



Industry Guidance to Manual Handling

SCOPE: This document represents the industry advised good practice advice available and considered pertinent after consultation within the membership and incorporating external advice. It is intended as a set of guidelines for consideration in developing procedures to reduce the risk of manual handling hazards within the malting industry.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 define manual handling as;
“any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or bodily force”.

Manual handling relates to the moving or handling of items either by lifting, lowering, carrying, steadying or pushing or pulling. The weight of the item is an important factor, but many other factors can create a risk of injury, for example the number of times you have to pick up or carry an item, the distance you are carrying it, where you are picking it up from or putting it down (picking it up from the floor, putting it on a shelf above shoulder level. Weather conditions such as high winds can also be a hazard when carrying large items) and any twisting, bending, stretching or other awkward posture you may adopt while doing a task.

Incorrect manual handling is one of the most common causes of injury at work. It causes work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) which accounts for over a third of all workplace injuries. Manual handling injuries can happen anywhere people are at work. eg: malt production, barley storage, engineering works, plant hygiene, laboratories, administrative offices, etc.

Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 Regulation 4 specifies the following;

*(1) Each employer shall –
(a) so far as is reasonably practicable, avoid the need for his employees to undertake any manual handling operations at work which involve a risk of their being injured;*

The regulations also stipulate that a hierarchy of control must be followed to manage the risks associated with manual handling.

1: Avoid hazardous manual handling operations so far as is reasonably practicable;
eg: redesigning the task to avoid moving the load or by automating or mechanising the process.

2: Assess any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided;
Regulation 4b requires a suitable & sufficient risk assessment to be completed for tasks in which manual handling cannot be avoided.

3: Reduce the risk of injury so far as is reasonably practicable.
This will include instruction and training of personnel in procedures, supervision to ensure that procedures and preventative measures are being followed correctly, use of PPE and maintenance of equipment

2. RISK ASSESSMENT

There are a number of different formats of manual handling risk assessments and in order to ensure that a suitable & sufficient risk assessment is completed, a suitable method must be followed for the specific task being undertaken.

The most commonly known method of manual handling risk assessment is T.I.L.E. (Task, Individual, Load, Environment).

As the acronym suggests it breaks the task down into specific features;

Task – What Activity is being conducted

Individual – Consider who is performing the Task– Are they of a suitable fitness, do they have any pre-existing health conditions?

Load – What is being carried and how heavy is it?

Environment – Flooring conditions, obstacles, lighting, place to stop, put down the load and take a break?

The Health and Safety Executive website offers a range of risk assessment methods and tools to allow you to complete a suitable and sufficient risk assessment.

Links to some of the relevant information are below;

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ck5.pdf> - Full risk assessment templates

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg383.pdf>

[MAC Tool – The Manual Handling Assessment Charts](#)

[V-MAC Tool - The Variable Manual Handling Assessment Chart](#)

[ART Tool](#) - The Assessment of Repetitive Tasks tool

[RAPP Tool](#) - The Risk Assessment of Pushing and Pulling tool

3. TRAINING

As with any task, the person performing it must be competent and to help ensure competency, training in manual handling must be completed.

To ensure that suitable and sufficient training in the task can be demonstrated, the training should ideally be specific to the task being carried out. For example moving a box to ground level to shelf at waist height does not require the same type of movement as shovelling grain, and therefore if correct training is not provided a worker trained in moving a box may injure themselves while shovelling in the incorrect manner.



Diagram shows correct lifting technique.



Diagram shows correct shovelling technique.

4. PRACTICAL TIPS ON BEST PRACTICE

- Use mechanical means. eg: Using telehandler / FLT instead of carrying manually. Lifting gear such as chain blocks for removal of motors / gearboxes.
- Rather than lifting bags, motors etc, use a sack barrow if FLT use not possible, and PUSH it don't pull it.
- When lifting heavier items, ask for assistance if MHE is not available.
- Select the correct person(s) for the task and rotate tasks so manual handling is not prolonged
- To aid shovelling ergonomic shovels are available. These are angular or have a bend two thirds of the way along their length. This will reduce debilitating forces to the spine when a loaded shovel is lifted off the ground as the user tends to remain in a more upright position. (see Picture 1).
- Use bins fitted with castors rather than lifting them once loaded. (see Picture 2)
- Use of sucker blower units instead of shovelling large volumes of grain. (see Picture 3)
- Avoid Lifting large item in open areas that could be affect by adverse weather conditions.
- Warm up before lifting.
- Provide suitable training specific to the tasks that are performed.
- Ensure there is a suitable level of supervision to ensure the practices in which the workers have been trained in are being followed.



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3

5. FURTHER INFORMATION

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg143.pdf>

Manual Handling a brief guide.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l23.pdf>

A guide to the regulations.