

Manual Task Risk Assessment



The Manual task risk assessment should be completed for manual tasks where there is a potential for injury. The risk assessment team should be made up of the people who do the task, the Safety and Health Representative and the Supervisor/Line Manager. Assistance may be sought from the Health and Safety Advisor and the Senior Ergonomics Advisor. Taking photos will provide reference material for developing safe work procedures. For further information refer to the [Ergonomics website](#) or the [WorkSafe Code of Practice for Manual Tasks](#).

Risk Control Measures

The hierarchy of control refers to the preferred methods of risk control eg. Elimination is preferred. Examples are in the table below:

Type of Control	Example(s)
1. Eliminate	Stop polishing floors, deliver goods to point of use
2. Substitute	Reduce size/weight of cement bags or product purchased. Replace hand tools with power tools
3. Isolate	Isolate vibrating machinery from the user, for example by providing fully independent seating on mobile plant
4. Engineering	Purchase trolleys, redesign storage areas, purchase adjustable workstations
5. Administrative	Safe Work Procedure (store heavy items at waist height), training; reduce working hours; rotate tasks
6. Personal Protective Equipment	Anti-vibration gloves, steel-capped or shock-absorbent shoes

Hazardous Manual Tasks

Hazardous manual tasks mean there is a greater risk involved. These include:

- (a) manual tasks having any of the following characteristics:
 - i. forces exerted by the worker (eg lifting, lowering or carrying) or on the worker by an item, person or animal (eg restraining a dog);
 - ii. awkward postures (eg bending forwards, twisting or reaching);
 - iii. sustained postures (eg prolonged sitting or standing);
 - iv. repetitive movements (eg repeating an action frequently, without breaks);
 - v. vibration – whole-body (eg sitting in certain vehicles) and hand-arm (eg using certain powered tools);
- (b) manual tasks involving the handling of a person or an animal; or
- (c) manual tasks involving the handling of unstable or unbalanced loads or loads difficult to grasp or hold.

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Curtin University

Activity/Task		Developed by <i>(list team members)</i> :	
Location:	Date conducted: / /	Residual Risk Score:	Approved By <i>(Line Manager)</i> : Signature: _____ Date: / /

Risk factors to consider Does the task being assessed involve any of the following activity?	Risk Assessment Maximum foreseeable risk if controls fail				Current Risk Control Measures	Additional controls required? Yes/No	Residual Risk Assessment Anticipated risk with current and proposed controls in place		
	Yes	Consequence	Likelihood	Risk Score			Consequence	Likelihood	Risk Score
If Yes score risk using the H&S risk matrix.						Add to Action List at end of form.			
1 Actions and Postures									
Do the actions and posture involve:									
1.1 -Holding loads or arms away from the trunk									
1.2 -Reaching upwards and handling a load above shoulder height									
1.3 -Bending the back/neck forwards or handling below mid-thigh height									
1.4 -Twisting the back, neck or upper body									
1.5 -Sideways bending or load handling on one side									
1.6 -Long carrying distances									

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1.7	-Sudden jerky, rapid or unexpected movements								
1.8	-Awkward movements of hands or wrists ie. forwards, to the side or twisting, wringing								
1.9	-Reaching behind or over reaching in any other direction								
1.10	-Crawling, kneeling, crouching, squatting, lying or semi-lying								
1.11	-Maintaining the same posture for long periods								
1.12	-Repeating similar movements or actions								
2	Forces and loads								
	<i>Are the forces and loads handled:</i>								
2.1	-Heavy								
2.2	-Bulky, large or awkward								
2.3	-Difficult or uncomfortable to grasp or hold								
2.4	-Unstable, unbalanced or unpredictable								
2.5	-Harmful or fragile								
2.6	-Handling a person or animal								
2.7	-Sudden, jerky, rapid or unexpected forces								
2.8	-Strenuous lifting, lowering or carrying								
2.9	-Strenuous pushing or pulling								
2.10	-Sustained application of force or grip								
3	Vibration								
	<i>Does the work involve:</i>								
	-use of machines or tool where the manufacturer's handbook warns of vibration								

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3.1	-use of a vehicle or tool not suitable for the environment or task								
	-Whole body vibration								
	-driving for long periods								
	-driving on rough roads								
3.2	-Hand arm vibration								
	-frequent use of hand powered tools or use for long periods								
	-using high grip forces or awkward postures when using power tools								
4	Working environment								
	Is there in the working environment:								
4.1	-constraints on postures or movement								
4.2	-rough or slippery floors								
4.3	-variations in levels or uneven ground								
4.4	-adverse climatic conditions e.g. cold, hot, wind, ice or humidity								
4.5	-poor lighting								
4.6	-narrow or obstructed thoroughfares								
4.7	-poor ventilation								
4.8	-distracting or loud noises								
5	Systems of work, work organisation and work practices								
	In the working environment do workers:								

