

General School Risk Assessments - No.13 Manual Handling (List additional hazards, risks and controls particular to your school using the blank template no.69)

Hazards	Is the hazard present? Y/N	What is the risk?	Risk rating H = High M = Medium L = Low	Controls (When all controls are in place risk will be reduced).	Is this control in place?	Action/to do list/outstanding controls *Risk rating applies to outstanding controls outlined in this column	Person responsible	Signature and date completed
Transporting heavy loads, e.g. caretaker transporting heavy load to stores For example ask: Is the weight too heavy? Is the load too big? Is the shape unwieldy or difficult to grasp?		Back or upper limb injury Over-frequent or over prolonged physical effort involving in particular the spine	H H H	When purchasing stock such as clay, ingredients the guideline weights are taken into account and smaller weight items purchased where possible e.g. 5kg bag of clay instead of 12.5 kg bag An appropriate trolley is used to transfer heavy loads Appropriate instruction is provided to staff on how to lift loads safely on to and off the trolley				
Lifting a heavy load above shoulder height, e.g. lifting cooking utensils from shelves in canteen or Home Economics room		Back or upper limb injury	H	Storage of regularly accessed utensils are arranged so that heavier items are stored on middle shelves not on floor or above shoulder height				
Injury sustained due to lack of knowledge, instruction or training to complete manual handling tasks appropriately		Back or upper limb injury	H	Carry out risk assessment of tasks prior to manual handling and ensure staff receive training from a competent instructor where necessary				

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Poor housekeeping, e.g. cleaner using floor cleaning equipment		Awkward and repetitive bending postures leading to injury	H	The vacuum hose is extended to the appropriate length to eliminate the need for unnecessary awkward bending posture				
		Poor suction in the vacuum leading to over frequent physical effort	H	Cleaning equipment is in good working order and repaired or replaced when necessary				
Carrying loads over distances, e.g. storage of classroom supplies such as Art room materials		Back strain, slipped disc, hernia	H	Re-organise work area to ensure materials are stored close to point of use or source a handling aid				
Pushing/pulling heavy or awkward items		Back strain, slipped disc, hernia	H	Appropriate trolley provided for moving items				
			H	Items are made lighter or less bulky where possible				
			H	Individuals ask for help when moving heavy items				
			H	All potential obstructions are removed				
			H	Choose safest route for moving items, particularly where there may be variations in the level of the floor, requiring the load to be manipulated on different levels, e.g. use of ramp				

If there is one or more **High Risk (H)** actions needed, then the risk of injury could be high and immediate action should be taken. **Medium Risk (M)** actions should be dealt with as soon as possible. **Low Risk (L)** actions should be dealt with as soon as practicable.

Risk Assessment carried out by: _____

Date: / /

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There are no longer any absolute weight limits as there are too many other risk factors involved. Figure 1 indicates guideline weights for lifting and lowering for an adult male (fit and healthy) in the best working conditions. For a female, all weights should be reduced by one third. These guideline weights assume up to 30 leisurely operations an hour - where the pace of work isn't forced, there are adequate pauses to rest and the load isn't held for any length of time. If the operation is repeated more often then the weights must be reduced.

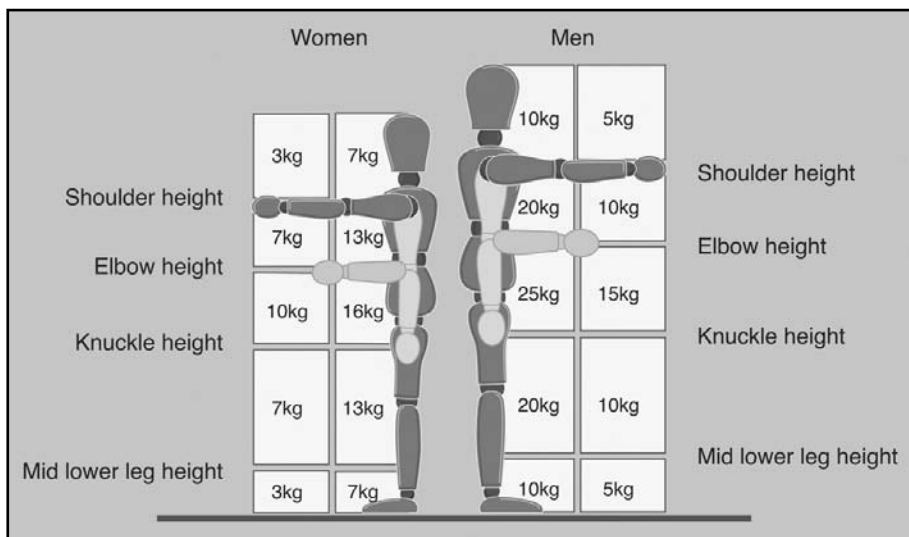


Fig. 1

If there is one or more **High Risk (H)** actions needed, then the risk of injury could be high and immediate action should be taken. **Medium Risk (M)** actions should be dealt with as soon as possible. **Low Risk (L)** actions should be dealt with as soon as practicable.

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Manual Handling Tasks:

The risk assessment above gives examples of manual handling tasks which pose a risk, there may be other manual handling tasks in your workplace that will need to be assessed in order to identify the risk factors, (e.g. handling at unsafe height) and to put appropriate control measures in place to avoid or reduce the manual handling through the use of handling aids or reorganisation of a work area.

Risk Factors:

The risk assessment above gives examples of some of the risk factors that needed to be considered when assessing a manual handling task, you will need to refer to HSA guidance on Manual Handling for examples of other risk factors that would need to be considered.

See key manual handling guidance at www.hsa.ie, in particular:

- *Guidance on the Management of Manual Handling in the Workplace - Manual Handling Risk Assessment Case Studies*
- *Guide to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations: Manual Handling, Chapter 4 of Part 2*