

OHCOW

PHYSICAL DEMANDS

DESCRIPTION HANDBOOK

David Mijatovic, ccpe

Occupational Health
Clinics for Ontario
Workers Inc.



Centres de santé
des travailleurs (ses)
de l'Ontario Inc.

ABOUT OHCOW

The Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW) was established in 1989 by the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) and is funded through the Ontario Ministry of Labour (MOL). The first clinic opened in 1989 in Hamilton, with subsequent clinics opened in Toronto, Windsor, Sudbury, Sarnia, Thunder Bay and Ottawa.

OUR MISSION

The mission of OHCOW is to prevent occupational disease, injuries and illnesses, and to promote the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of all workers.



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OHCO
PHYSICAL DEMANDS
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OHCO | **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**
DESCRIPTION HANDBOOK

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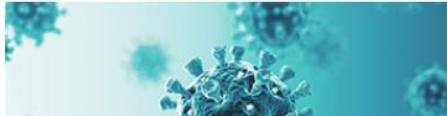
PDD toolkit



Quick Links

- OH-PODS OH COW PODCASTS
- ANNUAL REPORT

Covid-19



Events Calendar



New Search

If you are not happy with the results below please do another search

SEARCH



Physical Demands Description (PDD) Toolkit*

BLOG POST

A Handbook and Template for Completing Physical Demands Descriptions A document that objectively captures and describes the physical demands that are required to perform a particular job.



Physical Demands Description (PDD) Toolkit

PAGE

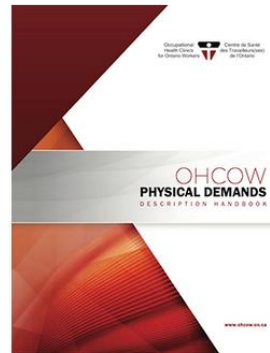
Who Uses PDD Information A PDD can...

scroll down



PDD Handbook

The **PDD Handbook** offers all the background information presented above along with the printed versions of the required forms for completing a PDD.



[Physical Demands Description Handbook](#)

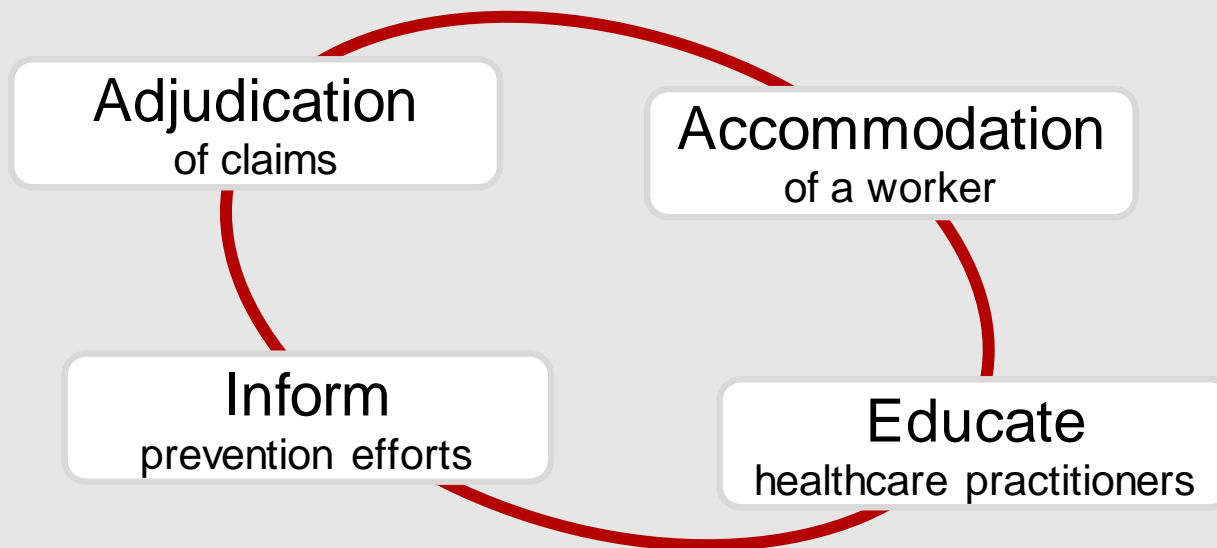
PDD Tool

The Excel-based **PDD Tool** is meant to accompany the Handbook as it provides dynamic forms for completing PDDs.