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5.1	Job demands and control								
	-have difficulty in maintaining levels of physical work								
	-require high levels of concentration								
5.2	Task design								
	-undertake a flow of work that does not minimize handling, repetitive movement or sustained postures								
5.3	Work load								
	-have performance monitored frequently								
	-have bonus or incentive schemes, which may cause unsafe work rates								
	-experience lack of control over work rate or demands								
5.4	Task duration, frequency and variety								
	-find activities to be too long, too fast or too frequent to maintain								
	-experience inadequate activity variation or inadequate task breaks								
5.5	Pace of work and time constraints								
	-frequently need to meet tight deadlines								
5.6	Peak demand								
	-experience sudden changes in workload e.g. seasonal changes								
5.7	-undertake long or extended work hours or shifts								

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5.8	-adequate resource support in the workplace (time, human & physical)								
6	Worker characteristics								
	Does the job:								
6.1	-involve workers with physical limitations or special needs								
	-involve young or older persons								
6.2	-involve workers who are pregnant or who have recently given birth								
6.3	-require special skills, capabilities or knowledge								
6.4	-require protective equipment or clothing that is limiting								
6.5	-involve workers with language or cultural barriers								
6.6	-involve repetitive movement								

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What next?

If you have residual risk ratings of medium, high or extreme further review of the task is needed. There may be a need for more detailed assessment e.g. ergonomic, noise, vibration or thermal stress assessment. Contact your area's Health and Safety Advisor and/or the Senior Ergonomics Advisor.

If the residual risk rating is low, and there are no suggested actions or additional control, continue to monitor and review to ensure risk rating remains low.

The assessment should be reviewed if the task, equipment or environment changes or as part of regular annual overall risk review.

If hazards are identified they should be reported through the online reporting system.

Risk Score

What is the highest risk score from the initial risk assessment?	
What is the highest residual risk assessment score? (This the overall risk rating for the task to add to the risk register)	

Action List

FURTHER RISK CONTROLS REQUIRED		
Control	Person Responsible	Date Due By:
<i>Eg. Trolley to be purchased for moving boxes.</i>	<i>e.g. John Smith</i>	
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Once the assessment has been completed it should be area approved by the line manager and saved in the local area document management system. The assessment can be used for training new staff as to the hazards associated with the manual task.

Manual Task Risk Assessment

Health & Safety Risk Matrix

DETERMINING THE RISK LEVEL: Risk Level = Consequence Level x Likelihood Level

Maximum Foreseeable Exposure: For each risk, select the expected Consequence Level and the expected Likelihood Level assuming controls are either not in place or controls fail.

Residual Risk Exposure: For each risk, select the expected Consequence Level and the expected Likelihood Level given the type and effectiveness of the controls that are in place.

Risk Response: Apply the appropriate response based on the assessed Risk Level.

IMPACTS		LIKELIHOOD DESCRIPTION					
		LIKELIHOOD	The event may occur only in exceptional circumstances	Not expected but the event may occur at some time	The event could occur at some time	The event will probably occur in most circumstances	The event is expected to occur or has occurred and is continuing to impact
CONSEQUENCE DESCRIPTION	Health and Safety	Likelihood Level					
		Rare	Unlikely	Possible	Likely	Almost Certain	
	Fatality Permanent Total Disability	Critical				Extreme	
	Significant/extensive injury or illness. Permanent Partial Disability	Major			High		
	Serious injury or illness. Lost time injury >10 days	Moderate		Medium			
	Injury or illness requiring medical treatment Lost time injury <10 days	Minor	Low				
	Injury or illness requiring First Aid treatment No lost time injury days	Insignificant					

RISK MANAGEMENT ACTION	
RISK LEVEL	RESPONSE
Extreme	Immediate action required to reduce exposure. A detailed mitigation plan must be developed, implemented and monitored by senior management to reduce the risk to as low as reasonably practicable.
High	A mitigation plan shall be developed and authorised by area manager or supervisor to reduce the risk to as low as reasonably practicable. The effectiveness of risk control strategies shall be monitored and reported to management and relevant committee.
Medium	A mitigation plan shall be developed. Control strategies are implemented and periodically monitored.
Low	Manage by documented routine processes and procedures, monitor periodically to determine situation changes which may affect the risk