



## ***10 RULES OF GOOD BODY MECHANICS***

1. **TEST THE LOAD.**  
Prior to lifting or moving an object, test the weight of the load to make sure you are able to move it safely. Remember to use an assistive device if necessary.
2. **PLAN THE MOVE.**  
Assess your path of travel or destination of the load to make sure the path is clear. If not, clear the way before you start.
3. **USE A WIDE, BALANCED STANCE OR BASE OF SUPPORT.**  
A solid base of support reduces the likelihood of slipping and jerking movements. You can access the load easier and have better stability with your lift.
4. **KEEP THE LOWER BACK IN ITS NORMAL ARCHED POSITION WHILE LIFTING.**  
Remember to bend at your knees and hips. When you arch your back, you lock it in and distribute the forces more evenly on the support structures of your back.
5. **BRING THE LOAD AS CLOSE TO THE BODY AS POSSIBLE.**  
This minimizes the fulcrum effect that is created between you and the object you are lifting and significantly reduces the stress on your back.
6. **KEEP THE HEAD AND SHOULDERS UP AS TO BEGIN TO LIFT.**  
Looking straight ahead helps to maintain the curves in your spine, especially in the low back.
7. **TIGHTEN THE STOMACH MUSCLES AS THE LIFT BEGINS.**  
The abdominals become a load bearing structure when they are contracted. They act as an internal belt to stabilize the lumbar spine. The stronger the abdominals, the more support and unloading of the spine occurs to reduce stress on the back.
8. **LIFT WITH THE LEGS AND STAND UP IN A SMOOTH, EVEN MOTION.**  
Using the strength of the hips, buttocks and legs to complete the lift helps to decrease the lower back stress.
9. **MOVE THE FEET (PIVOT) IF A DIRECTION CHANGE IS NECESSARY.**  
Shifting your feet or pivoting eliminates the need to twist at the waist, which is important in reducing torque and shear on the structures of the back. Remember to shift your weight and use your legs.
10. **COMMUNICATE IF TWO OR MORE INDIVIDUALS ARE INVOLVED IN THE MOVEMENT.**  
Have one person count to three before lifting. Coordinate your efforts.