



Outdoor Ergonomics



Toolbox Talks are intended to facilitate health and safety discussions. Find more Toolbox Talks on the [Occupational Safety web page](#).

General Information

Farming, landscaping, outdoor work involves physical labor, and over time, can take a toll on the body. Due to the labor-intensive nature of working outside, ergonomics can be of great value in reducing the risk of injuries. Let us look at how to protect workers from injuries by looking at ergonomics.

Tools

- Avoid using tools or other items above shoulder height.
- Cover handles with slip resistant materials (plastic or rubber).
- Do not overexert when shoveling. Maintain your back in an upright position, lifting with the legs and not your back.

Lifting

- Keep loads between hand and shoulder level.
- Avoid lifts from the floor or over shoulder level.
- Put handles on containers whenever possible.
- Redesign loads so that they can be lifted close to the body.
- When carrying objects more than a few feet, use a dolly or utility cart.
- Try to use both arms – your back will be less likely to strain if you carry two half containers in each arm, rather than a full container with only one.



Positioning

- Sit up with a straight back, keeping the shoulders back. Knees should be even with or slightly higher than your hips. Keep feet flat on the floor.
- Try to avoid sitting in the same position for more than 30 minutes.
- Allow workers to do different types of work (change from standing to sitting to walking).
- Redesign work to avoid stooping. If stooping is required, integrate other alternative tasks that require sitting or walking.

Discussion Date:

Supervisor:

Participants:
