General Lifting Guidelines: Plan Ahead

- Check the pathway you are taking:
  - Any obstacles?
  - Slip hazards?
  - Is the walking surface solid?
  - Are doors open?

- Visualize the lift in your mind:
  - Posture,
  - Coupling points,
  - One- or two-person job?

- Test the load:
  - Too heavy or bulky for one person?
  - Is object stable and balanced?
  - Can it be divided into smaller loads?

- Are mechanical aids available?
  - Dolly,
  - Hand truck,
  - Cart, etc.

- Any twisting involved?

- Avoid loads that are too heavy:
  - Get help.
  - Divide the load.
  - Use mechanical aids.

- Establish proper footing:
  - Feet at least shoulder width apart.
  - One foot slightly ahead of the other (karate stance).
  - Firm footing (surface condition, type of footwear).
  - Are you positioned as close to the object as possible?

- Bend at the knees rather than at the waist:
  - Use the larger leg muscles to give strength to the lift.
  - Maintain neutral posture.
  - Lead with the head and torso.
  - Sustain smooth continuous motion.
  - Do not rush the lift.
  - Use the strong leg muscles.
  - Tighten your abdomen (contract stomach muscles).
General Lifting Guidelines:
Plan Ahead

- Keep the load as close as possible to the body:
  - Avoid a negative “leverage.”
  - Put yourself at a biomechanical advantage.

- Avoid twisting:
  - Move your feet – take small steps and pivot instead.
  - Reposition the object if possible.

- Push rather than pull the load:
  - Let your large leg muscles do most of the work.
  - Stay close to the load.
  - Don’t lean forward.
  - Use both arms.
  - Keep your stomach muscles tight.

- If you must pull the load:
  - Face the load squarely (one foot at least 12” in front of the other)
  - Keep your back in neutral position.
  - Bend your knees slightly.
  - Pull with one smooth motion.

- Avoid lifting outside the “safe zone”:
  - Don’t lift above the shoulders.
  - Don’t lift from below the knees.
  - Don’t reach over an object to lift a load; instead,
    - Move the object, or
    - Go around it.

- Minimize the frequency of lifts. Consider:
  - The weight of the object.
  - The distance to travel with the object.
  - The height to which the object is raised/elevated.

- Develop specific procedures for common lifting tasks:
  - Consider using Ergonomic Interventions.

- Identify, reduce, and/or eliminate risk factors:
  - Engineering Controls,
  - Administrative Controls,
  - Work Methods.