



Three Points of Contact

MYTH: *You need to have two feet and one hand on a stepladder at all times when carrying out a task. FALSE!*

When you need to have both hands free for a brief period to do a job using a stepladder (eg putting a box on a shelf, hanging wallpaper, installing a smoke detector on a ceiling) you need to maintain **three points of contact** at the working position. This is not just two feet and one hand, it can be two feet and your body (use your knees or chest to help with stability) supported by the stepladder. Ensure a handhold is available to steady yourself before and after. (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/work-at-height/myths.htm>)



Why is this on our Manual Handling newsletter?

Although this may be a “working at height” issue, the fact that a lot of you may carry items (goods, equipment etc.) up and down ladders or other access equipment makes this relevant and whilst 2 hands may be required on the item, this is when you are stationary. Taking the 24 pack of deodorant off of the shelf, using your screwdriver or replacing the light bulb, you should have one hand free to be holding the hand rail when going up or down, before or after the job is done - this is the Manual Handling aspect.

If the load can't be carried in one hand safely, you must find another way!

You must take into account when planning how to ascend/ descend that you should not be carrying the load in two hands. We always stress the cumulative long term effect of poor manual handling techniques but if you fall from a height because you couldn't hold the rail then **you could be the damaged goods.**



Why Exercise is Good For Your Back

We always go on about how the hardest thing to do is change the manual handling habits we have got into over the years, and everyone keeps telling us why exercise is good for us. We have been preached at so we try to let you weigh up the reasons why we advise certain things – so here's a few more pointers to help you make up your minds and avoid a bad back.

- Fitness postpones fatigue, helping you avoid tired habits like not lifting correctly.
- When the muscles of your midsection (stomach and back) are toned, they work together to improve posture and support the whole area like a weight lifters belt or corset.
- Fit muscles have more power in reserve, giving greater control and a smoother motion during moving and handling.
- Exercise makes bones denser and stronger proven to help prevent and offset the effects of osteoporosis.
- With stretching, exercise increases flexibility so helping you use good postures for moving and handling.
- Exercise helps you lose weight and helps you stop smoking! Both are bad for backs.
- Exercise improves blood circulation, and so aids the recovery processes after hard work fatiguing muscles in your back.

And the coverall – always consult your doctor and/ or a fitness professional before starting a fitness programme.

Sermon over!



Competition: “You could use a knee to help you get **A BIT SILTY**”

Rearrange the letters in **BOLD CAPITALS** above to make sense of the sentence.

Email your answer to mail@getsettraining.co.uk by Friday April 3rd and one winner will get £20.00 in Marks and Spencers vouchers.



Congratulations!

Winner of January's £20.00 prize was Bryan Ballantyne of Innovia Films Ltd.

Correct Answer: A natural **ALIGNMENT** of the spine should be maintained when carrying out manual tasks.