DOWNLOAD THE TOOL

What is a PDD

A Physical Demands Description is simply a detailed, objective description of the physical aspects of a particular job.



What is a PDD

A Physical Demands Description is simply a detailed, objective description of the physical aspects of a particular job.

How PDD Information is Used

Adjudication of Claims – PDDs can be used by insurance providers (particularly the WSIB in Ontario) to assist in the determination or work-relatedness or cause of injury in the adjudication of claims. There are limitations to the use of information for this purpose.

Accommodation of a Worker – PDDs can be used as a reference to provide employers with specific information about jobs to quickly and effectively accommodate workers in jobs that are within prescribed physical restrictions by a healthcare practitioner. This should not be mistaken for simply matching restrictions and PDDs. A PDD does not eliminate the possibility of accommodating a restriction through modifications to the current process.

Educate Treating Healthcare Practitioners – PDDs can provide treating healthcare practitioners with an accurate understanding of the tasks their patients are required to perform in their occupations. This can help in creating an effective treatment plan that considers the potential impact of work and may help them return to work more quickly, but also safely.

Inform Prevention Efforts – PDDs can be used to guide further investigation into potential hazards or risk of injury. Workplaces can use the PDD observation and data collection process to flag potential hazardous tasks that require analysis or further investigation. It may result in ergonomic improvements such as process modifications or design changes that prevent future injuries.

Cautioned Uses of PDD Information

Job Matching to Restrictions – Using PDDs as the sole source of information for matching workers with restrictions to potential jobs is very problematic. There may be ways that a job or specific tasks could be modified in order to accommodate a worker with an impairment that are not captured in a PDD. It should be used as only one source of information in a larger process.

Risk Assessment – PDDs themselves are not an assessment or measure of risk. They can inform where further investigation is needed, but should not be used as a determination of risk.

Body Postures – PDDs *cannot* be used to identify specific body postures for a task. Every worker is different and therefore it is impossible to document a common posture such as angle of back flexion or shoulder abduction. Stature, arm length, etc. can all have an impact on a worker's posture.



Is there any potential advantage to our PDD template?

- More detailed, quantitative documentation
- Direct inputs into risk assessment tools
- Consistent documentation for all tasks
- Doesn't encourage the use of posture descriptors

Task based PDD

Job (1 week)

