Safe Manual Handling: UK Weight Zones & TILE Check

Workplace Quick-Reference Poster · MHOR 1992, HSE Guidance L23 (4th Ed.) & Leaflet INDG143 (rev4)

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HSE INDG143 Lifting & Lowering Guideline Zones

Vertical Hand Zone	Men Close	Men Extended	Women Close	Women Extended
1. Shoulder to Head	10 kg	5 kg	7 kg	3 kg
2. Elbow to Shoulder	20 kg	10 kg	13 kg	7 kg
3. Knuckle to Elbow (Waist)	**25 kg**	**15 kg**	**16 kg**	**10 kg**
4. Mid-Shin to Knuckle	20 kg	10 kg	13 kg	7 kg
5. Floor to Mid-Shin	10 kg	5 kg	7 kg	3 kg

How to read this chart: These figures are risk-assessment filter triggers (not legal maximum limits) assuming an upright two-handed lift under once every 5 minutes on dry, level flooring. If a lift passes through two zones (e.g. floor to waist), **always use the lower number**. Screen mixed teams against the lower (women) columns to protect ~95% of staff.

Mandatory HSE Adjustments & Push/Pull Filters

Trunk Twisting: Cut guideline weight by **10%** at 45° twist, or **20%** at 90° twist. Move your feet instead.

Repetitive Pace: Cut weight by **30%** (1 to 2 lifts/min), **50%** (5 to 8 lifts/min), or **80%** (over 12 lifts/min).

Team Lifts: 2 handlers = **2/3 (~67%)** of combined solo filters. 3 handlers = **1/2 (50%)** of combined filters.

Carrying Distance: Filter holds up to **10 metres** on clear flat floors. Use trolleys or conveyors beyond 10 m.

Seated Lifting Cap: Max **5 kg (men) / 3 kg (women)** close to chest. Never pick floor loads up from a chair.

Wheeled Push / Pull: Starting force filter: **20 kg (men) / 15 kg (women)**. Keeping load rolling: **10 kg / 7 kg**.

Run a 60-Second TILE Check Before Every Lift (MHOR Schedule 1)

T : Task

Can a pallet truck, sack truck, or trolley take the weight instead? Check lift height, reach from waist, carrying distance, and waist-high landing spot.

I : Individual

Do you need a second person? Flag tiredness, stiffness, bulky PPE, pregnancy, or recent injury early before lifting heavy or awkward items.

L : Load

Read weight labels and gently rock one corner first. Watch out for shifting liquids, off-centre loads, wide boxes hiding your feet, or sharp strapping.

E : Environment

Walk the route first. Clear loose shrink-wrap and cables, check wet patches, kerbs, stairs, and cold-room grip, and prop doors safely.

6-Step Safe Lifting & Lowering Technique (HSE L23)

1 Stop & Plan the Route

Use mechanical handling aids first wherever available. Clear obstacles and prepare a waist-high bench or trolley to set the load down.

2 Set a Stable Stance

Stand close to the load with feet shoulder-width apart and one foot slightly forward alongside the item for steady front-to-back balance.

3 Bend Hips & Knees

Flex your hips and knees while keeping your natural back curve upright and head looking ahead. Avoid stooping with straight legs or deep squatting.

4 Hug the Load Close

Take a full-palm diagonal grip (not fingertips), tuck elbows in, and keep the heaviest side pressed tight against your waist/belt line.

5 Lift Smoothly with Legs

Straighten your legs steadily while breathing out naturally. Never jerk, snatch at a falling box, or adjust your grip mid-lift.

6 Step Around to Turn

Turn by moving your feet rather than twisting your shoulders. When setting down, slide the box onto the shelf edge first, then push into place.

Employer Reminder (MHOR 1992 Reg 4): Avoid hazardous manual handling first where reasonably practicable. Any task exceeding INDG143 filter guidelines requires a suitable risk assessment (using HSE MAC, RAPP, or ART tools) and practical engineering controls. Report faulty trolleys, damaged floors, or early back/shoulder aches to your supervisor straight away.