# Transporting Loads Using a Lift Table

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH | Environmental Health and Safety

## What is a Lift Table?

A **(Manual) Lift Table** is a load lifting device with a material-holding platform that uses a scissor mechanism to lift, lower, and adjust large loads across short distances in industrial applications. A strong and rigid foundation frame with 4 wheels at the base and a handle on one end supports the load platform. The lift table also incorporates hydraulically powered scissor legs for easy operation.

## What are the most common hazards?

- Fingers and hands being caught in or between the lift table's fixed and moving parts
- Toes, feet and lower legs being bumped, crushed or run over by the lift table
- Possibility of creating a trip hazard when not stored properly after use
- Risk of injuring nearby workers by driving into them due to obstructed vision
- Risk of raised, unsecured loads falling and injuring nearby workers


## How to Use a Lift Table Safely

- Before using the lift table, fully inspect it for any damage to confirm it is in good working condition
- Position the lift table near the load, then use the foot pedal to hydraulically raise the table to the load's height to transfer goods onto the platform. Use the easy-release lever to lower the table for storage after task completion.
- Lower the load before moving the table lift. Do not move the lift table when it is in a raised position with a load, as the load could fall down
- Do not use the lift table on a slope or an inclined surface, as the load may become unstable and uncontrollable
- Stay within load capacity of the lift table and if needed break large loads into smaller ones
- Stay clear of the area under the lift table and keep limbs clear of pinch points
- Use the lift table only for its intended purpose. Do not lift or carry people.
- Check that other workers are not in the way when moving the lift table.
- Keep observing the condition of the load during transport. STOP operating if load is unstable and unbalanced.
- Wear the appropriate personal protective equipment for the task (e.g., safety footwear)

# Transporting Loads Using a Lift Table

## Factors to consider when selecting a lift table

- **Platform Size** – The platform is the surface on which goods are raised or lowered. The platform size and consequently the lift table size will decide the load capacity. Larger lift table dimensions imply a greater load capacity, support for larger goods, and more stability due to a wider base.

- **Lifting Height** –The lifting height depends on the platform's minimum and maximum heights. The minimum height allows easy loading of massive workpieces as the user can push the load onto the table without having to carry it as some lifting tables are at floor level. The maximum height normally ranges from 40 to 400 inches. A lift table must be selected based on the task's height requirements, the worksite's maximum clearance level, and the user's comfort level working at various heights.

- **Load Capacity** - The load capacity of a lift table is the maximum weight that it can safely support. Lift tables typically have a load capacity ranging from 300 - 4000 lbs. The manufacturer always specifies the load capacity of a lift table on the capacity plate attached to the table's body. Load capacity must be considered when selecting a lift table that can support the expected load for a task.

- **Wheel Type** – The wheel type should work well on the ground surface most frequently encountered during a project. Solid wheels are fine for rolling items across flat and stable surfaces. Mold-on rubber is a good choice for paved surfaces. Inflatable wheels are much better suited for moving loads up and down curbs and other obstacles. Pneumatic tires offer great shock absorption for uneven surfaces.

- **Manoeuvrability**– The four wheels are added by design to increase manoeuvrability. The two back wheels are designed with 360-degree swivel functionality for easy transit at sharp angles and getting around corners; therefore, test the table for ease of pivoting and tendency for smooth and fluid mobility if the work site has many bends.


## What are the weight and height clearance limitations of an average Lift Table?

| Type of Lift Table | Maximum Load | Min/Max Lift Height | Lifting Height | Table Size |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ELT 1650N Lift Table | 1650 lbs | 16 / 40 in | 24 in | 40x20 in |

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## Safe Use of Lift Tables – Path of Transport

### Aisle Conditions

- Keep aisles clear of clutter/make sure path is clear and free of unnecessary objects
- Aisles should be at least 3ft for the 4-wheeled lift table in width (wide enough to allow the table to move freely through the pathway, without hitting the walls or any side obstacles)
- Corners should accommodate the turning radius of the lift table without stopping and starting

### Floor Conditions

- Keep floors in good condition so that the surface is uniform and even, allowing for easy movement.
- Ensure floors are clean, free of debris, dirt, dust, miscellaneous liquids, or spills

### Worksite Surroundings

- Check there is a minimum of 0.5 m space on all sides of the lift table at the worksite
- Before entering a tight space, ensure the lift table size (including handle height) is smaller than other low hanging objects or nearby surroundings when the lift table platform is fully lowered.
- Before raising the load, check the platform maximum lifting height plus the load height is within the workspace maximum clearance height to avoid load damage and injuries

### Ramps

- If there are many ramps on site, install a hand or foot brake on the lift table to assist the operator in controlling the table when moving while platform is lowered.
- When going down a ramp, descend slowly and ask for assistance controlling the lift table


### Reminders

- Review manufacturer's instructions for operating the table lift vertically and while in transit.
- Observe weight limits and check that loads are secure
- Report any equipment defects or maintenance needs
- Check for hazards unique to each worksite before using the table lift

# Transporting Loads Using a Lift Table

Use this page to list any specific points, reminders or highlights noted during the training related to the tasks involved (if applicable).

**Date:** _____

**Training given by:** _____

Operational Reminders:

- _____
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Safety Reminders:

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# Transporting Loads Using a Lift Table

Use this page to mark attendance at the training.

Date: _____

Training given by: _____

| Attendee Name (please print) | Signature |
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