



Injury prevention

If your work involves heavy lifting – it could be moving luggage, wine cartons or even furniture – you probably completed manual handling training when you first started the job.

But when was the last time you went through the **principles of safe lifting**? And more importantly, when was the last time you actually thought about these principles and practises **while you were doing your job**?

Here are some valuable pointers. You can see examples of the right techniques in my videos on the HOSPO Health website.

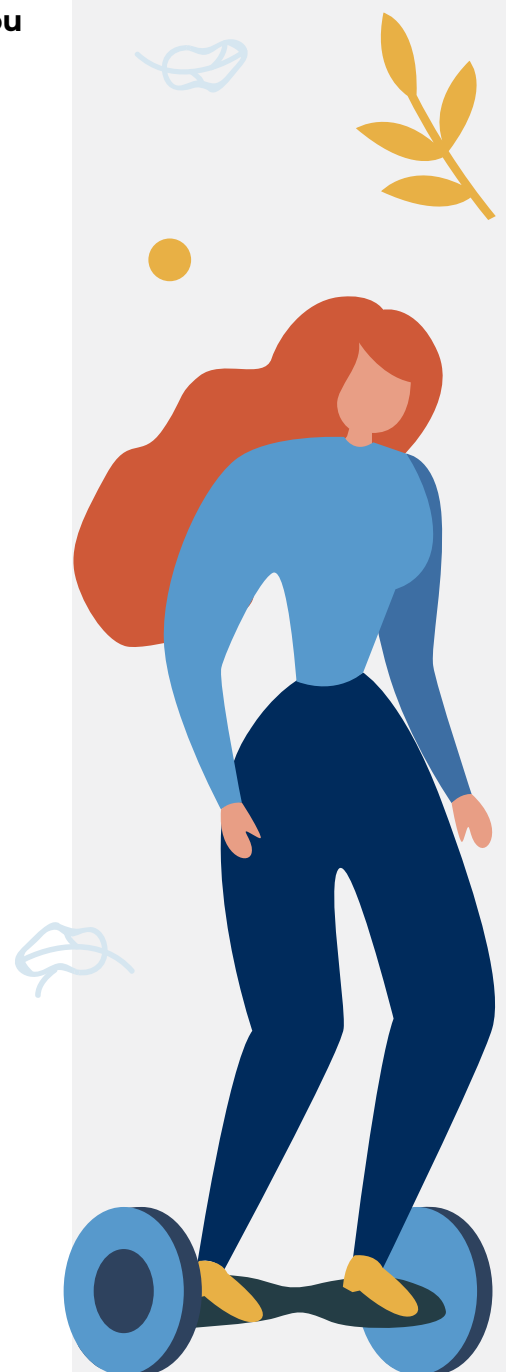
TIPS AND TRICKS FOR SAFE LIFTING AND MATERIALS HANDLING

- Learn a good hip hinge strategy
- Learn to activate major muscle groups
- Understand the concepts of base of support and centre of gravity
- Learn how to stabilise your knees, hips, trunk and shoulders
- Don't forget about your forearm and hand muscles - make sure you stretch your flexor and extensor muscles
- **Be a forklift, not a crane**
- Pre-engaging your gluteal and abdominal muscles prepares your body to lift
- For ground lifts, get into position with your knees bend and think about how you are lifting - make sure your back is NOT doing the heavy work
- If you have to reach for the object, use a split stance with your feet apart to stabilise yourself and engage your shoulder blades
- Do a self-check: firstly, evaluate your lift and the environment, then evaluate your capacity on the day



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LOOKING AFTER YOUR FEET & LOWER LEGS

Our feet just might be the unsung heroes of our body – we put a lot of pressure on them, and for the most part they continue to hold us up and carry us around without groaning too loudly!

But if we look after them and give them some TLC, we will definitely feel the benefit in the short and long term.

Prolonged standing leads to circulation decreases in your lower legs, which causes swelling.

Static loading fatigues the small muscles in the feet and lower legs, which leads to poor foot posture.

A few easy actions can make a big difference:

- Use fatigue matting where possible
- Keep your feet supple and malleable
- Keep a check on your foot posture
- Elevation and compression after your shift will reduce the effects in the long term

PREVENT SLIPS, TRIPS & FALLS

Slips, trips and falls are a major cause of workplace injuries. Here are a few tips that will help you minimise your risk:

- Wear appropriate footwear (and that includes socks as well as shoes)
- Improve your balance – test your single leg stand, and then practice until you can build up to 30 seconds on each foot
- Improve your lower limb power by including squats, lunges and deadlifts in your workout.

If your work involves regular heavy lifting, develop a warm-up and cool down plan for each shift.
Treat your body well!

