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## Safe Job Procedure for Manual Materials Handling

### Before You Begin

- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Warm up your muscles (do some light stretching) for a few minutes before you start lifting.
- Know the approximate weight of the item before you attempt to lift it.
- Use a mechanical lifting device (e.g. dolly, hand truck, cart, etc) to move a heavy or bulky load wherever possible.
- Do not attempt to lift a load that is too heavy or too bulky for you. Ask for assistance.

### Lifting & Lowering Procedure

1. Look and plan ahead. Make sure your path is free of obstructions, debris and slip and fall hazards such as grease, oil, water, etc.
2. Ensure that you can lift the load without over-exertion.
3. Ensure that the load is “free” to move.
4. Check that you can get a good grip of the load.
5. Stand over the object.
6. Place your feet so you are balanced.
7. Bend your knees (not beyond 90 degrees) and keep your back comfortably upright.
8. Grip the object with your whole hands (not just the fingers) so you can hold it securely. Avoid grasping the ends of long items.
9. Tighten your abdominal muscles.
10. Tuck your chin into your chest.
11. Lift by straightening your legs. Use your legs to lift.
12. Lift smoothly without jerking.
13. Hold the load close to your body.
14. Move your feet if you must turn while lifting. Do not twist your body.
15. When walking with a load, short steps are best. Keep the load at a reasonable height. Watch where you are going. Watch for tripping hazards.
16. Lowering guidelines (putting a load down):
  - a. Take a wide stance with one foot in front of the other.
  - b. Keep the load close to your body.
  - c. Keep your back straight. Do not bend over when setting a load down
  - d. Bend your hips and knees.
  - e. Set the load down. Keep the load tilted so you do not squat your fingers. Avoid a jerky release.
17. Stand up smoothly, easing your muscles

Please note: This document is for information purposes only as a guide. The safe job procedures (SJP) and safe work practices (SWP) created for your workplace should reflect your organizations processes, equipment and hazards as identified by a hazard analysis. Construction Safety Nova Scotia does not assume responsibility for the use of information in this document. If assistance is needed to complete a SWP and SJP for your organization please contact CSNS member services at [constructionsafetyns.ca](http://constructionsafetyns.ca) or 1.800.971.3888.