

# Technique

- Position the load and/or yourself:
  - To minimise the need to reach
  - So handling occurs between mid-thigh and chest height
  - So you can avoid twisting, turning and bending.
- Make sure you get a good grip on the load.
- Use smooth, slow movements. Avoid jerking.
- Carry the load close to your body.
- Turn your feet, not your trunk.

# Storing heavy loads

- Store heavy loads between mid-thigh and chest height. This will reduce your need to lift.

# Know your limits

- If you are tired, do you need to stop?
- If you are no longer enjoying what you are doing, that might be a good time to stop.
- If you are not fit, should you do it for so long?
- If you haven't got the strength, should you do it at all?

For further injury prevention information, check out the ACC website, [www.acc.co.nz](http://www.acc.co.nz), or phone 0800 THINKSAFE (0800 844 657).

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To Kāporeihana  
Āwhina Hunga Whara

# Handling heavy loads

TAKING CARE IN AND AROUND THE HOME



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thinksafe



Injuries in and around the home can occur as a result of handling heavy loads.

Handling may involve lifting – but you also need to consider the risks associated with carrying, holding, pushing, pulling and throwing.

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Many injuries from heavy handling can be avoided. Here are some tips...

## Avoid heavy handling if possible

- If you need to move a particularly heavy item (like a piano) or are planning an extended period of handling (like moving house) it may be better to get professional help.
- When packing things use conveniently sized boxes. Don't overpack.
- If you can, divide the load into smaller parts.

## Get help

- Two people can often move a load more easily than one.

## Plan ahead

- Make sure that the route you are going to take with the load is dry and clear of obstacles.
- Make sure you can see where you are going – if the load is large, get help.
- Make sure the lighting is adequate.
- Keep small children and animals out of the way.
- Spread prolonged heavy work (like moving furniture) over a long period and take rest breaks.
- Wear protective, non-slip shoes.

## Get a good grip

- Add handles to the load – if they will help – like ropes or straps.
- Wear well fitting gloves, with a good grip.
- If the load is messy, wear the right clothes or protective gear so you can carry it close to your body.
- Make sure you won't slip.

## Use handling equipment

- Can you transfer the load to a device of some sort? For example:
  - *Use a wheelbarrow or sack for moving pot plants.*
  - *Put garden waste on a plastic sheet and drag it.*
  - *Use a wheeli-bin for the rubbish.*