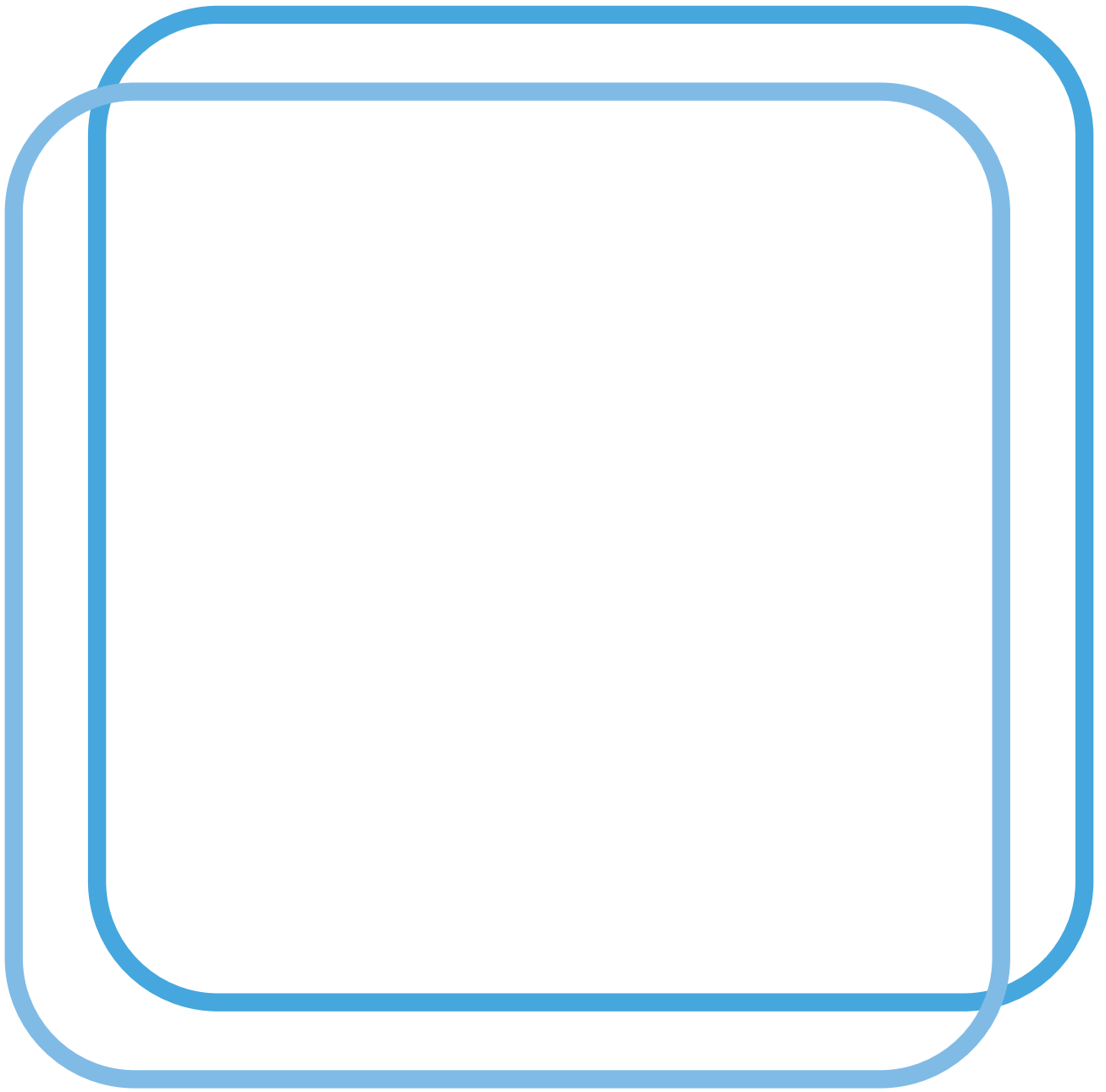


Manual Handling



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Safer Business - Better Health

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Introduction

Why focus on Manual Handling?

Manual Handling accidents account for more than a third of all accidents reported each year to enforcing authorities (i.e. HSE and Local Authorities). Fatal manual handling accidents are rare, however accidents resulting in a major injury (e.g. broken bones etc) are more common, accounting for 10.5% of the total number of reported manual

handling accidents in 2001/02. An estimated 12.3 million working days were lost and on average each sufferer took approx. 20 days off in that 12 month period.

Manual handling accidents can occur at any workplace. They do not just happen in jobs which involve heavy manual labour.

What does the law say?

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 states that employers have duties to ensure the health and safety of all employees and anyone who may be affected by their work. This includes taking steps to control manual handling risks.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations place duties on employers to

assess risks at work (including manual handling) and where necessary take action to safeguard health and safety.

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations require employers more specifically to avoid, assess and reduce hazardous manual handling tasks.

Where do I start on carrying out Manual Handling Assessments?

Avoid

If the general assessment (see risk assessment section) indicates a possibility of injury through manual handling operations, the first thing to consider is whether the manual handling operation can be avoided altogether.

