Protect your back from injury

A Guide to Lifting Safely

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Before You Lift It, Have a Plan

What?
How heavy is it? What does it contain? Can it block your vision when carried?

Why?
Must you lift it?

When?
Can you lift it right away or are preparations needed: e.g., stabilization, clear a safe path; do warm up exercises, etc.

Where?
Where will you move it to? Will you need a ladder?

How?
How will you move it? Should you ask for help? Can it be broken down into smaller units? Should you use mechanical assistance?

Stretch and Warm Up

Stretch each arm and shoulder
Stretch each leg
Stretch the lower back and hips
Safe Lifting

1. Test the Load
   - Weight
   - Shifting potential
   - Gripping points
   - Integrity

2. Position Your Feet
   - Face the load
   - Feet apart and close to the load
   - Knees bent
   - One foot slightly in front for balance

3. Position Your Body
   - Squat down, bend at hips
   - Maintain back’s natural S-curve
   - Don’t bend at the waist

4. Get a Firm Grip
   - Grip load firmly and securely
   - Use handles or cut outs if available
   - Glide object up on your body before rising

5. Lift Smoothly
   - Keep back straight and tighten stomach
   - Lift with leg muscles
   - No sudden, jerky movements

6. Move Your Feet
   - Avoid twisting as you lift
   - Turn shoulders and feet to turn

7. Keep it Close and Balanced
   - Balance weight through both sides of your body

8. Set it Down Slowly
   - Lower slowly, using leg muscles
   - Keep fingers away, slide load into position