

---

---

# LIFTING BASICS:

---

---

## Techniques For Safe Lifting

Safe lifting is always important - but it's critical when lifting is a part of your job or everyday activities. If you've ever "thrown out" your back while doing a seemingly simple lift - moving a crate, lifting a piece of furniture, carrying a file box to the office - you know firsthand the importance of safe lifting. Safe lifting means keeping your back aligned while you lift, maintaining your center of balance, and letting the strong muscles in your legs do the actual lifting. By using the following techniques, you can learn how to lift safely and save your back from accidental strain and injury.

### The Safe Way to Lift

Before you lift anything, think about the load you'll be lifting. Ask yourself: "Can I lift it alone?" "Do I need mechanical help?" "Is it too awkward for one person to handle, or should I ask a co-worker for help?" If the load is manageable, follow these tips for safe lifting:



#### 1. Tuck Your Pelvis

By tightening your stomach muscles you can tuck your pelvis which will help your back stay in balance while you lift.



#### 2. Bend Your Knees

Bend at your knees instead of at your waist. This helps you keep your center of balance and lets the strong muscles in your legs do the lifting.



#### 3. "Hug" The Load

Try to hold the object you're lifting as close to your body as possible, as you gradually straighten your legs to a standing position.



#### 4. Avoid Twisting

Twisting can overload your spine and lead to serious injury. Make sure your feet, knees, and torso are pointed in the same direction when lifting.

### Tips To Remember

In addition to these techniques, remember to make sure that your footing is firm when lifting and that your path is clear. And be sure to use the same safe techniques when you set your load down. It takes no more time to do a safe lift than it does to do an unsafe lift, so why not play it safe and lift it right?

*The above information was reprinted from Interchange, Winter 1991, a publication of the Nebraska T<sup>2</sup> Center.*