

PLAN S.M.A.R.T. PRINCIPLES

Plan: Think before you act and apply the risk management approach.

Before you complete any manual handling tasks, consider if you can eliminate the whole or part of the task or apply some control measures to reduce any manual handling risk.

S

Size up the load/stable base of support/secure the load.

- Do not move or handle more than you can easily manage.
- Create and maintain a stable base/position.
- Ensure a good hold on the load.
- Put down, then adjust.

M

Move close to the load/keep the load close to your waist.

- Keep the load close to the trunk for as long as possible.

A

Always applying the semi-squat position.

The semi-squat allows for:

- The spine is maintained with its normal curvature, which places less demand on the spinal extensor muscles.
- The overall load distribution is shared through the ankles, knees and hips more evenly.
- There is a greater mechanical and psychological advantage to the positioning and length of the muscles.
- It allows greater stability and adaptability throughout the lift.
- Is adaptable to different situations.

Extreme flexion of any of the joints (for example a full squat, more than a slightly curved spine) should be avoided.

R

Raise the object smoothly and with your legs.

Keep your spine in the same position.

- Do not flex your back any further as you lift and ensure that you keep the load close to your body as you lift.
- Keep your head up when handling.

T

Turn by moving on your feet, avoid twisting movements.

Keep it smooth.

- Avoid twisting the trunk or leaning sideways, especially while the back is bent and avoid jerking movements.

Adapted from information provided by The Recovre Group.