

# Team Lifting Guidelines

**When a load weight exceeds recommended limits, ask a teammate for help!**

A well executed team lift allows you to safely move loads without increased risk of accident or injury.



Follow this 6-point plan to score a safe team lift:

## 1. Know the Rules

Before you lift, make sure that your back and legs are warmed up! We are ALL athletes in life, so we need to warm-up our body to improve performance and to reduce risk of injury. It's important to prepare your body for work.

Understand the do's and don'ts of proper lifting:

### DO...

- ✓ Use ergonomic lift assists when possible.
- ✓ Know and follow the work rules for loads that require team lifting.
- ✓ Keep the object in the power zone.
- ✓ Use a wide stance for balance.
- ✓ Use your legs to lift.
- ✓ Pivot your feet to avoid twisting.

### DON'T...

- ✗ Don't hold your breath while lifting.
- ✗ Don't bend or twist at the waist.
- ✗ Don't use a partial grip (1-2 fingers).
- ✗ Don't obstruct your vision when carrying.
- ✗ Don't jerk or lift quickly.
- ✗ Don't pinch your fingers or toes.
- ✗ Don't pull a load if you can push it.

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## 2. Get Help

Get help when work instructions and rules call for team lifting. Team members must always ask for help when load weight exceeds recommended limits!

## 3. Be the Leader

When a team lift is required, a team leader should be determined. This team leader will have a role which is very similar to a quarterback in football who organizes the team, calls the play, and signals the team to start the play. In most cases, the team member who is requesting assistance for performing the lifting task should take the quarterback or team leader role.

## 4. Survey the Field

The team leader should make sure that there's enough space for movement, good footing, and there are no obstructions in the planned path of the lifting task. The team leader should also pre-determine the number of steps in the lifting task required to safely move the load from the origin to the destination.

## 5. Call the Play

The team leader should then “call the play”, clearly communicating the method and steps of the lifting task to the other team member(s). This communication should happen prior to breaking the huddle to execute the team lifting task.

## 6. Execute the Play

The team leader “calls the signals” to ensure proper coordination of the lift. Remember, if one person lifts or lowers/drops the load too soon or too late - either team member could be injured. The lift and lower signals used by the team lift leader should be very clear. For example, the team leader could say “We will lift on the count of three”, and then use a steady cadence of “1 – 2 – 3” to insure good team coordination. Remember, each team member needs to use great individual body mechanics!

If carrying is required, the team leader should guide the team to move slowly and evenly without sudden movements or sudden starts and stops. The load should be kept level and the weight evenly distributed. Team members should be especially careful on any incline/decline. The team should avoid walking backwards when carrying if at all possible. An extra team member should guide the move if backward carrying can't be avoided.