

Manual handling:
a short guide to what every
business should know from
Stannah Microlifts.



Stannah

Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended in 2002)

Manual handling injuries – the massive cost

Every year over a third of all over-three-day injuries reported to the HSE or local authorities are due to manual handling – the transporting or supporting of loads by hand or bodily force.

The majority of such accidents cause back injury and lead to, on average, 20 days off work. In some cases the victim never recovers.

This massive human and economic cost is not just caused by the handling of heavy loads. Many injuries arise through the repetitive movement of light or difficult to handle loads.

Loads themselves can be as diverse as a box of goods,

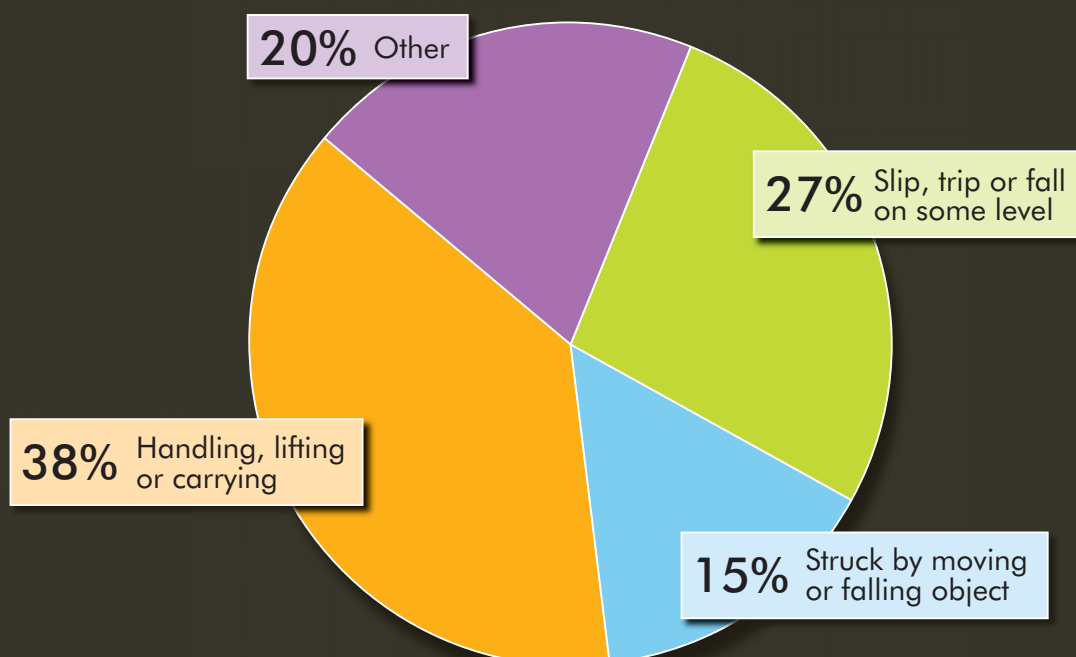
an animal or a patient and the environments in which injuries occur include everything from a factory to an office, a hospital to a bank, a building site or while making deliveries.

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, as amended in 2002 ('the Regulations') exist to help prevent many of these injuries.

In these pages we take a closer look at the Regulations and how employers can meet with the necessary requirements. We also include a section on how the range of Stannah goods lifts can solve some of the problems associated with manual handling.

Causes of injury

The types of accident causing over-three-day injury, 2001/02 – the results of the most recent survey of self-reported, work-related illness. In 2001/02, around 1.1 million people in Great Britain suffered from musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) caused, or made worse by, their current or past work. Circa 12.3 million working days were lost. Each person was absent from work for about 20 days during that 12-month timespan.



How can Stannah help?

As you will see from the weight guidelines inside this leaflet, manual handling is not just about moving heavy goods. The weights involved can be as little as 5kg where other factors such as frequency of handling and type of load come into play.

Any manual handling operation must be assessed with one of the key elements being how often a load is moved and whether it has to be moved a long distance or up and down stairs. This is where Stannah can help.

