

## Manual Handling Operations (MHO) Checklist

This checklist is designed to assist you in identifying hazards generated by manual handling operations (MHO). While MHO can be defined as; *'the transporting or supporting a load by hand or bodily force,'* put simply MHO would be anything you are required to move or hold using your own bodily strength. This could include, lifting bags of loam, pushing a manual roller, guiding a powered pedestrian mower etc.

To ensure the likelihood of injury is reduced to an acceptable level, you should first identify the hazards generated by your manual handling tasks. Then you can apply the following hierarchy:

**Avoid** - hazardous manual handling operations, 'so far as reasonably practicable,' remove or modify the task.

**Assess** - the risk of injury to workers from any hazardous manual handling that cannot be avoided.

**Reduce** - the risk of injury to workers from hazardous manual handling to as low as reasonably practicable.

### Identify your manual handling tasks

MHO tasks will be vast and varied. Take a walk around you place of work, identify all the manual handling tasks and the hazard they present. Be critical, insignificant hazards can be discarded later.

Consider the items to be moved and the different scenarios they might be handled. Some articles could be used in different scenarios. This could include, articles, machinery, fluids, and many others. Then using the acronym LITE: Load, Individual, Task and Environment, assess the risks and prioritise the controls you put in place to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

**LOAD:** *A moveable object, such as a box or package, a bag of loam or a fuel can, or something being pushed or pulled, such as a roller or mower (even if it is powered).*

Size: Is it bulky? Does it obstruct your view??

Weight: Is it too heavy?

Is it Hot/Cold/

Does it have sharp edges/corners?

Is it slippery, difficult to grasp or unstable?

Does it have an uneven centre of gravity

Y	N

**INDIVIDUAL:** *Consider the person doing the handling, does the task pose an unacceptable risk to:*

Those with existing health problems or learning/physical disabilities?

New or young workers?

New or expectant mothers?

Those with restricted abilities due to age or general fitness levels?

Does the task require someone with above average strength or agility?

Is the person wearing clothing or PPE that could contribute to the hazard?


**TASK:** *Tasks vary, how it is designed will largely dictate the level of risk involved, consider:*

The frequency of task. monthly, weekly, daily, hourly, or continuous.

Does the process dictate the speed and/or frequency/intensity/pace of task.


- Can the person dictate the pace of work?
- Can the task be described as monotonous?
- How far is the distance of carry?
- Does the task require highly repetitive movements?
- Does the task involves lifting from above head height, below the feet or stretching and/or twisting?
- Does the task require a great amount of force?
- Is their sufficient rest/recovery time?


**ENVIRONMENTAL:** *Does the characteristics of the place of work contribute to the risk?*

- Is it Hot/Cold/Humid conditions?
- Does it restrict posture/mobility?
- Does it have uneven/slippy floor surface?
- Is the workspace cluttered?
- Does it dictate the need to move from one level to another i.e., the use of stairs or steps?
- Is lighting poor, or does moving from light to dark require eyes to adjust?
- Do windy or gusting conditions have an adverse effect on the load?
- Is it a Multi occupancy site – i.e., are others aware of your activities?


Your next step is to conduct a risk assessment, put controls in place and communicate them to those undertaking manual handling as part of the tasks. The result of your survey will help indicate where improvements are needed and which to prioritise. More information plus a useful guide that includes several types of control can be found [here](#).