



Risk Reminder

Lifting Properly:

Packing School Supplies for Summer Break!

If you've ever injured your back while doing a seemingly simple task like lifting a box full of textbooks, moving a large desk, or carrying a load of school supplies into the school building from your car - you've learned firsthand the importance of safe lifting techniques. Safe lifting is easy to learn, simple to do, and may be one of the most important skills you, your staff and your students ever learn. Safe lifting techniques keep your back aligned and can prevent painful strains and more serious injuries.

Follow These Steps for Proper Lifting:

- 1. Bring the load as close as possible before you lift.** Minimize the distance you have to travel while carrying the load. Use transport carts or rolling tables to move heavy things long distances.
- 2. Make sure the load is balanced and is not beyond your strength and abilities.** Don't be afraid to ask for assistance.
- 3. Separate your feet, placing one slightly in front of the other.** Bend your knees to a comfortable position while keeping your back straight. Let the large muscles in your legs support your back and carry the weight.
- 4. Tuck in your pelvis.** By tightening your stomach muscles, you can keep your back's three curves in balance.
- 5. Hug the load.** Try to hold the object you're lifting as close to your body as possible, as you gradually straighten your legs to a standing position.
- 6. Lift the load straight up slowly and steadily.** Avoid fast, jerky motions.
- 7. Don't twist your torso while lifting or carrying a load.** Keep your shoulders and hips squared, turning your body with your stance not at your waist.
- 8. When carrying items, always keep them as close as possible to your body** so that your center of gravity remains over your legs.
- 9. Setting the load down is as important as lifting it up.** Keep your back straight and lower the load by bending your knees.



Your back supports 70 to 80 percent of your body weight when you're standing up straight. When you bend at the waist without support, your back actually supports 6 times the weight you're lifting.