



## **Lifting Safely**

It is sometimes necessary to load and unload awkward or heavy objects into a van by hand. Great care must be taken to avoid any chance of injury to your back, legs and arms. The following guide advises on how to minimise the risks involved and how the correct lifting technique can help you avoid any problems or injury.

### **Assess the situation**

Before lifting or carrying a heavy object, plan ahead and consider the following:

- Test the weight of a large object by lifting a corner, can you lift the load safely by yourself or do you need help?
- If the load is too heavy or an awkward shape is it possible break-down into smaller parts?
- Check how far you have to carry the load and if the path is clear of anything which may cause you to trip. Check that all doors have been opened in advance.
- Once the load is lifted, will it block your view?

### **General lifting advice**

Wear gloves to protect your hands and provide better grip.

Use a mechanical aid whenever possible and control using both hands.

When using a lifting aid or trolley always push rather than pull, use your body weight to assist and help control the load.

Use tie-downs where necessary to secure the load.

- If you must lift objects, do not try to lift objects that are awkward or are heavier than 20 kg.
- Before you lift a heavy object, make sure you have firm footing.
- To pick up an object that is lower than the level of your waist, keep your back straight and bend at your knees and hips. **Do not bend forward at the waist with your knees straight.**
- Stand with a wide stance close to the object you are trying to pick up and keep your feet firm on the ground. Tighten your stomach muscles and lift the object using your leg muscles. Straighten your knees in a steady motion. Don't jerk the object up to your body.
- Stand completely upright without twisting. Always move your feet forward when lifting an object.
- If you are lifting an object from a table, slide it to the edge of the table so that you can hold it close to your body. Bend your knees so that you are close to the object. Use your legs to lift the object and come to a standing position.
- Avoid lifting heavy objects above waist level.
- Hold packages close to your body with your arms bent. Keep your stomach muscles tight. Take small steps and go slowly.
- To lower the object, place your feet as you did to lift, tighten stomach muscles and bend your hips and knees.



Improper Lifting



Proper Lifting