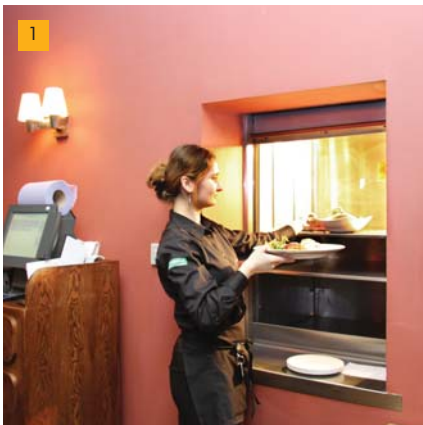
The Stannah range of goods lifts offers models from 50-1500kg capacity; a choice of lift that can eliminate the need to carry any goods from one floor level to another.

Even the smallest 50kg lift can be an aid to manual handling. For example, in hospitals where samples are regularly carried between floors taking up staff time and also presenting a risk of injury or in factories where heavy palletised goods are manufactured and stored on different floors.

Stannah ensures that the installation of a lift is a positive decision that does not cause major upheaval in the workplace.

All Stannah goods lifts come with their own structure-supported frame, making installation simple. Builders work is minimal, taking as little as 1-2 days for a two-floor model. After the test and commission visit, the lift is ready for action.

For a free, no-obligation survey, call us on 01264 351922.



Stannah Microlifts – making life easier

- 1 Stannah 50-100kg Microlifts
- 2 Stannah 250kg Trolleylifts
- 3 Stannah 300kg Trolleylifts
- 4 Stannah Goodsmaster up to 1500kg
- 5 Stannah Goodsmaster goods attended lift



Good handling

Technique is everything when it comes to avoiding injury during the handling of goods. Here's how to get the technique just right – but bear in mind individual capability.

The guidelines below will give reasonable protection to nearly all men and around half to two-thirds of all women. To provide similar protection to all women, weight guidelines must be reduced by around one third.

These guidelines are also for infrequent operations - about 30 per hour - and where employees can work to their own pace with adequate pauses. As a rough guide, weights must be reduced by 30% if the operation is repeated once or twice per minute; by 50% if the operation is repeated 5-8 times a minute and by 80% when the operation is repeated more than 12 times per minute.

Factors that will also need to be taken into consideration include whether:

- The load is easily grasped with both hands;
- The lifter needs to twist during the operation;
- The operation takes place in reasonable working conditions with the lifter in a stable position.

What do the Regulations say?

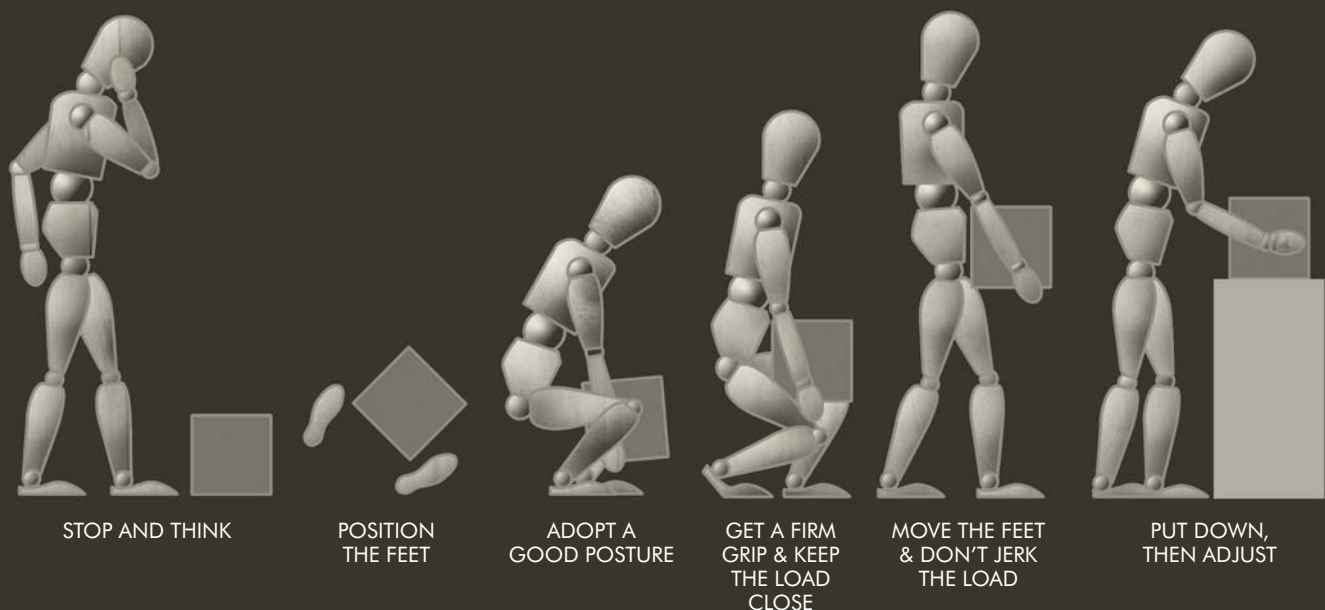
The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended in 2002) require an employer to:-