Task 11

2.5%

Task 10

2.5%

Task 9

2.5%

Task 8

5%

Task 7

7.5%

Task 6

7.5%

Task 5

7.5%

Task 4

10%

Task 1

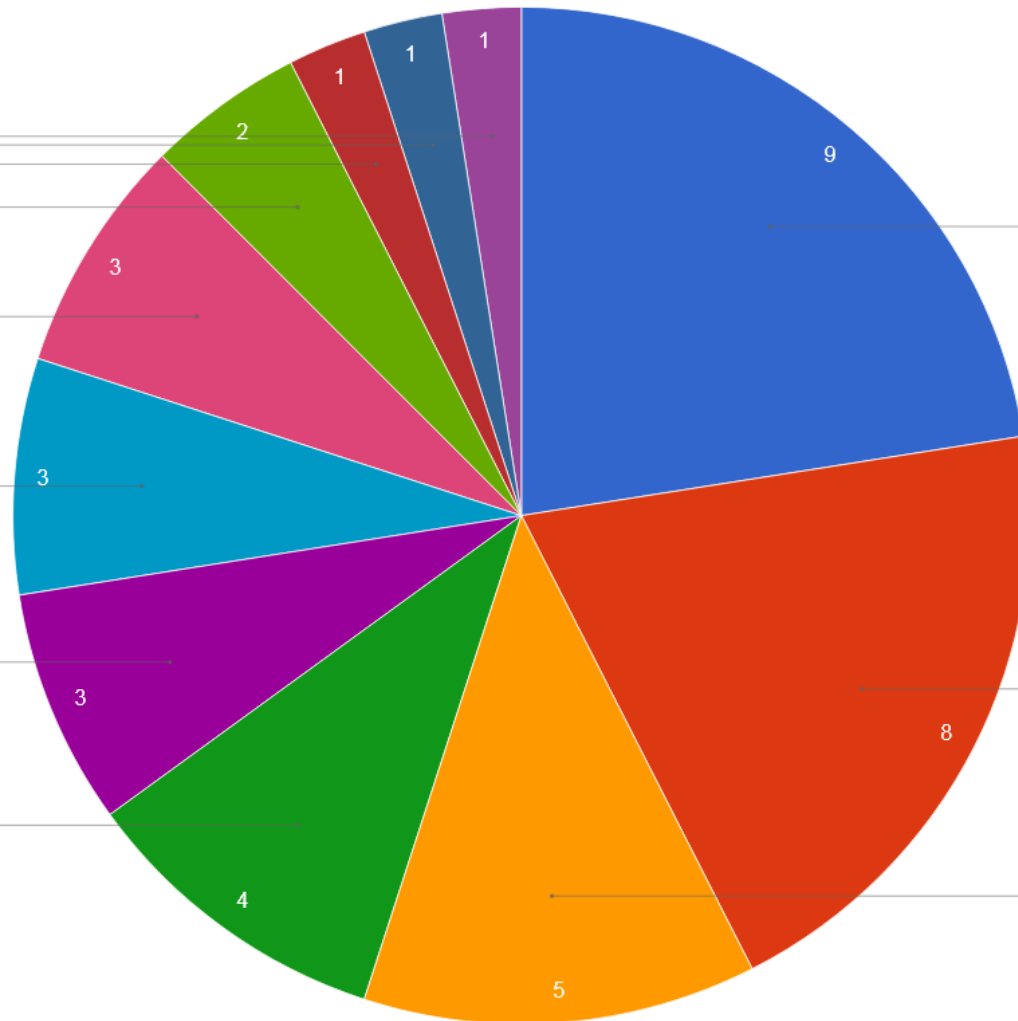
22.5%

Task 2

20%

Task 3

12.5%



THE PDD PROCESS



PREPARING TO CONDUCT A PDD

Determine where PDDs are required

List all Jobs	Existing PDD	Date completed	Up-to-date	Needs PDD	Comments	Date of new PDD
Reception				✓		
Inspector	✓	Jul 2004		✓		
Welder	✓	Jul 2004	✓			
Machinist	✓	May 2008	✓			
Team Leader				✓		
Salesperson				✓	Outside sales	
Accountant				✓		
Forklift Driver	✓	May 2008	✓		Route change	
Assembler 'c'				✓		
Mechanic				✓		
Painter	✓	Aug 2014	✓			

PREPARING TO CONDUCT A PDD

Determine who needs to be involved

COMMON PEOPLE INVOLVED

- ▶ Workers Performing the Job
- ▶ Supervisors
- ▶ Managers
- ▶ HR
- ▶ Union
- ▶ JHSC
- ▶ Maintenance

Determine who collects the data

Outside Consultant

- Check credentials and experience

Inside Staff

- With the right training, staff within your workplace could create quality PDDs

PREPARING TO CONDUCT A PDD



Applied Ergonomics

Volume 54, May 2016, Pages 33-40



Evaluating the ability of novices to identify and quantify physical demand elements following an introductory education session: A pilot study

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^a School of Kinesiology and Health Studies, Queen's University, Canada

^b Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers Inc., Ontario,

^c Department of Kinesiology, Faculty of Applied Health Sciences Waterloo, Kingston, Ontario, Canada

Highlights

- Students attended a 3-h introductory workshop on physical demands description.
- Participants were asked to identify and quantify physical demands in three case examples.
- Participants identified 80% of the physically demanding elements.
- Participants quantified key measures with more the 10% error from the criterion.
- Novices' have some limitations in their ability to accurately conduct PDDs.

