

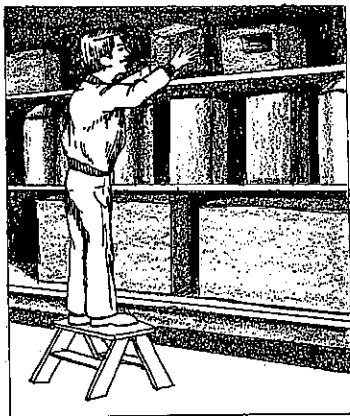
LIFTING AWKWARD LOADS

Safe Lifting In Special Situations

Most people whose jobs require lifting are familiar with the "safe" lift—bending your knees, hugging the load, and letting the strong muscles in your legs do the actual lifting. This standard way of lifting is safe, but in many situations, it's impractical. When the load you have to lift is awkward, or is in a hard-to-reach area, a standard lift can be difficult to perform. The following tips can help you lift safely in situations where the standard lift can't be used.

Odd-sized Loads

Long objects that are relatively light can be awkward to lift and carry. When lifting and carrying pipes, lumber, or other long, light loads don't "hug" the load close to your body. Instead, support it on your shoulder, keeping the front end of the object higher than the rear. If the load is long or heavy enough to require two people, each of you should shoulder it on the same side and keep the object level. (Be sure to keep in step



If you have to lift an object that's above shoulder-level, use a stepstool or ladder to avoid over-reaching.



If a load is hard to reach, stand with feet at shoulder distance apart, slightly bend your knees, and start to squat, bending at your hip joints, not at your waist. (The movement is the same one you make when you lower yourself into a chair.)

while walking.) Some over-sized loads may be light enough to carry, but can block your vision. In those situations, it's best to use mechanical help or ask a coworker for a hand.

Hard-To-Reach Loads

Overhead loads can be difficult to lift. If you have to lift an object that's above shoulder-level, use a

stepstool or ladder to avoid over-reaching. Test the weight of the load before removing it from its shelf. If it's under 25 pounds or so, slide it toward you, and hug it close to your body as you descend. If possible, hand it down to a waiting coworker.

Reaching into a bin, container, or other storage area to lift an object makes the standard lift next to impossible. In these situations, stand with feet at shoulder distance apart, slightly bend your knees, and start to squat, bending at your hip joints, not at your waist. (The movement is the same one you make when you lower yourself into a chair.) Slide the load as close to your body as you can and raise yourself using your leg and hip muscles. Tighten your abdominal muscles as you lift, and if possible, rest your knees against the side of the container for additional support.

Tips To Remember

Whenever possible, use the standard lift. But, if a load is awkward, use the preceding tips to help you lift it safely. Avoid extending your upper body to lift a load—you'll not only lose your center of balance, you'll also risk injuring your back. Finally, use your safety sense—if a load is too awkward or hard-to-reach to lift it safely—get help!