When trying to avoid manual handling you need to ask the following questions:

- Whether the load/s need to be handled at all; and
- can the work be done in a different way?

cont'd

Where do I start on carrying out Manual Handling Assessments? (cont'd)

If so far as is reasonably practicable, handling of the load cannot be avoided, then can the operation/s be either automated or mechanised?

Examination of existing activities may also reveal opportunities for avoiding manual handling operations that involve a risk of injury. Such improvements often bring additional benefits in terms of greater efficiency and productivity, and reduced damage to loads.

Assess

Where the general assessment (see risk assessment section) indicates a possibility of injury from manual handling operations, but you can not avoid/automate/mechanise reasonably, a more specific assessment should be carried out as required by the Manual Handling Operations Regulations.

Most situations will require just a few minutes' observation to identify ways to make the activity less stressful on the body.

On the following pages is a check sheet to get you started in assessing manual handling tasks - this is not an exhaustive list.

It is strongly recommended that you include your employees in the assessment process - they often know what problems there are and how best to solve them. If their work is varied or not closely supervised, make sure they are aware what risks to look for when lifting, and what to do about them. In this way they will be able to routinely assess risk as they go along.

The important thing in all assessments is to identify all significant risks of injury and point the way to practical improvements therefore **reducing** the risk of injury.

Manual Handling Checklist

This checklist has been designed as an aid to help you in assessing the manual handling hazards within your business. This can be used in conjunction with the general risk assessment sheet to help identify possible hazards, associated risks and control measures.

| | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| Name of business: | |
| Nature of business: | |
| Address: | |
| Name of person completing: | Date: |

Step One

| | |
|--|---|
| Task Name:- | |
| Task Description:- | |
| Load Weight:- | Load Description (Dimensions etc.):- |
| Carry Distances (if applicable):- (including Pushing/Pulling) | Lifting Heights:- |
| Are other manual handling tasks carried out by these operatives? | Assessment discussed with employees/safety representatives and date this occurred:- |
| Diagram of the task:- | |
| Is a full assessment needed? – an assessment will be needed if there is a potential risk of injury e.g. if the task falls outside the guidelines in the Manual Handling Operations Regulations | |
| If 'Yes' continue. If 'No' the assessment need go no further | |

Step Two

| | ✓/x | Assessment of Risk | | |
|--|-----|--------------------|--------|------|
| | | Low | Medium | High |
| Do the tasks involve: | | | | |
| Holding loads away from the trunk? | | | | |
| Twisting? | | | | |
| Stooping? | | | | |
| Reaching upwards? | | | | |
| Large vertical movement? | | | | |
| Long carrying distances? | | | | |
| Strenuous pushing or pulling? | | | | |
| Unpredictable movement of loads? | | | | |
| Repetitive handling? | | | | |
| Insufficient rest or recovery time? | | | | |
| A work rate imposed by a process? | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Are the loads: | | | | |
| Heavy? | | | | |
| Bulky/unwieldy? | | | | |
| Difficult to grasp? | | | | |
| Unstable/unpredictable? | | | | |
| Intrinsically harmful? | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Are there: in the working environment | | | | |
| Constraints on posture? | | | | |
| Poor floors? | | | | |
| Variations in levels? | | | | |
| Hot/cold/humid conditions? | | | | |
| Strong air movements? | | | | |
| Poor lighting conditions? | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Consider the individual capability, does the task: | | | | |
| Require unusual capability? | | | | |
| Pose a risk to those with a health problem or a physical or learning difficulty? | | | | |
| Pose a risk to those who are pregnant / nursing or young person | | | | |
| Call for special information/training? | | | | |

Step Two Cont'd

Step Two cont'd

| | ✓/x | Assessment of Risk | | |
|--|-----|--------------------|--------|------|
| | | Low | Medium | High |
| Other factors to consider: | | | | |
| Protective clothing | | | | |
| Is movement or posture hindered by clothing or personal protective equipment? | | | | |
| Is there an absence of the correct/suitable PPE being worn? | | | | |
| | | | | |
| Work Organisation | | | | |
| Do workers feel that there has been a lack of consideration given to the planning and scheduling of tasks/rest breaks? | | | | |
| Do workers feel that there is poor communication between managers and employees (eg not involved in risk assessments or decisions on changes in workstation design)? | | | | |
| Are there sudden changes in workload, or seasonal changes in volume without mechanisms for dealing with the change? | | | | |
| Do workers feel they have not been given enough training and information to carry out the task successfully? | | | | |

Step Three

Please list any risks occurring from the task

Please list any possible remedial actions to counteract the problems identified

Step Four

| Remedial steps that should be taken, in order of priority | Person responsible for implementing controls | Target implementation date | Completed Y/N |
|---|--|----------------------------|---------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Date by which actions should be completed:

Date for review of assessment:

Assessor's name:

Signature:

NOTE

This checklist has been produced to start you thinking of what hazards/controls you have at the premise. The list is not exhaustive and there maybe hazards/controls that have not been covered.