

Center of gravity & base of support



Line of gravity: a vertical line through the relevant center of gravity. **Base of support:** the support area between and beneath the feet, shown here from the side.

Markers are schematic, not measured. Actual positions depend on body posture and the mass and position of the load; a closer load does not guarantee safety.

5 practical lifting tips

Make the task manageable before focusing on technique.



A Standing

B Held away

C Held close

01 Plan before you lift

Clear the route. Decide where the item will land. Use a cart, smaller loads, or help when needed.

02 Bring the load closer

Get a secure grip. Keep the item near you rather than reaching out with it.

03 Find a stable stance

Set your feet comfortably apart. Make room to step as you move.

04 Move with control

Let your hips and knees share the movement. A deep squat or rigidly straight back is not always necessary.

05 Step to turn

Reposition your feet when changing direction. Set the item down before making a precise adjustment.

Helping a person move? Patient transfers need an individual assessment, appropriate equipment, and trained assistance. These tips are not a patient-transfer protocol.

No technique guarantees injury prevention. Follow any existing medical or surgical restrictions.

Sources: HSE, Good handling technique; OSHA, Safe patient handling. Reviewed October 26, 2026.