- Avoid the need for manual handling as far as reasonably practicable;
- Assess the risk of injury from any manual handling that cannot be avoided;
- Reduce the risk of injury from manual handling as far as reasonably practicable.

Employees have their own responsibilities. They must follow established Safe Systems of Work to avoid potential injury. They must also make proper use of equipment provided for their safety, and co-operate with their employer on health and safety matters.

Good handling – a visual guide

To promote best practice, follow these simple steps when training people in safe manual handling. It will protect you and your workforce, encouraging good health and productivity.



What next?

First and foremost, assess the work place for manual handling. See what activities can be minimised or avoided by the introduction of mechanical aids.

This assessment is the employer's responsibility. They must also keep a record of the steps taken to avoid potentially hazardous operations. Of course, some procedures cannot be avoided but they can often be improved. Sometimes risk can be reduced only so far – e.g. until the cost of improvement outweighs the benefits.

Ways of reducing the risk of injury

Can you –

- Improve workplace layout to improve efficiency?
- Reduce the amount of twisting and stooping?
- Avoid lifting from floor level or above shoulder height?
- Reduce carrying distances?
- Avoid repetitive handling?
- Vary the work, allowing one set of muscles to rest while another is used?

Can you make the load –

- Lighter or less bulky?
- Easier to grasp?
- More stable?
- Easier to hold? (Your suppliers may be able to help you with this.)

Can you –

- Remove obstructions to free movement?
- Provide better flooring?
- Avoid steps and steep ramps?
- Prevent extremes of hot and cold?
- Improve lighting?
- Consider less restrictive clothing or personal protective equipment?

Can you –

- Take better care of those who have a physical weakness or are pregnant?
- Give your employees more information – e.g. about the range of tasks they are likely to face?
- Provide training?

Problems to look for when making an assessment:

The tasks: do they involve –

- Holding loads away from trunk?
- Twisting, stooping or 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?

The loads: are they –

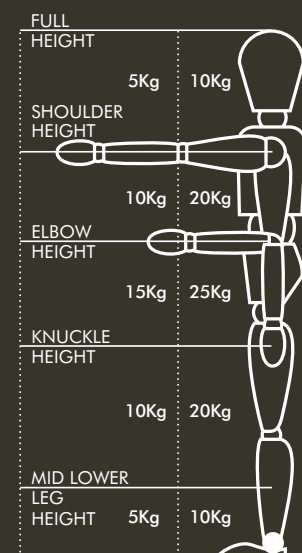
- Heavy, bulky or unwieldy?
- Difficult to grasp?
- Unstable or unpredictable?
- Intrinsically harmful e.g. sharp or hot?

The working environment: are there –

- Constraints on posture?
- Poor floors?
- Variations in levels?
- Hot/cold/humid conditions?
- Strong air movements?
- Poor lighting conditions?
- Restrictions on movements or posture from clothes or personal protective equipment?

Individual capacity: does the job –

- Require unusual capability?
- Endanger those with a health problem?
- Endanger pregnant women?
- Call for special information or training?



If the lifter's hands enter more than one box during the operation, use the smallest weight



Stannah Microlifts

Caxton Close, East Portway, Andover, Hampshire SP10 3QN
Telephone: 01264 351922

www.stannahlifts.co.uk

Stannah