

Warehouse & Storage Safety



**National
Safety
Council**



Safe storage

Store It Safe

Many companies store merchandise and supplies that are expensive and valuable. Even more important, though, is the safety of the people who pick orders, stack goods, load and unload, operate machinery and perform other warehouse jobs.

This booklet will show you the hazards you face in performing storage and warehouse work. It will also give you some ideas on how to control those hazards so that you don't get hurt.



This booklet will show you how to protect yourself against injury while performing storage and warehouse work.

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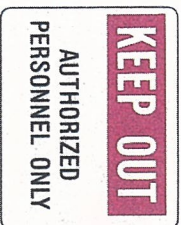
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Color it safe

Many storage areas are color coded for safety. These signals are for your protection. Observe them and follow their instructions.

Red

Red indicates fire equipment, danger and emergency stop controls.



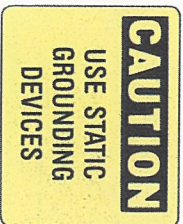
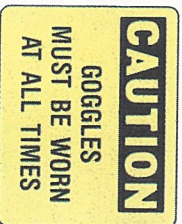
White, Green, Black

These colors are used for general safety information.



Yellow

Yellow indicates caution. Watch out for falling, stumbling, crushing or bumping accidents.



Personal protective equipment

Hard Hats and Caps

Protect your head against bumps or falling objects.

Safety Gloves or Hand Leathers

Protect your palms and fingers against strapping wires and other material handling accidents.

Safety Glasses or Goggles

Safety glasses or goggles shield your eyes.

Earpugs or Earmuffs

These can help prevent hearing loss.

Safety Shoes

Safety shoes protect your feet and ankles.

Breathing Protection

Breathing protectors safeguard you against irritating dust, vapors and fumes.

Equipment Maintenance

- Keep protective equipment clean and in good condition.
- Check it before you use it.
- Replace damaged equipment.



Keep protective equipment clean and in good condition.

How to lift right

Follow these tips to avoid hurting yourself.

Size

Don't lift loads that are too heavy or bulky. Ask for help or use mechanical lifting equipment.

Sight

Keep a clear line of sight. Never carry a load that's so big you can't see where you're going.

Hands, Arms

Keep your hands free of oil and grease. Wipe off greasy, wet, slippery or dirty objects before you handle them. Keep your elbows and arms close to your body. Get a good grip.

Position

When you're lifting something from the floor, squat down close to it. Plant your feet firmly.

Back Position

Keep your back reasonably straight, and keep material close to your body. Does it feel as though there's a straight line from your head to your seat? Let your thighs and arms take the strain, not your back.

Turning

As you turn with a load, turn your whole body, including your feet. This keeps you on balance.

Two-person Load

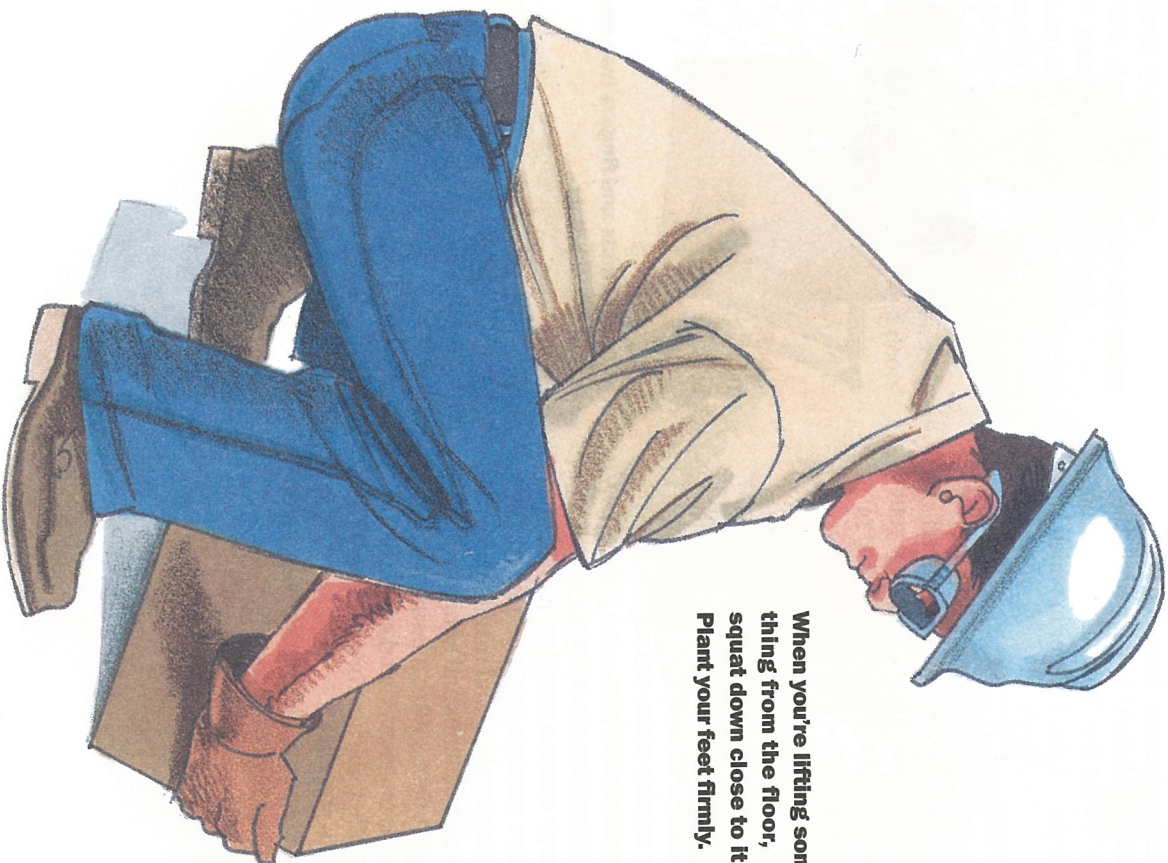
You and your carrying partner should carry the load at the same level. Let one person take charge and call the signals.

