

Quick Tips

WISHA Lifting Calculator

The Lifting Calculator was developed by the Washington State Department of Labor and Industry as a tool to evaluate lifting and lowering tasks. The Lifting Calculator is based on the same research as the NIOSH Lifting Equation and is best used to identify the highest risk lifts in a job or facility. This specific tool focuses on heavy, frequent, or awkward lifting tasks and uses the following lifting variables to score a task:

- Horizontal and vertical position of hands from the front of the toes at the start of the lift or lower
- Duration and frequency of lifting
- Whether there is twisting of $> 45^\circ$ while lifting



The reason we like this tool is:

- It is formatted in a simple, one-page layout that is easy to use
- It uses less variables than the NIOSH lifting equation
- It focuses on the start of the lift, which is typically where the highest risk exists
- It has 2 possible outcomes, either the lift is ok or not (removes ambiguity of a yellow or moderate score—what are you supposed to do with a yellow anyway?)
- It also provides guidance on the bottom of the page on which tasks to analyze for jobs that involve numerous different lifting scenarios (weights, location, etc.)

There, of course, are some limitations to using the tool, but overall it is a good method to initially assess a job for ergonomic hazards associated with lifting. Please contact us if you'd like to learn more about the WISHA Lifting Calculator and its effective use as a risk assessment tool in the workplace.