

When Moving Materials

Use a good lifting technique

1 Avoid bending by storing heavy materials at waist level

Frequently used materials should be located on a level as close to waist height as possible. Bend your knees and keep your back straight while grasping and moving materials. This allows you to use the best body positions to move the load. Handling materials stored below knee level and above shoulder height increases your risk of injury.

2 Make sure you have a good grip on the load

Ensuring that you have a good grip on the container makes the load easier to manage and reduces the risk of injury. If the container does not have hand cut outs or handles, then cup your hands around the bottom of the container. Wearing gloves reduces your grip strength, and requires you to use more force to handle the load.

3 Keep load close to the body

By keeping the load close to the body, the weight of the upper body and the weight of the load are closer to the low back. This reduces the force required to manage the load. Keeping your feet shoulder width apart and keeping the weight of the load equally distributed maximizes your stability as you move the container.

4 Avoid twisting, move your feet to move the load

Moving your feet helps to reduce or eliminate twisting the spine while you are moving a load. By not twisting the spine, you avoid adding extra stress on your spine and lower back. Before moving a load, establish a clear path to reduce the risk of injury.

5 Avoid overhead lifting

Lifting overhead increases the risk of injury to the shoulders and upper back. Maintaining careful control of the load, especially overhead, helps to prevent injury due to sudden movements.

Use carts, dollies, or lift devices when available



3701 Neil Street, Raleigh, NC 27607
P 919.515.2052 F 919.515.8156
ErgoCenter.NCSU.edu