PREPARING TO CONDUCT A PDD

Gather all necessary equipment

Outside Consultant

- They will have their own

Inside Staff

- May be possible to rent some equipment



Tape Measure ▶ Measure all heights, reaches and distances associated with tasks.



Camera ▶ Take pictures of each task as well as tools and working environment



Video Camera ▶ Record the overall job for task identification, frequency, etc



Force Gauge ▶ Measure push, pull forces



Note Pad ▶ Take additional notes or observations



Scale ▶ Weigh parts, tools and other objects



Stop Watch ▶ Time task or cycle length



Clip Board ▶ Hold paper or data collection sheets



Pen/Pencil ▶ Record measurements and notes



Other Tools: ▶ Dynamometer to estimate grip force
▶ Pinch Force Gauge to estimate pinch force

Force Gauge



PREPARING TO CONDUCT A PDD

Schedule data collection dates

CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ Are necessary people available?
- ▶ When is the highest workload?
- ▶ When is the lowest workload?
- ▶ Is there a difference in workload between days/shifts?
- ▶ Are there variations in staffing levels?
- ▶ Will all tasks be performed during observation and data collection?

OBSERVATION & DATA COLLECTION

Determine job purpose & the tasks

- Human Resource's job description or other documents

Verify job purpose & the tasks

- Verify through direct observation AND discussion with worker & supervisor

Quantify physical demands of each verified task

- Measure & document all physical aspects of each verified task...
- Force of push
- Distance of walk
- Reach distance to tool
- Weight carried
- Frequency of transfer
- Duration of task...

Classify essential & non-essential tasks *

- An important step

ESSENTIAL

Tasks or duties that are deemed to be very important, necessary or vital to the job or service. Other synonyms include: critical, fundamental, integral, crucial, indispensable or imperative.

NON-ESSENTIAL

Tasks or duties that are not an integral part of the job or service; they may be shared by other workers within the organization. Other synonyms include: peripheral, accessory, incidental, or supplementary.

There is little guidance on how to distinguish between essential duties and others. In one Tribunal decision, the word "essential" was defined as follows:

"Essential" means that which is "needed to make a thing what it is; very important; necessary" -Synonyms are "indispensable, requisite, vital." Thus, peripheral or incidental, non-core or non-essential aspects of a job are not pertinent to a determination under [s. 17(1)].^[36]

OHRC website

Job	Essential Function	Non-Essential Function
Cafeteria Worker	Serve customers	Unload supply truck
Auto Mechanic	Fix cars	Speak with customers
Receptionist	Answer incoming calls	Hand deliver phone messages
Airline Pilot	Land plane	Greet passengers
Teacher	Teach students	Play sports with students
Bus Driver	Drive bus	Clean trash from bus
Assembler	Assemble product	Sweep area

Job

**Task
(essential)**

Elements

- 1. 4.
- 2. 5.
- 3. 6.

**Task
(essential)**

Elements

- 1. 4.
- 2. 5.
- 3. 6.

**Task
(essential)**

Elements

- 1. 4.
- 2. 5.
- 3. 6.

**Task
(non-essential)**

Elements

- 1. 3.
- 2. 4.

**Task
(non-essential)**

Elements

- 1. 3.
- 2. 4.

MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUES



Weight

- Force gauge or scale
- Multiple measures should be average
- Also report maximum



Force

- Multiple measures should be average
- Smooth push/pull movements
- Report avg. & max force



Distance

- Height typically measured from the floor
- Reach measured from a physical barrier
- Start to end point of walk, carry, crawl, etc.