Hazardous Materials

If you work with loads labeled "Flammable," "Corrosives," "Poison" or "Acids," follow your company's material handling rules.

Repetitive Lifting

If you are required to do a lot of lifting, stretching exercises may be helpful. Check first with your doctor.



When you're lifting something from the floor, squat down close to it. Plant your feet firmly.

Conveyors

While conveyors, hand and lift trucks are helpful in your work, they can also be dangerous if they are not operated in the manner in which they were intended.

Conveyor Hazards

- You can get your hands, fingers, feet or clothing caught when you feed material onto a conveyor. Keep your hands and fingers free and clear of pinch points.
- Watch out for cartons, boxes and other materials that can fall from overhead conveyors.
- Riding, climbing or crossing a conveyor can be dangerous, even if it's not moving when you step on it.

Conveyor Safety

- Lock out/tag out of hazardous energy sources must be implemented before employees are permitted to perform service and maintenance on any machines and equipment.
- Report damaged or missing safeguards on an overhead conveyor or any other machine or equipment to your supervisor.
- Don't stand on, ride, cross over or step on a moving conveyor.

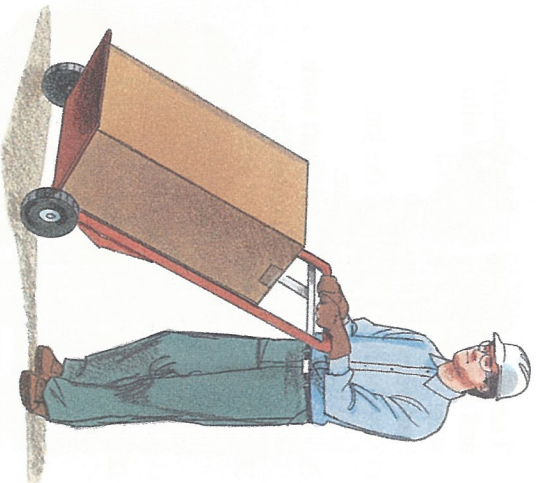


Keep your hands and fingers free and clear of pinch points.

Hand and lift trucks

Hand Truck Safety

- Push, don't pull. It's safer and easier on your back. Don't overload.
- Keep hands and feet away from hand truck wheels.
- Don't stack materials so high you can't see where you're going.
- Keep hands inside the handles so they don't get crushed against doors or posts.
- Use the right truck when the load is too heavy to handle.
- Don't try to operate powered hand and lift trucks without the right training and authorization.



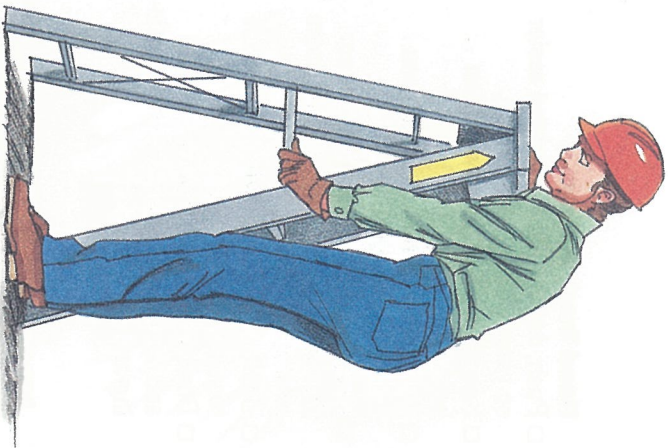
When using a hand truck, don't stack materials so high you can't see where you're going.

