

Who has not heard the basics of back injury prevention? At the same time, who has applied these principles to every day work? Many people understand the basics of safe lifting, but fail to perform these basic practices on a regular and consistent basis. The following is a summary of the basics:

- Bend your knees and keep a straight back when you lift.
- When you bend down to pick up a tool, bend your knees.
- You should NEVER bend at the waist to pick up anything (or even to tie your shoes.).
- Keep your stomach muscles in shape. This will help maintain proper posture while lifting, and ultimately reduce your chance for a back injury.
- When lifting and moving a load, shift your feet, rather than twisting your back.
- Remember the 10:1 ratio for lifting improperly –

A straight-legged lift of 20 pounds will apply over 200 pounds of force on your vertebrae and disks in your lower back. (*This is why you must bend your knees to lift.*)

- Know what items are two men lifts:
  - Large sections of forms
  - Large core sections
  - Large cut outs
  - Etc.

## Prevention –

- Stretch you legs and back before you start to work.
- Think of proper lifting technique before you begin a lift.
- Establish a clear travel path before you begin your lift.
- Remind your co-workers of proper technique of lifting.

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