

# Toolbox Talk: Manual Handling for Window Cleaners

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## Purpose

To ensure operatives understand the risks associated with lifting, carrying and moving equipment and materials during window cleaning and exterior cleaning work.

## Legal Duty

Under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, employers must avoid hazardous manual handling where possible, assess risks and reduce the risk of injury to workers.

## Why This Matters

Manual handling injuries are among the most common workplace injuries in the UK. Window cleaners frequently move ladders, poles, hose reels, water containers, buckets and other equipment.

## Common Manual Handling Risks

- Lifting heavy water containers or equipment
- Carrying ladders or long poles
- Repetitive movements during work
- Twisting while lifting
- Carrying equipment across uneven ground

## Safe Lifting Techniques

- Plan the lift before starting
- Keep the load close to your body
- Bend your knees, not your back
- Avoid twisting while lifting
- Maintain a firm grip
- Ask for help if a load is too heavy

## Reducing Risk

- Use mechanical aids such as trolleys where possible
- Break loads into smaller parts
- Organise equipment properly in vehicles
- Take regular breaks for repetitive tasks



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## **WCA Member Disclaimer**

This document is provided by the Window Cleaners Association (WCA) as general safety guidance for members. It does not replace workplace risk assessments, manual handling training or professional health and safety advice. Employers remain responsible for ensuring compliance with current UK health and safety legislation and guidance from the Health and Safety Executive.

## **Recommended HSE Sources**

HSE – Manual handling at work: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/manual-handling.htm>  
HSE – Manual Handling Operations Regulations: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/manual-handling-law.htm>