Tools and equipment

These can make your work easier and faster — *if* you use them with safety in mind.

Ladders

- Use the right ladder for the job. Make sure it's safe to use.
 - Stand in a safe position. Don't work off the top rung of a ladder.
 - Ladder extensions need safety feet. Angle the ladder one foot for every four feet of length from the base to the top support.
 - Move the ladder as close to your target as possible. Never reach sideways more than an arm's length. It can cause the ladder to fall.
- ## Pallets and Containers
- Watch for nails, jagged metal and splinters.
 - Discard any broken skids or damaged containers.
- ## Racks and Shelves
- Don't stand, climb or sit on them. They're made to hold materials, not people.



Use the right ladder for the job. Make sure it's safe to use.

- Don't exceed the load capacity for the shelf or rack.
- Keep stored material secure, with nothing loose or overhanging to cause injury.
- Report any damaged racks.

Hand Tools

- Use the right tool for the right job.
- Inspect tools before you use them. Repair or throw away tools that aren't in good condition.
- Shield sharp blades and tool points.
- Store them when you're not using them.

Crowbars

- Use the right size for the job.
- Stand to one side when you use a crowbar, not over the job.
- Store tools in the right place.

Electrical Tools

- Make sure they're grounded, and/or double-insulated, and working properly.



Stand to one side when you use a crowbar, not over the job.

Other lifting devices

Cranes and Hoists

Knowing the answers to these

questions can help prevent accidents.

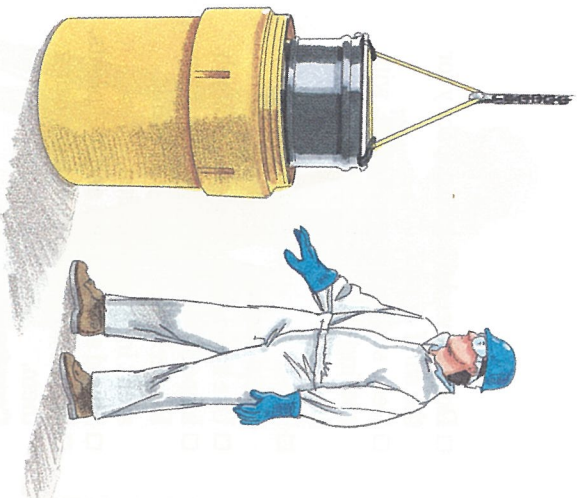
- Are you authorized and trained to operate the equipment?
- Can the crane or hoist carry the load?
- Where will the load travel?
- Where will the load be put down?
- Is the hoist or crane hook fitted with a safety latch to fasten the load on the hook?
- Are the right safety devices in place?

Slings and Chains

- Are they in good repair? Can they carry the load?
- Are you trained in how to use them?
- Are you using the right rigging equipment?
- Is the sling or chain hitched securely to the load?
- Don't cross, twist or kink a chain. Don't shorten it by tying a knot.
- Don't let the loose ends swing free when you're removing chains and slings. They can injure people and property.

Hand Hooks

- Keep the point sharp, and shield the point when you're not using the hook. Hooks that are dull can slip on boxes or other objects.
- Watch out for people around you when you use hand hooks.



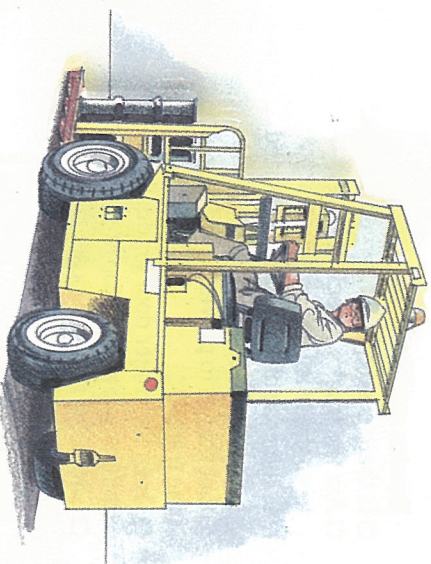
Is the sling or chain hitched securely to the load?

