

TOOLBOX TALK

BRIEFKIT

Manual Handling

A ready-to-deliver toolbox talk for foremen and supervisors. 8-10 minute spoken script plus briefing register for operative sign-in.

REFERENCE	TBT-MANUAL-HANDLING-001	DURATION	8-10 minutes
DATE		SITE	
TRAINER (PRINT)		SIGNATURE	

1 Why it matters

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 require us to avoid hazardous manual handling where reasonably practicable, and assess the risk of what's left. Around a third of all reported workplace injuries in construction are linked to manual handling. Most are backs, shoulders and knees. Most don't get fixed. They get managed for the rest of someone's working life.

2 PPE required for this task

Hard hat

Safety boots, steel or composite toe

Safety glasses where dust or debris is likely

Hi-vis vest

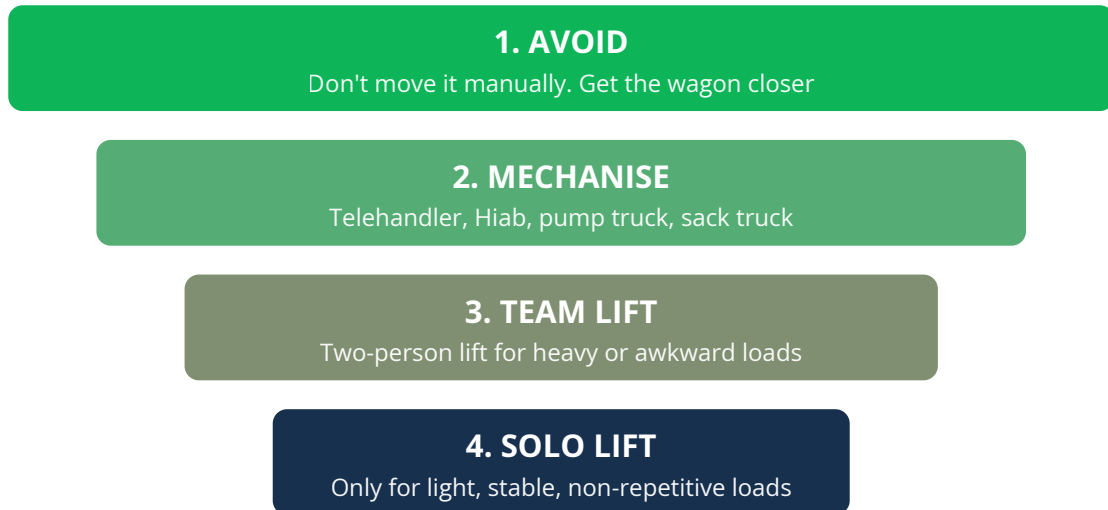
Gloves with grip (cut-resistant for block, sheet, and rebar)

3 Hierarchy for lifting

Manual lifting is the last option, not the first.

The hierarchy for lifting

Manual lifting is the last option, not the first.



4 What to say

Spoken script for the supervisor. Read or paraphrase, in order.

1 What we try first: don't lift it

First question is always: do we have to lift this at all? Can we wheel it? Can we get the wagon closer to the drop point? Can we break a pallet down where it lands? Manual lifting is the last option, not the first. If there's a sack truck, pump truck, telehandler or Hiab on site, that's what moves the heavy stuff. Walking 30 metres for a trolley beats six months off with a slipped disc.

2 TILE: what to think about before you bend down

Task, Individual, Load, Environment. Task: what are you actually doing? Lifting, carrying, twisting, holding it for how long? Individual: are you the right person? Fit, trained, not knackered from the last job? Load: what does it weigh, where's the centre of gravity, is it stable? Environment: floor wet, route clear, lighting OK, anywhere to set it down halfway? Three seconds of thinking saves three months of physio.

3 How to lift one: the actual technique

Feet shoulder-width, one slightly forward. Bend the knees, not the back. Get a firm grip with your palms, not just fingertips. Keep the load close to your body. Lift smoothly using your legs. Head up, back straight. Don't twist while you're lifting. Turn with your feet. To put it down, reverse the same way. If you have to read this twice, it means we've been getting it wrong.

