

SAFELIFT Preventing Back Injuries

Primary Causes

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- Improper lifting techniques
- Overexertion
- Poor posture
- Slips and falls
- Twisting when lifting
- Other factors
 - Medical
 - Lack of exercise

Symptoms

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- Pain and tightness
- Spasms
- Decreased range of motion
- Numbness of the legs
- Limited ability to sit or stand

The Opportunity

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 About 70% of injuries to Medical Practitioners are back injuries



8 Steps to a

- 1) Size up the load
- 2) Assess and plan the job
- 3) Firm base of support
- 4) Easier with your knees bent
- 5) Loose grips lead to strains
- 6) Is the load close to your body?
- 7) Flex your legs to lift
- 8) **T**urn your body, don't twist

STEP 1 - Size up the load

- Evaluate the load before lifting. Don't try to lift a load that is too heavy or too large
- If load is too heavy, use a cart/rolling rack/hand truck, make more trips, or get help
- Make sure the load is stable and balanced
- Carry the load as close to your center of gravity as possible
- When possible, push instead of pulling an object. Pushing puts less strain on the back
- Lean into the object and let your body weight and leg muscles do the work.

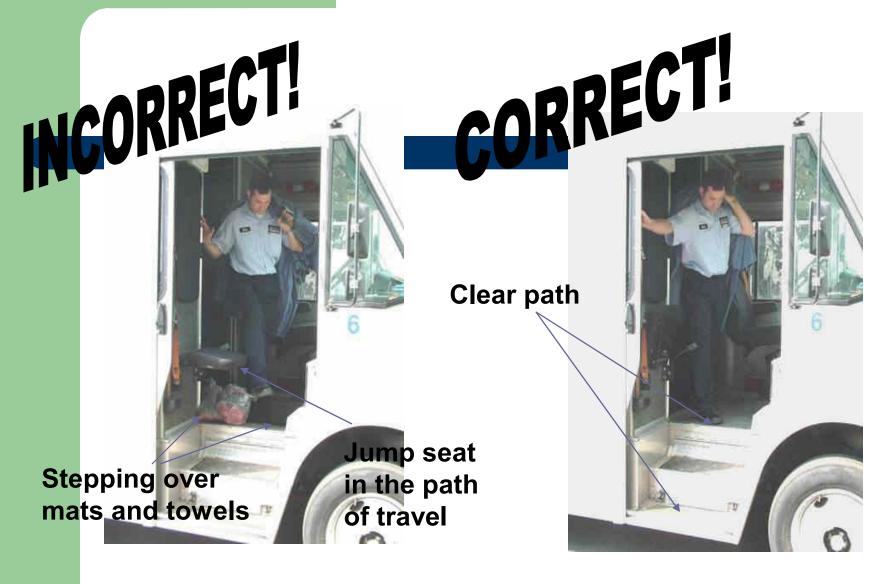




STEP 2 – Assess and plan the job

 Choose the safest route to your destination; if possible, avoid stairs and other areas that provide poor footing

- If load must be carried a long distance, stop to rest if necessary
- Think through the lift, lift the load in your mind
- Face the object you are about to lift and if possible, face toward the direction you want to go



STEP 3 – Firm base of support

- Make sure your footing is firm
- Keep feet at least shoulder width apart
- A staggered stance, with one foot slightly behind the other, often aids in providing a firm base of support.



Unbalanced stance

Staggered stance

STEP 4 – Easier with your knees bent

- When lifting bend at your knees, not your waist
- Bend down as far as necessary using your legs and not your back



Knees bent