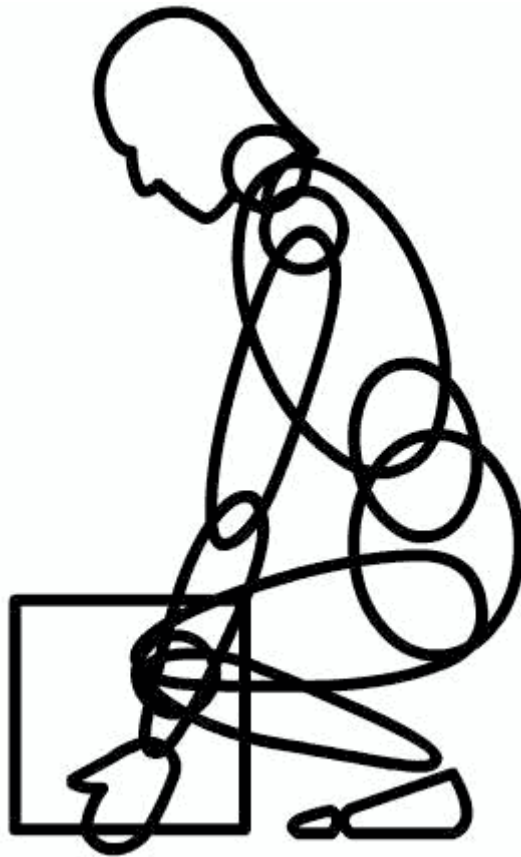


Handling Basics

A Guide to Lifting Loads Safely



Produced by:



In association with:



What is Manual Handling?

Basically, manual handling is any activity which involves a person or persons moving a load from one place to another. It's something that we do everyday – whether it is carrying boxes, moving tables or lifting heavy bags of waste.

What's this booklet about then?

This booklet, *Handling Basics*, brought to you by The City Bin Co. and EssentialSkillz, describes a simple lifting technique you can use to avoid injury from manual handling.

Injury?

Yes, injury. Every year thousands of people are injured in the home and at work while lifting loads. In fact, manual handling accidents are the most common cause of injury in the workplace: over one-third of workplace injuries can be attributed directly to loads that were lifted incorrectly.

So, this booklet will help me avoid manual handling injuries?

It's one step. By demonstrating the SPINE® approach to lifting it will certainly show you how to handle loads more safely. However, the SPINE® approach to lifting assumes that you won't try to lift more than you should.

How much should I lift?

For general items there is no exact rule about how much one can lift safely. This is because people's capabilities vary widely according to age, gender, fitness, build and the nature of the item or items being lifted. Having said this, the Health and Safety Authority does recommend that you lift no more than 15kgs to elbow height.

With regard to lifting bags of refuse, however, there are specific guidelines in place. In fact, the Galway City Council (storage, presentation and collection of waste) Byelaws, 2000, state that bags must weigh no more than 12kgs.

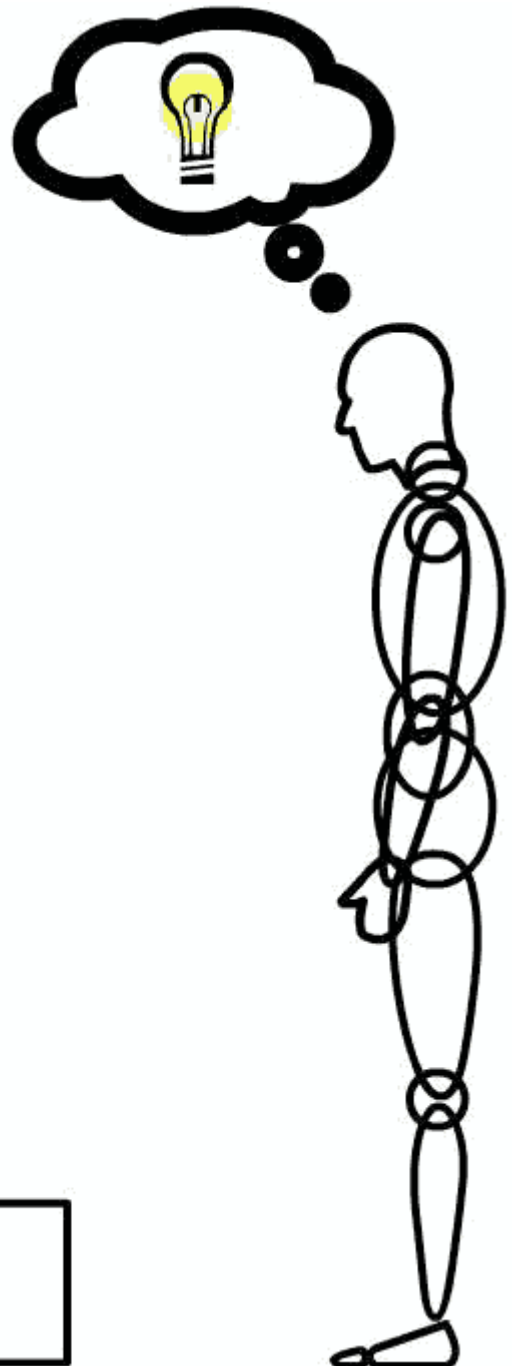
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Stop and Think

Before you begin lifting, plan!

