

Automotive service and repair industry

Manual tasks

Manual tasks can cause injury if they involve:

- high force (e.g. lifting a car bonnet)
- bad postures (e.g. lying in a small car boot to do welding)
- static postures (e.g. sitting or standing in one position for long periods)
- repetitive movement (e.g. using a spanner repetitively).

To decrease the likelihood of injuries from manual tasks, the harmful task should be eliminated completely (wherever possible). This is not always possible, so changes need to be made to the task to reduce the risk of injury.

Solutions to prevent or minimise the risk of injuries

Where a **high force** is involved:

- use suitable mechanical aids for moving heavy items (e.g. trolleys, caster systems, hoists, porta power)
- maintain mechanical aids to ensure they work properly
- use pumps or taps on drums of thinners so they do not have to be lifted regularly
- use team lifting, but only if all people involved have been trained in team lifting techniques.

Where **bad postures** are involved:

- store heavier items on middle racks (at waist level) and lighter items on high and low racks
- adjust the height of what is being worked on, or raise or lower the person to minimise bending and reaching
- provide a mechanics creeper to make low work easier.

Where **static postures** are involved:

- provide height-adjustable stools that allow people to change their posture when necessary
- install a horizontal bar at the bottom of workbenches for foot support
- install anti-fatigue matting on hard floor surfaces, where possible
- encourage workers to take short breaks and organise work so that workers have to occasionally get up and move.

Where **repetitive movements** are involved:

- use machines to reduce the need for people to do repetitive tasks (e.g. using electric or air tools)
- rotate people between repetitive and non-repetitive tasks
- train workers in all the tasks they do to make sure they are doing them in the safest and most efficient way.

For further information on manual tasks issues, call 1300 369 915 or visit www.deir.qld.gov.au.

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