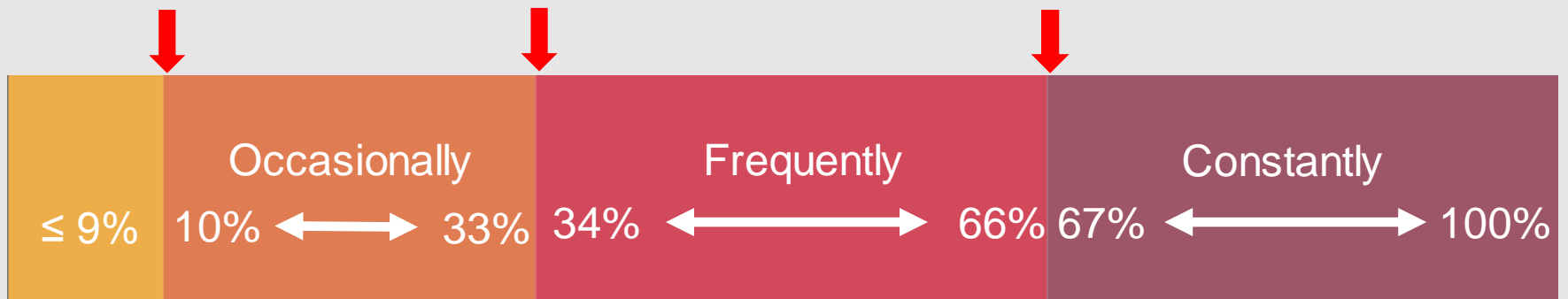
Frequency

- Count how many times task is completed
- Rate per min, hour, or shift
- Taking video is useful here



Duration

- Duration to complete a single task
- Use an average if it varies between task
- Taking video is useful here



Minimally

GRADING SYSTEM:

N	Not required	=	Activity is not performed
M	Minimal	=	0-10% of work day
O	Occasional	=	10-33% of work day
F	Frequent	=	34-66% of work day
C	Constant	=	67-100% of work day

FUNCTION	PHYSICAL DEMANDS					COMMENTS
	N	M	O	F	C	
Mobility						
Sitting		x				On most floors, will spend most of standing/walking – occasionally sit

I have also obtained a physical demands analysis (PDA) for your job from your employer. According to the PDA, you are required to lift above shoulder *minimally* at most, lift from waist to shoulder *occasionally* at most, and reach above shoulder *minimally*. Based on the PDA as well as your own description of your job, I am unable to establish significant overhead or repetitive shoulder activities compatible with a right shoulder injury.

MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUES



Distance – A tape measure will be used to collect the distances for heights, reaches and distances.

Height – Must be measured as an absolute value. This is most typically measured from the floor height. Depending on the work environment, there may be other structures that height could be measured from such as platforms, staircases, etc.

Reach – Must be measured based on the work environment, not the individual. All reach distances must be measured from a physical barrier such as a table or railing.

Distance – Measured from start point to end point. This could be for walking, carrying, crawling, etc.

MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUES

APPLICATIONS MANUAL FOR THE REVISED NIOSH LIFTING EQUATION

Thomas R. Waters, Ph.D.
Vern Putz-Anderson, Ph.D.
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Public Health Service
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
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Cincinnati, Ohio 45226

