



DO YOU EVEN LIFT?

BY SARA THISTLE, LAT, ATC, CSCS

Lifting – or more simply, picking something up – is so woven into daily life that it’s rarely given much thought. It’s something we expect to do without hesitation: picking up a child, picking up the groceries, picking up dropped keys or tools after a clumsy moment. The movement is so foundational that it becomes background noise in the rhythm of a normal day. But lifting often becomes noticeable when one of two things happens:

- 1 We're engaging in intentional strength training, like lifting weights. Cue the classic, "I lift things up and put them down" phrase.
- 2 We begin to lose ease, strength, or confidence in the ability to lift like we used to.

A DIFFERENT WEIGHT

When either of these two considerations occurs, the simplicity of lifting takes on a different weight – both physically and mentally 😊. A jug of milk becomes awkward. Your child reaches up, but letting them hug your knees is the best we can manage that day. A laundry basket sits on the couch longer than usual because lifting it now requires planning, effort, and maybe a wince.

Like so many daily movements, we tend not to appreciate the ability to lift until it no longer feels automatic.

But there’s good news tucked in here. While some things remain out of our control, lifting is something we can often improve (and protect) with intentional effort. Strength, posture, and habit all play a role. What we do throughout the day, *both at home and at work*, adds up to how we move and whether we move well.

PREVENTION FAVORS THE PREPARED

This month, we turn our attention to **Proper Lifting Posture**, the second “P” in our PREPARED framework. And for those navigating discomfort or limitation when lifting, it’s rarely just about cues or quick feedback to remedy painful lifting or limited range. It’s a bigger picture; a picture that includes mechanics, consistency, fatigue, and function. Stick around for the rest of May’s newsletters for different aspects of the concept!

What’s our ultimate goal, though? To lift without hesitation. To pick something up without bracing for pain or mentally rehearsing the movement. It may seem like a small thing, until it isn’t. And the work we put in to lift well today helps make sure we’re still lifting with ease tomorrow.



STEPS TO A SAFE LIFT



1. Widen your feet apart to approximately shoulder width.
2. Evenly distribute your weight between both feet.
3. Keeping your back straight and chest up, sit back into a squat like you are sitting down onto a low stool or bench behind you.
4. Try to keep your knees in line with your toes, tighten your core, and use the large muscles of the hip (the glutes!) to bring yourself back to a standing position.

Sara Thistle, LAT, ATC, CSCS || Sara is an Industrial Athletic Trainer and also works in Operations, Management, and Continuing Education for Work Right. When she isn't working on logistics, program development, or supporting her onsite clinicians, she is probably buried in a good book, lifting weights, or bothering her cats, Tsuki and Mr. Todd.

Work Right is changing the way that companies view workplace hazards. Our focus is on educating the workforce to prevent injury. We provide access to Injury Prevention Specialists in the workplace to address the early signs of discomfort. We are changing the industry one company at a time by helping one person at a time.

