

BODY MECHANICS

Keeping your spine properly aligned reduces everyday stresses on your back and minimizes the effects of the normal aging process on the spine

Common Posture

Normal Back

Prolonged standing often causes an increased curve in your back. Elevating one foot will take stress off the lower spine.



Sway Back

An increased curve in your lower back will jam the vertebrae together. This position will lead to lower back pain.



Flat Back

Too little curve will put extra pressure on the front of your discs. This may contribute to disc problems and pain.



Material Handling

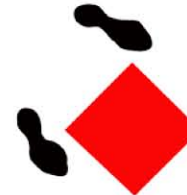
STOP AND THINK

- Plan your move
1. Size up the load
 2. Make sure path is clear
 3. Get help as needed.
 4. Use dolly if necessary



POSITION THE FEET

Adopt a stable position with feet apart and one leg slightly forward to maintain balance.



ADOPT A GOOD POSTURE

When lifting from a low level, bend the knees. But do not kneel or overflex the knees. A slight bend stooping or squatting, lean forward a good grip. Keep the shoulders as the hips.



KEEP CLOSE TO THE LOAD

Keep the load close to the trunk for as long as possible. Keep the heaviest side of the load next to the trunk.



DON'T JERK.

Lift smoothly, keeping control of the load.

MOVE THE FEET

Don't twist the trunk when turning to the side.

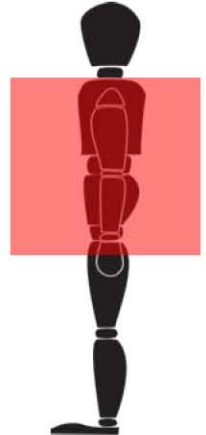
KEEP YOUR HEAD UP

When handling, look ahead, not down at the load (once it has been held securely).



KEEP LOAD ON SAFE ZONE

Avoid lifting above shoulder height. This causes the back arch, placing heavy stress on the small joints of the spine



Work Overhead

- When working overhead in an arched position for prolonged periods, take regular breaks by returning to stable footing and bending forward three times.

- If possible avoid working on ladders. Use scaffolds instead, especially for long-term tasks or for jobs where you must handle heavy materials.

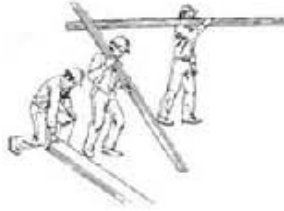


Lifting Techniques

LONG MATERIALS

If material is on the floor, use the same technique as for lifting long lumber. Lift one end first.

Where possible, store material at a convenient height and above ground on 2 X 4's or trestles.

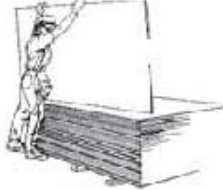


SHEETROCK

Grasp sheet on long side at mid-point.



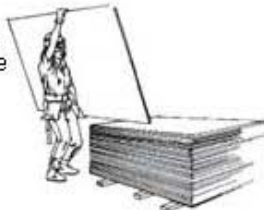
Tip sheet up, then slide sheet partway off pile.



Bend at the knees, maintaining the normal curve in your lower back. Grasp sheet above and below at mid-point.



Carry sheet, keeping back erect. Avoid leaning to one side.



For long carries use sheetrock dolly.



TWO PERSON LIFT

Lifters should be of similar height. Before starting plan for a lifting strategy and who will take charge.

For a two-person lift load, the lifter who takes charge must see that the load is carried on the same side.



CARRYING ON STAIRS

Use your stomach muscles to help support and protect your back. If possible, the tallest and/or strongest person should be at the bottom of the load.



MECHANICAL HELP

Use a cart or dolly for transporting tools and equipment wherever possible.



MOBILE SCAFFOLD

Mobile scaffolds may be useful for moving heavy objects such as acoustical material, piping, joint compound (mud), etc.



Stretch and Flex

Warm-ups are beneficial by increasing the body's core temperature. By increasing muscle temperature, it helps the muscles to stay loose and more flexible.

ARM CIRCLES

Stand with arms raised horizontally and slightly in front of shoulders, palms down and feet shoulder-width apart.

Rotate arms in forward circular motion for 15-30 seconds. Relax repeat 3-5 times.



KNEES TO CHEST

Support yourself securely with one hand.

Pull your knee toward your chest and grasp around your knee with your free hand. Hold the stretch for 15 seconds. Lower your leg to the ground and repeat with other leg.



HIP STRETCH

Stand with one foot in front of the other. Place hands above the knee of the front leg.

Gently bend front knee, keeping back foot flat on floor. Hold for 20 seconds. Repeat other leg.



THIGH STRETCH

Support yourself with one hand on something secure. Bend your leg back and grasp your ankle with your free hand. Hold for 15 seconds. Repeat other leg.

