

# PROTECT YOUR BACK

## Lifting Tips – Building a Bridge

When you bend over at the waist to lift, you add the weight of your upper body to the lift. You can reduce this problem by “building a bridge” to support your upper body and add strength and balance to the lift.

### How do you “build a bridge?”

- If you can lift with one hand, place your free hand against a nearby solid object and push up against it to stand up.
- If you aren’t close to a solid object, stand in a power stance with one leg slightly forward. Place your free hand just above your knee and push down against your leg as you rise.
- When both hands must be used to lift the object, push the bottom of the object against your thigh on your forward leg as you stand up. Increases balance and power when lifting.



### How does bridging work?

“Bridging” means positioning your body to provide additional support when you lift. This adds strength and balance.

- The demands of any lift are determined by the position of the back.
- By “building a bridge” your arm supports your upper body weight and takes it out of the lift.
- If you can’t use your arm to build a bridge, simply put one leg forward when you lift. Bend at your hips and knees. When you feel your weight on your forward leg, you have shifted the weight of your upper body onto your leg rather than your lower back. You just built a bridge!

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