General Lifting Guidelines: Plan Ahead

Check the pathway you are taking:
       Any obstacles?
       Slip hazards?
       Is the walking surface solid?
       Are doors open?

Visualize the lift in your mind:
       Posture,
       Coupling points,
       One- or two-person job?

Test the load:
       Too heavy or bulky for one person?
       Is object stable and balanced?
       Can it be divided into smaller loads?

Are mechanical aids available?
       Dolly,
       Hand truck,
       Cart, etc.

Any twisting involved?

Avoid loads that are too heavy:
       Get help.
       Divide the load.
       Use mechanical aids.

> **TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE DISTANCE OF OBJECT FROM BODY AND THE LOCATION OF THE FINAL RESTING POINT.**

Establish proper footing:
       Feet at least shoulder width apart.
       One foot slightly ahead of the other (karate stance).
       Firm footing (surface condition, type of footwear).
       Are you positioned as close to the object as possible?

Bend at the knees rather than at the waist:
       Use the larger leg muscles to give strength to the lift.
       Maintain neutral posture.
       Lead with the head and torso.
       Sustain smooth continuous motion.
       Do not rush the lift.
       Use the strong leg muscles.
       Tighten your abdomen (contract stomach muscles).

From the Safety

Keep the load as close as possible to the body:
> Avoid a negative "leverage."
> Put yourself at a biomechanical advantage.

Avoid twisting:
> Move your feet – take small steps and pivot instead.
> Reposition the object if possible.

Push rather than pull the load:
> Let your large leg muscles do most of the work.
> Stay close to the load.
> Don't lean forward.
> Use both arms.
> Keep your stomach muscles tight.

If you must pull the load:
> Face the load squarely (one foot at least 12" in front of the other)
> Keep your back in neutral position.
> Bend your knees slightly.
> Pull with one smooth motion.

Avoid lifting outside the "safe zone":
> Don't lift above the shoulders.
> Don't lift from below the knees.
> Don't reach over an object to lift a load; instead,
>> Move the object, or
>> Go around it.

Minimize the frequency of lifts. Consider:
> The weight of the object.

From the Safety