

# Manual Handling Safety in Schools

Statistics show that approximately 41% of all lost time accidents are due to manual handling operations

## Planning

All activities should be properly planned and organised and a formal risk assessment must be carried out using the corporate M34 risk assessment form.

## Storage

Keeping store rooms tidy and easily accessible will help when it comes to lifting. An untidy unorganised store room will cause problems when carrying equipment in and out. Always keep equipment and boxes off the floor, not only could you trip over them they will also be awkward to lift. Try to store heavy items at waist height and lighter items on top/bottom shelves.

## Rule of thumb

If you can't move an item or slide it along the floor with your leg, then chances are it's too heavy to pick up

**Risk assessment:** When carrying out a risk assessment, remember **TILE** and consider the following factors;

- **T**ask – bending, twisting, lowering or lifting, prolonged physical effort,
- **I**ndividual - size, gender, physical capabilities, training they have received, medication, age etc
- **L**oad - weight, size, centre of gravity, difficult to grasp, hot or cold, sharp edges etc
- **E**nvironment – Indoors or outdoors, limited space, slippery floors, uneven floors, poor lighting etc



**Step 1**  
**Assess**

**Step 2**  
**Position**

**Step 3**  
**Gripping**

**Step 4**  
**Lifting**

**Step 5**  
**Moving**

**Step 6**  
**Lowering**

**Step 1:** Assess the load (weight, size, sharp edges) and plan your route. Are there obstructions - you may need someone to hold open doors.

**Step 2:** Position your feet with your leading leg forward. Position yourself so that the heaviest part of the load is next to you.

**Step 3:** Make sure you can get and maintain a good firm grip.

**Step 4:** Bend your knees slowly and keep a straight back. Tuck your chin in on the way down. Keep your shoulders level and without twisting or turning stand up. Bring the load to waist height and keep the lift as smooth as possible

**Step 5:** Make sure you can see where you are going and maintain a firm grip.

**Step 6:** Lower the load, reversing the procedure for lifting. Position and secure the load.

More than a third of all reported injuries which result in someone being off work for more than 3 days are caused by manual handling.

# Ladder Safety in Schools

A third of all reported fall-from-height incidents involve ladders and stepladders – on average this accounts for 14 deaths and 1200 major injuries to workers each year.

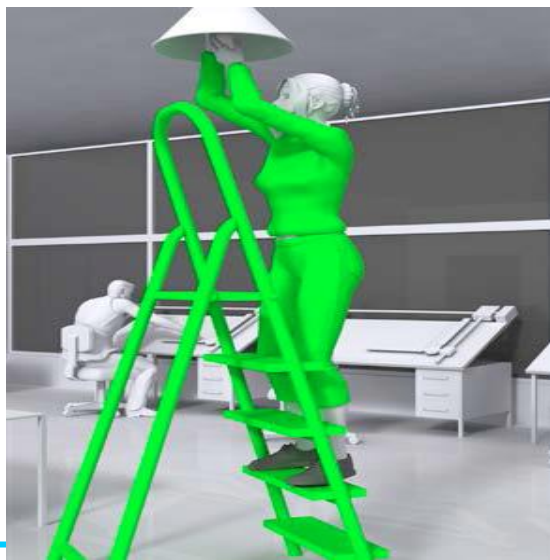
## **AVOID – ALWAYS TRY TO AVOID WORK AT HEIGHT**

Can you avoid using a ladder or working at height. If possible put displays up from floor level. This will eliminate the chance of any falls from height.

**REDUCE** – Can you reduce the time spent working from a ladder. Put displays on large pieces of paper so that you only have to get up the ladder once instead of lots of times. You might need someone to pass you the display so that you can keep your hands free for climbing.

**Always keep 3 Points of Contact when you're using a ladder. This helps maintain your balance.**

**Only use CLASS 1 or EN131 (professional) ladders in work. No domestic ladders**



## **Always check a ladder before use; check for:**

- Check the stiles – make sure they are not bent or damaged
- Check the feet – if they are missing, worn or damaged
- Check the rungs are not bent, loose or missing
- Check the locking mechanisms, are they secure and stable
- Check the stepladder platform is not split or buckled
- Check the treads & steps are not contaminated with mud or anything that could cause you to slip

**Try not to use a ladder if children are in the vicinity. Not only could they get hurt from falling equipment but they can also be a distraction. If this is unavoidable make sure they are well supervised and kept away from the ladder!**

## **Don't overreach**

If your waist isn't within the stiles (sides) of the ladder, you're leaning too far. Keep your navel inside the rungs of the stiles of the ladder,

## **Face forward**

Don't twist or turn on the ladder. Step up or down the ladder one rung at a time. Don't use the ladder if someone else is on it.

## **Keep your hands free**

You need both hands to climb.

## **Ladders**

Use ladders and footstools for reaching high places, not a chair or other furniture. Don't try to reach too far, move the ladder or footstool instead.

Remember children might see you standing on tables and chairs; this sets a very bad example!

Make sure you have appropriate footwear on when using a ladder.

Do not use a ladder which looks unsafe or in poor condition!

Always work from a step ladder with the rungs facing the work and NOT side on, as this is less stable

Do not use the top 3 rungs of a step ladder, this will mean you can keep 3 points of contact at all times

**Establish the ladder or stepladder is in a safe condition before using it.**