everyday activity for most, but if it is continually practised incorrectly with large, heavy objects, it could cause serious, long-term injury.



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