Ask yourself:

- Can I avoid the lift?
- If not, can I use a mechanical aid?
- Can I see clearly where I am going?
- Do I know where the load is to be placed?

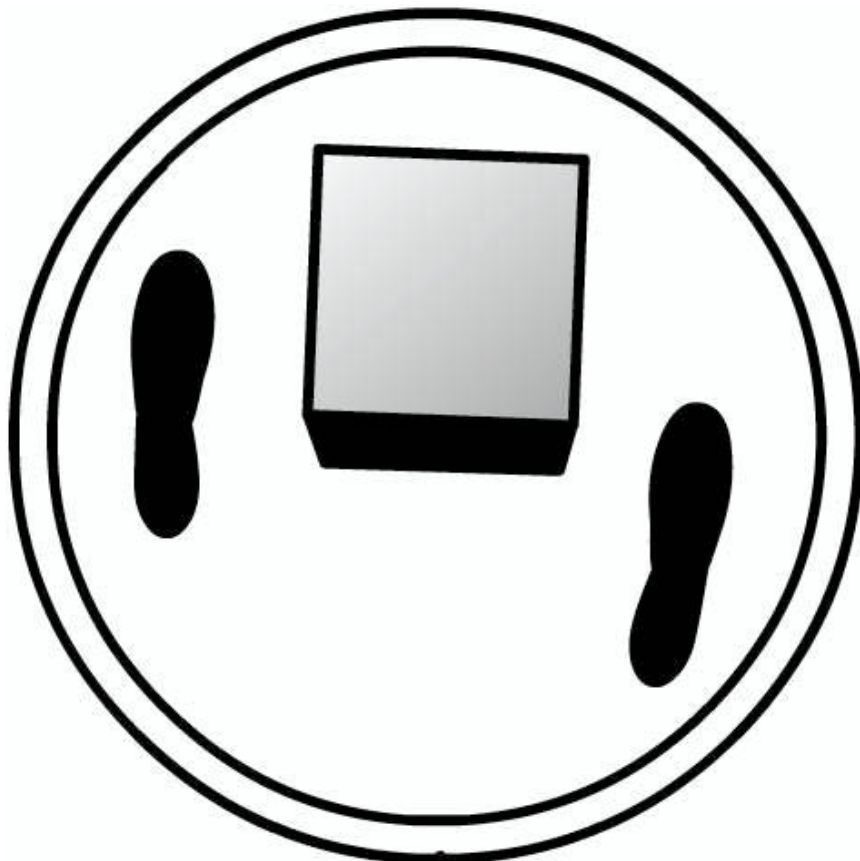


Position Your Feet

Position your feet on either side of the load.

Make sure that:

- You are as close to the load as possible
- Your feet are apart
- Your leading foot is forward
- Your feet and body are pointing in the direction your intend to go, if possible

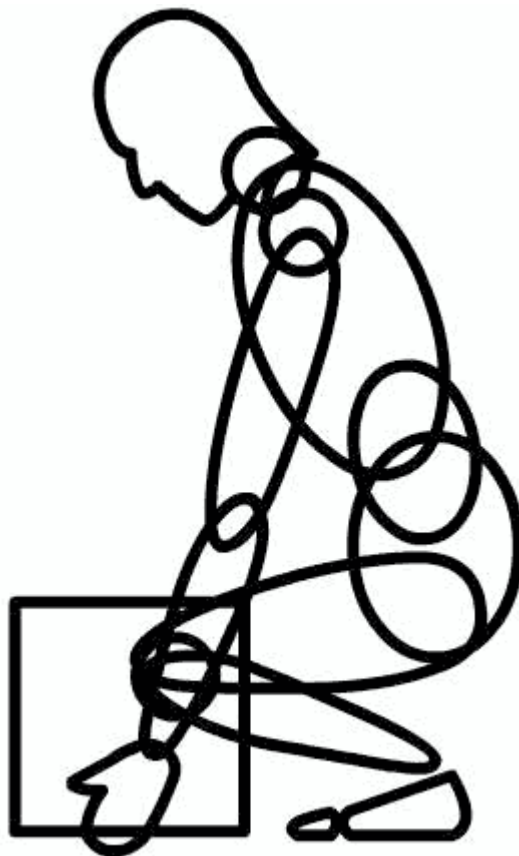


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Get Into a Good Posture

When your feet are in position:

- Bend the knees
- Keep your back straight, maintaining its natural curve
- Tuck in your chin
- Lean forward over the load to get a good grip
- Keep your shoulders level facing in the same direction as your hips



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Now Get a Firm Grip

Place your hands underneath the corners of the load.