Motorized trucks and forklifts

Vehicle Safety

Operating these vehicles is a big responsibility. It includes these points:

- Are you trained and authorized to run one of these?
- Do you obey company safety rules on operating a forklift?
- Are you extra cautious near pedestrians, corners, walkways, intersections and whenever your view is obstructed?
- Do you use the vehicle's warning device?
- Do you report any problems promptly to your supervisor?
- Do you use a safety belt and tie-off before you use an order-picking truck?



Are you trained and authorized to run one of these?

Unloading safety

Trucks and Trailers

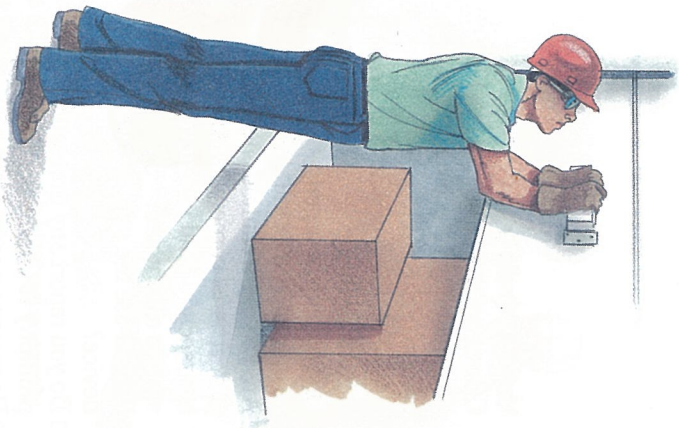
- Is there enough light for you to work?
- Are the truck's wheels chocked to keep the truck stationary?
- Is the nose of the trailer supported by a jack when it is not attached to that tractor to prevent unpadding of the trailer?
- Open the trailer door gradually, so things won't fall on top of you.
- Check the floor for loose nails, sharp objects and loose and broken flooring.

Rail Cars

- Are the car wheels chocked to keep it stationary?
- Check for loose objects that might fall over.
- Take away shoring and bracing.
- Throw away trash and debris.
- Check the floor for loose nails, sharp objects and loose and broken flooring.
- Use proper equipment to open and close freight car doors.

Dockboards

- Can they carry the load?
- Are they wide enough so you can drive hand or power trucks over them?
- Do the dockboard ends make firm contact with the dock or loading platform?
- Are they free of dirt, oil, grease, water, ice and snow?



Open the trailer door gradually, so things won't fall on top of you.

Warehouse & storage safety tips

What Can Hurt You

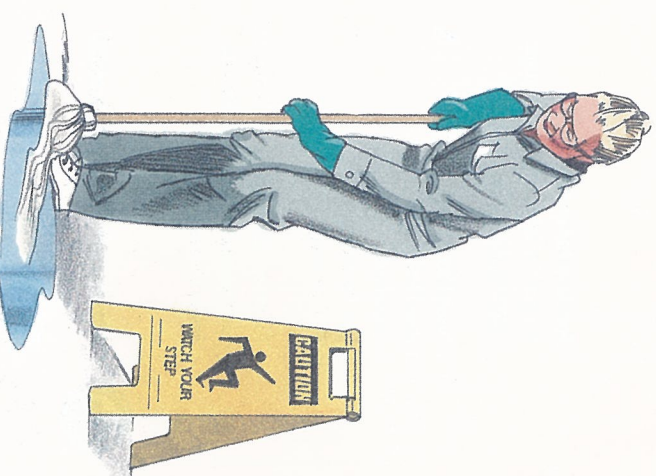
- Falling objects
- Hand tools
- Tripping and falling in cluttered aisles and walkways
- Lifting and handling heavy objects
- Operating hand and lift trucks and other equipment
- Loading and unloading trucks and rail cars
- Handling hazardous materials.

What Can Help You

- These pointers can help you work more efficiently and more safely.
- Keep exits and aisles clear.
- Clean up spills.
- Get rid of oily or greasy rags.
- Store things where they belong.
- Discard trash and debris in the right containers.
- Cover sharp and pointed tools when you're not using them.
- Throw away worn pallets and damaged containers. Don't leave them in the aisles.
- Clothes should fit right. Torn or bulky clothes can get caught in machinery or make you trip.
- Jewelry can get caught on equipment or in machinery. Don't wear it on the job.

Remember

Your safety is even more valuable than the merchandise and supplies you work with. Take care of yourself by practicing good safety awareness.



Clean up spills promptly.

For Your Information

You may be interested in our other booklets. Ask about:

- Head Protection
- Hand Protection
- Sound Sense
- Eye Protection
- Foot Protection

For more information or to order, call your regional office of the National Safety Council toll-free.



National Safety Council

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