

# Lifting Awkward Loads

When the standard safe lift—bending your knees, hugging the load, letting your legs do the work—can't be used, follow these guidelines.



## Overhead Loads...

- ◆ Use a stool or ladder to avoid over-reaching.
- ◆ Test the weight, then slide the object toward you and hug it close as you descend.
- ◆ Try to keep at least one hand on the ladder.
- ◆ Use leveraging as much as possible.
- ◆ If possible, hand it to a coworker before descending the ladder or stool.

## Odd-Sized Loads...

- ◆ Carry long, light objects such as pipes or lumber on your shoulder, with the front end higher than the rear.
- ◆ Get a helper for long, heavy loads. Each of you should shoulder it on the same side and walk in step.
- ◆ For large loads that block your vision, get mechanical help, or ask a coworker for help, even if the load is light.

## Reaching Into a Bin

(or other storage area)...

- ◆ Stand with feet at shoulder distance apart.
- ◆ Slightly bend your knees.
- ◆ Start to squat, bending your hips and knees, not your waist.
- ◆ Slide the load as close to your body as you can.
- ◆ Tighten your abdominal muscles.
- ◆ Raise yourself using your leg and hip muscles.
- ◆ If possible, brace your knees against the side of the container for additional support.
- ◆ Get help if the load is more than moderately heavy.

***Don't take chances with your back. When in doubt, get help.***

# Lifting Basics

*Safe lifting can save you from serious injury.*

## Think Before You Lift

? Do you have firm footing and a clear path?  
• Is it safe to lift it alone?

*Ask a coworker for help or get mechanical help if a load is heavy or awkward.*

## Lifting the Load:



### 1. Tuck your pelvis

...by tightening your stomach muscles, to keep your back aligned. Keep your feet shoulder-width apart.



### 2. Bend your knees

...to let your legs do the lifting. Be sure to maintain the natural curve of your back.



### 3. Hug the load

...to keep under it as much as possible. Be sure to grasp the load at opposite corners.



### 4. Avoid twisting

...by pointing your feet, knees and chest in the same direction. Lift the object and then turn your whole body.

**Putting It Down:** Use the same technique in reverse.

**LIFTING & MOVING MATERIAL**