Once you've done that make the load secure by:

- Gripping it like a hook (a hook grip is less tiring than a grip in which the fingers are kept straight)
- Keeping your arms within the boundaries formed by your legs

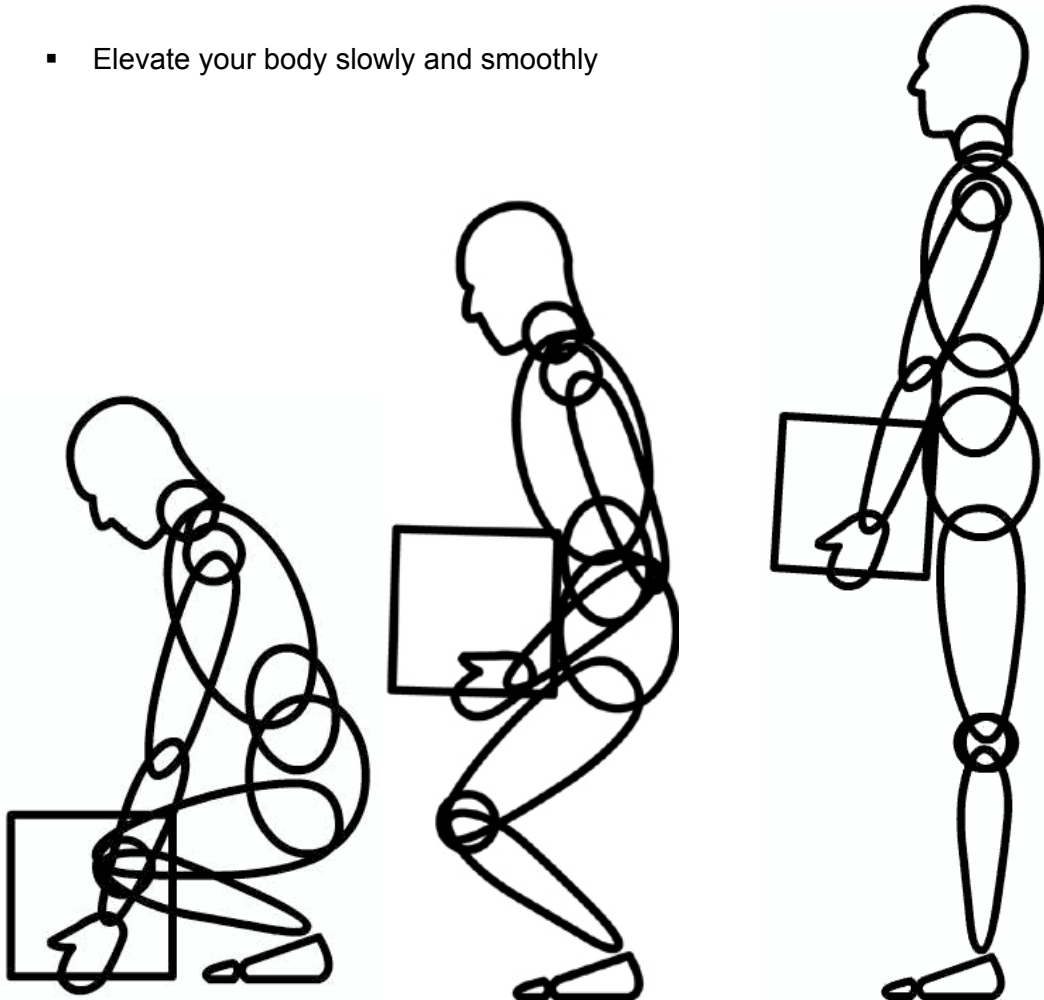


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Elevate Smoothly

When lifting a load:

- Push up using your legs, raising your chin as the lift begins
- Pull the load as quickly as possible into your waist
- Elevate your body slowly and smoothly



Do I know everything about manual handling now?

Not quite. There's a lot more to it than simply knowing how to lift. The European Union recommends that a comprehensive manual handling training programme include detailed information on how your back works, how to assess a load for possible risks, and how to lift and set down a load correctly. It also recommends that lifting techniques be learned in a supervised classroom. In other words, you can't learn proper lifting technique by reading it in a book: it has to be shown to you. You have to take a course.

Where can I get manual handling training?

EssentialSkillz provide a blended approach to manual handling training. Our online course *Handling Essentials* teaches you the theory of manual handling, while *Handling Applied* gives you the opportunity to practice correct lifting techniques under the supervision of a qualified instructor.

Please contact us for more information. You can call us at 091-503090 or email us at info@essentialskillz.com. For more information about Handling Essentials, Handling Applied or any of our other courses, check out our website at <http://www.essentialskillz.com>.

The City Bin Co. is a progressive and dynamic company acting as a catalyst for change in the Irish waste management industry. Their customer driven approach to commercial and industrial waste management has reshaped and redefined the sector.

EssentialSkillz is an e-learning company based in Furbo, Co. Galway. They produce a suite of online health and safety courses, including Handling Essentials, Workstation Essentials and Fire Safety Essentials.