4 Team lifts: when and how

Anything over 25kg for a man, 16kg for a woman, or anything awkward, it's a two-person lift. Both face the same way. Decide who's calling it before you pick it up ("on three, lift") and both lift on the same count. Same pace walking. Same person calls the set-down. If you're carrying a long load like a lintel or a section of duct, one at each end, the man at the back follows the man at the front, not the other way around.

5 Repetitive lifting: the silent one

Most manual handling injuries on site aren't one heavy lift. They're the same medium lift done two hundred times. Bricks all morning. Bags of muck off the wagon all afternoon. Decking boards passed up to the platform all day. Rotate the team. Swap who's on the trolley and who's stacking. Take a proper break every couple of hours, not when you collapse. If it hurts the next morning, tell us.

6 If you feel it go

If something pulls, stops, or pings while you're lifting, stop. Don't finish the lift, don't tough it out, don't say nothing. Tell the supervisor straight away. Sit down. We get you assessed. A pulled muscle treated on day one is a week off. A pulled muscle worked through for a fortnight is a year off.

5 Lifting technique

Right way and wrong way for a solo lift.

Lifting technique: knees, not the back

Bend the knees, keep the load close to the body, head up, no twisting under load.

CORRECT



Knees bent, back straight, load close to the body

WRONG



Bent from the waist, straight legs, all the load on the lower back

6 Team lifts

When a load is over 25kg or awkward, it's a two-person lift.

Two-person lift

Both face the same way. Lift on the same count. One person calls it.



Anything over 25kg, or anything awkward, is a two-person lift

7 Common mistakes to call out

- Bending from the waist instead of the knees (the single most common mistake on site)
- Lifting and twisting at the same time (especially when loading wagons or stacking blocks)
- Holding the load away from your body because it's dirty or you're worried about your hi-vis
- Carrying too much in one trip to save going back (a second trip is free, an injury isn't)
- Lifting solo just because the other man is busy (wait, or get the trolley)
- Forgetting the route, picking up a heavy load with nowhere to put it down halfway
- Pulling pallets off a wagon by the strapping (band snaps, load drops on feet)
- Lifting a kerb or paving slab with no gloves and no edges checked
- Picking up a load before checking what's underneath it

8 Watch on site this week

What the supervisor should be actively spotting on walk-arounds.

Operatives lifting bagged materials (plaster, cement, sand) solo when there's a sack truck three metres away

Anyone bending from the waist on a repetitive task (blocklayer, decker, slabber)

Long loads (timber, duct, lintels) being carried by one man instead of two

Materials stacked too high to lift safely from the top of the pile

Pallets being broken down on the wagon bed instead of being lifted down whole

Anyone twisting under load when turning to stack

Tool belts overloaded (that's a manual handling injury waiting to happen too)

Lifting in poor light, wet weather, or on a muddy route without it being flagged

9 Confirm the team understood

Ask one or two of these at the end of the talk.

1. What does TILE stand for? (Task, Individual, Load, Environment.)
2. What's the guideline weight that triggers a two-person lift on this site? (Around 25kg for a man, 16kg for a woman, but awkward shape or repetition can drop that.)
3. If something pulls or twinges while you're lifting, what do you do first?
4. Where's the nearest sack truck / pump truck / telehandler on this site right now?

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Briefing register: Manual Handling

All operatives who attend this toolbox talk must sign below. Their signature confirms they have heard and understood the briefing.

Briefing delivered by:

Name (print):		Date:	
Signature:		Time:	
Site:			

Attendees. I confirm I have heard and understood the briefing detailed above:

#	Name (print)	Company / Role	Signature	Date	CSCS / Ticket No.
1					
2					
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Keep this register in the site Safety File. Additional sheets may be appended if more than 12 operatives are briefed.

Generated by Briefkit on 05 June 2026 · Latest version at briefkit.co.uk/toolbox-talks/manual-handling

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