January 1994

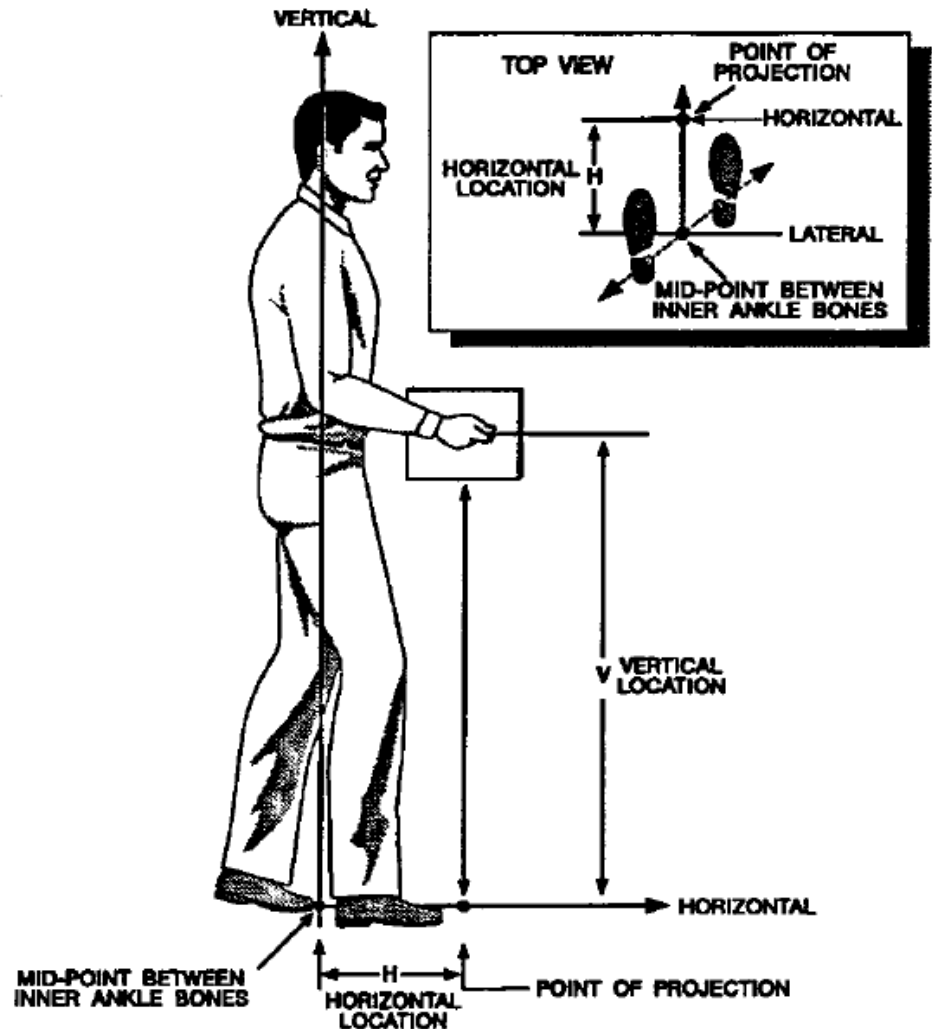


Figure 1 Graphic Representation of Hand Location

MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUES

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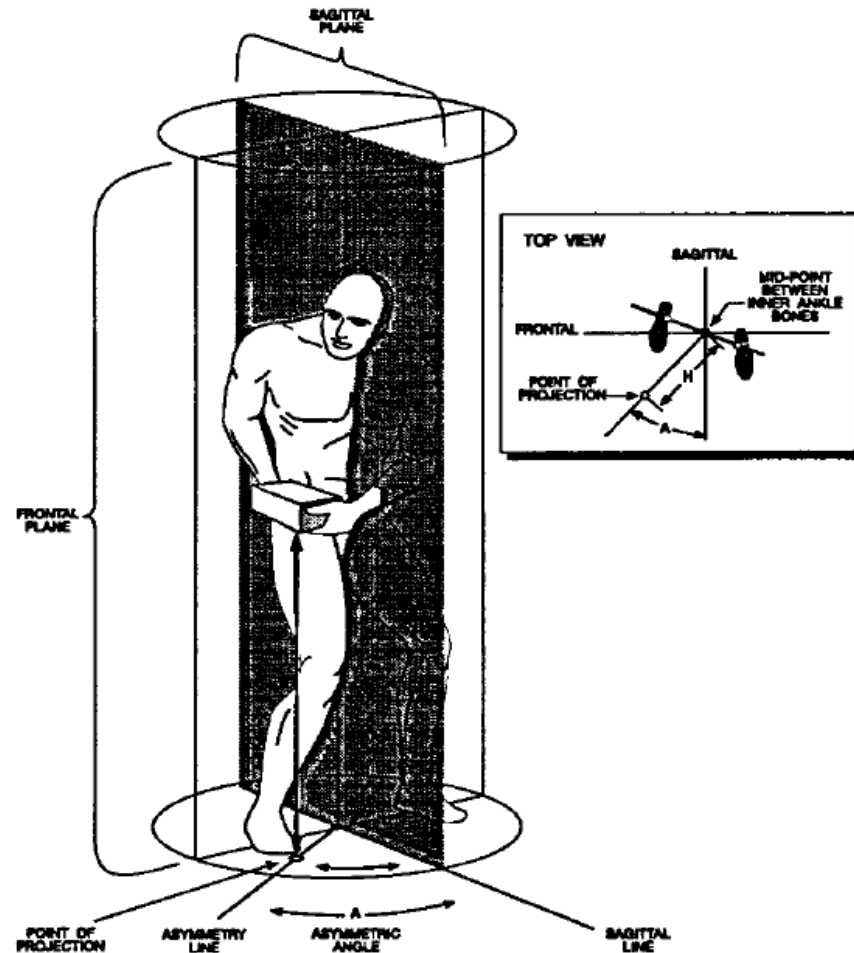


Figure 2 Graphic Representation of Angle of Asymmetry (A)

Environmental Factors to Document

There are many factors that can affect the physical demands of a task. It may be important to identify and document these types of factors in the PDD. Be sure to provide an appropriate amount of detail in order to understand why the environmental factor is important to the performance of the task.

Examples:

INDOOR

- ▶ Hot
- ▶ Dry
- ▶ Slippery
- ▶ Vibration

OUTDOOR

- ▶ Cold
- ▶ Wet
- ▶ Surface Noise
- ▶ Lighting

GOOD PHOTO VS. BAD PHOTO

90 DEGREES TO WORKER

- ✓ 90 Degree View of Worker
- ✓ Task Clearly Visible



- ✗ 90 Degree View of Worker
- ✗ Task Clearly Visible

CLEARLY VISIBLE WORKER

- ✓ 90 Degree View of Worker
- ✓ Task Clearly Visible
- ✓ Minimal Background



- ✗ Task Clearly Visible
- ✗ Minimal Background

MINIMIZE UNNECESSARY BACKGROUND

- ✓ 90 Degree View of Worker
- ✓ Task Clearly Visible
- ✓ Minimal Background



- ✗ 90 Degree View of Worker
- ✗ Minimal Background

DOCUMENTING TOOLS USED BY WORKER



Identify brand & model



Measure the weight



Take a photo



APPENDIX: PDD TEMPLATE

PHYSICAL DEMANDS DESCRIPTION | Job Title: _____

Date: _____ Date

Department: _____ Department Name

Work Hours: _____ e.g., 8:00AM – 5:00PM

Schedule: _____ e.g., Monday – Friday

Shift: _____ e.g., 'Nights', 'A'

Completed by: _____ Name of Observer

Verified by: _____ Worker Representative

Management Representative

PPE: _____ Personal Protective Equipment used

Description of the Job: Describe the overall purpose of the job here

Summary of Essential Tasks

TASK NAME	FREQUENCY	TOTAL DURATION	% OF WORK TIME
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

Summary of Non-Essential Tasks

TASK NAME	FREQUENCY	TOTAL DURATION	% OF WORK TIME
1.			
2.			
3.			

