



Topic: Food Service – Manual Material Handling

Accidents involving manual material handling tasks such as lifting are some of the most common causes of injuries in the workplace. It might seem simple, but taking a moment to assess and plan before engaging in these tasks can reduce the potential for injury.

General Safety Tips

- Assess the weight of the object before attempting to move it
- Create a clear pathway before starting the task
- Use a balanced stance; for example, with feet a shoulder width apart
- Keep lower back in its natural/neutral position
- Maintain a secure grip on the item
- Lift with the legs and stand up in a smooth, even motion
- Bend at the knees and hips before the lift begins
- If an even and smooth lift can't occur, stop and consider an alternative method
- Never twist and lift, which can put additional stress on the back
- Pivot feet when changing directions
- Position feet in the direction of the transfer and pivot your body
- Store heavy, bulky materials on mid-level shelves, preferably on shelves near waist height
- Use a cart, dolly or load lifter for assistance moving objects – boxes, crates, barrels, etc.
- Conduct a two-person lift for heavy items that can't be moved alone with a cart/dolly
- When standing for long periods, use anti-fatigue mats to reduce stress on backs and legs

Topics to Discuss

- Available equipment
- Identify potential ergonomic stressors
- Procedures to follow if a lifting injury occurs
- Maintenance schedules for moving objects such as tables, equipment, etc.

Resources

For more information about this topic, visit:

- [Restaurant Safety: Strain and Sprain Prevention](#)
- [Reducing Manual Material Handling Injuries in the Workplace](#)
- Lifting Techniques: [English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Vietnamese](#) | [Punjabi](#)
- [OSHA.gov/ergonomics](https://www.osha.gov/ergonomics)





Safety in Five

Topic: Food Service - Manual Material Handling
Date:
Location:
Meeting Organizer:

Organization Name

Items Discussed:

Problem Areas or Concerns:

Attendees (Names/Signatures):

Comments:

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