

# GENERAL SAFETY

The following sections provide general guidelines for basic safety situations. This chapter covers the following topics:

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## Americans with Disabilities Act

UT Arlington complies with the requirements and guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This means that new facilities and renovations to existing facilities are designed by the Office of Facilities Management to provide accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Handicapped parking and wheelchair ramps must remain accessible at all times. Do not block these areas or tamper with other accessibility equipment. In addition, do not remove Braille tabs on elevator buttons or other signs.

Report accessibility violations such as blocked wheelchair ramps and blocked disabled person parking to the Environmental Health & Safety Office (EH&S) or the University Police Department (UTAPD).

Contact the [Office of Facilities Management](#) (817-272-3571) or the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#) (817-272-3364) for more information on accommodating handicapped individuals or making your workplace more accessible.

## Dress Code

Dress in a manner that does not impair safety. Loose clothing, long hair, lanyards, neckties, dangle jewelry, and sandals may be dangerous around moving equipment.

Always wear clothing that is appropriate for your job type. Refer to the chapters on Personal Protective Equipment and Office Safety for more information.

## Hearing Conservation Program

Excessive noise levels may permanently or temporarily damage a person's hearing. Whenever possible, employees should reduce noise levels to an acceptable level. The table on the following page outlines OSHA limits for acceptable noise exposure, indicated as decibels (dB):

Duration/Time (Hours)	Sound Level in dB (Time Weighted Average)
16	85
8	90
4	95
2	100
1	105
1/2	110
1/4 or less	115

**\* Hearing loss can be permanent; wear protective equipment when noise levels are high.**

Before using personal protective equipment (PPE), such as ear plugs or muffs to reduce noise exposure, try to reduce noise levels by changing work procedures. Engineering Controls to reduce noise levels will minimize the need for PPE. The following maintenance practices can also reduce noise levels:

- When possible, move your work area away from the noise source.
- Replacing worn or loose machine parts
- Performing high-noise operations during hours when people are less likely to be affected
- Maintaining and lubricating equipment to eliminate rattles and squeaks

**The following illustrates various noise levels:**

WHISPER\*\*\*\*10 dB  
 QUIET OFFICE\*\*\*\*\* 30 dB  
 STREET SOUNDS\*\*\*\*\*70 dB  
 FACTORY\*\*\*\*\*80-90 dB  
 SANDER\*\*\*\*\*85 dB  
 SUBWAY\*\*\*\*\* 90 dB  
 PNEUMATIC DRILL\*\*\*\*\*100 dB  
 ARTILLERY/CARHORN\*\*\*\*\*120 dB

**Engineering controls, such as the following, can also reduce noise levels:**

- Replacing noisy materials
- Using large, low speed fans
- Considering the noise level of new equipment or processes before purchasing or implementing
- Placing heavy machines on rubber mountings
- Using sound-absorbing acoustical tiles or baffles
- Placing noisy machinery or operations in a separate area or room
- Enclosing noisy conveyors

Areas that may require hearing protection include machine shops, the power plant, etc. Observe all warning signs and wear hearing protection whenever necessary. Do not interfere with, remove, or modify noise abatement equipment. Keep all equipment properly maintained, and report any malfunctions immediately.

Refer to the chapter on Personal Protective Equipment for more information on hearing protection, as well as UT Arlington’s [Hearing Conservation Manual](#). Direct all questions regarding hearing conservation to the Environmental Health & Safety Office. When requested and necessary, EH&S monitors noise levels.

## Heat Stress

People may suffer from heat stress during hot, humid conditions. Because the climate at UT Arlington is conducive to heat stress, people should take preventive measures to reduce their risk. To prevent heat stress, employees should limit strenuous physical activity during the hottest portion of the day, wear a brimmed hat when in the sun, take frequent breaks, and drink plenty of fluids.

Heat stress occurs in two forms: heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

## Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is usually caused by strenuous physical activity and hot, humid conditions. Because heat exhaustion is the body's response to insufficient water and salt, it should be treated as quickly as possible.

### **Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion include the following:**

- Exhaustion and restlessness
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Cold, clammy, moist skin
- Pale face
- Cramps in abdomen and lower limbs
- Fast, shallow breathing
- Rapid, weak pulse
- Falling body temperature
- Fainting

### **Take the following steps to administer first aid for heat exhaustion:**

1. Have the victim lie down in a cool or shaded place.
2. If the victim is conscious, have him/her slowly sip cool water.
3. If the victim is sweating profusely, have him or her sip cool water that contains one teaspoon of table salt per pint of water.
4. If the victim is unconscious or is conscious but does not improve, seek medical assistance as soon as possible.

## Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is usually caused by exposure to extreme heat and humidity and/or a feverish illness. Heat stroke occurs when the body can no longer control its temperature by sweating. Heat stroke is extremely dangerous and may be fatal if not treated immediately.

### **The signs and symptoms of heat stroke include the following:**

- Hot, dry skin
- Headache
- Dizziness
- High temperature
- Strong pulse
- Noisy breathing
- Unconsciousness

**Immediately take the following steps to administer first aid for heat stroke:**

1. If possible, move the victim to a cool place.
2. Seek medical attention as soon as possible.
3. Remove the victim's clothing.
4. If the victim is conscious, place him in a half-sitting position and support the head and shoulders.
5. If the victim is unconscious, place him on the side with the head facing sideways.
6. Fan the victim and sponge the body with cool water.

## **Lifting**

All employees must use proper lifting techniques to avoid injury when lifting heavy objects. In general, employees should seek assistance when lifting objects that weigh 50 pounds or more. Use your good judgment to determine if you need assistance. A dolly, cart, or other lifting device should be used when moving heavy objects.

The back supports the weight of the entire upper body. When you lift objects or move heavy loads, your back has to support even more weight. If you exceed your body's natural limits, your back cannot support both your body and the extra load. The excess, unsupported pressure is transferred to the lower back, where injury is imminent. By using the muscles in your arms and legs and exercising proper lifting techniques, you can move loads safely and protect your back from possible injury.

**Follow these guidelines to help avoid back injuries:**

- Avoid moving objects manually.
- Plan jobs and arrange work areas so that heavy items may be moved mechanically.
- Keep in good physical condition. If you are not used to lifting and vigorous exercise, do not attempt difficult lifting tasks.
- Think before you act. Use proper lifting techniques and lifting aides such as dollies, etc.
- Get help if you need it, team lifts can help reduce back injuries

**When lifting heavy objects, follow these steps: (for additional instruction please refer to the [Back Injury Prevention Training](#))**

1. Test the object's weight before handling it. If it seems too heavy or bulky, get assistance.
2. Face the object, place one foot behind the object and one foot along its side.
3. Bend at the knees.
4. Get a firm, balanced grip on the object. Use the palms of your hands, and use gloves if necessary.
5. Keep the object as close to your body as possible. (Pull the load in close before lifting.)
6. Lift by straightening your legs and slightly unbending your back.
  - If the object is too heavy or bulky, get help.
  - Do not twist the back or bend sideways.
  - Do not perform awkward lifts.
  - Do not lift objects at arm's length.
7. When moving objects, proceed with caution through doors and around corners.