Environmental Factors (Check all that apply)

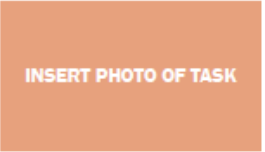
- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indoor | <input type="checkbox"/> Rugged Terrain | <input type="checkbox"/> Cold | <input type="checkbox"/> Slippery | <input type="checkbox"/> Vibration | <input type="checkbox"/> Gas/Fumes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor | <input type="checkbox"/> Weather | <input type="checkbox"/> Dry | <input type="checkbox"/> Dark | <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic | <input type="checkbox"/> Magnetic Fields |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flat Surface | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot | <input type="checkbox"/> Wet | <input type="checkbox"/> Bright | <input type="checkbox"/> Biological Agents | <input type="checkbox"/> Congested Area |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Chemicals | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

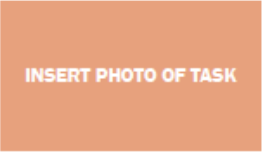
Summary of Tools & Equipment

TOOL/EQUIPMENT	MAKE	MODEL	WEIGHT	DIMENSIONS
1.				
2.				
3.				

Photographs of Tools & Equipment

Physical Demand Task Details

1. Task Name 	Task Duration	Description & Comments <i>Description of the task and environmental factors (what, where, how, etc.)</i>					
	<i>Time</i>						
	Task Frequency						
	<i>Frequency</i>						
Task Elements	Measure 1	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7
<i>Element 1</i>							
	Measure 2	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7
<i>Element 2</i>							
	Measure 2	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7
<i>Element 3</i>							
	Measure 2	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7
<i>Element n</i>							

2. Task Name 	Task Duration	Description & Comments <i>Description of the task and environmental factors (what, where, how, etc.)</i>					
	<i>Time</i>						
	Task Frequency						
	<i>Frequency</i>						
Task Elements	Measure 1	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7
<i>Element 1</i>							
	Measure 2	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7
<i>Element 2</i>							
	Measure 2	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7
<i>Element 3</i>							
	Measure 2	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7
<i>Element n</i>							

PHYSICAL DEMAND TASK ELEMENTS

Physical Demand Element	Measures to Document in the PDD						
Lift/Lower	Frequency	Weight	Start Height	End Height	Hand(s) Used	Reach	Grip Type
Carry	Frequency	Weight	Height	Distance	Hand(s) Used	Reach	Grip Type
Push	Frequency	Average Force	Max Force	Height	Distance	Hand(s) Used	Grip Type
Pull	Frequency	Average Force	Max Force	Height	Distance	Hand(s) Used	Grip Type
Reach	Frequency	Height	Distance	Hand(s) Used			
Grip	Frequency	Force	Height	Direction	Hand(s) Used	Reach	Grip Type



GRIP ▶ Seizing, grasping, holding, turning, or otherwise working with the hands. Fingers are simply an extension of the hand.

Important Items to Document:

- ✓ Description of the gripping task (what, where, how)
- ✓ Type of grip used
- ✓ Direction of turning or manipulation (if applicable)
- ✓ Whether left, right or both hands were used
- ✓ Height of the hand(s) during the task
- ✓ Reach distance required (if applicable)

Smell	Frequency	Odour Type(s)	Precision Level			
Speech	Frequency	Information	Level of Detail			
Hear	Frequency	Duration	Sound(s)	Sound Level		
Feel/Tactile	Frequency	Duration	Material(s)	Precision Level		
Vision/Read	Frequency	Information	Level of Detail			
Data Entry	Frequency	Information	Technology	Hand(s)		
Driving	Duration	Hand Height	Vehicle	Surface	Surroundings	
Foot Action	Frequency	Force	Height	Object	Foot/Feet	
Handling of Odd Objects	Frequency	Duration	Weight	Height	Object	

PHYSICAL DEMAND TASK ELEMENTS



Lift / Lower



Reach



Fine Finger Movement



Kneel



Climb



Data Entry



Hear



Carry



Grip



Sit



Crouch / Squat



Taste



Driving



Feel / Tactile



Push



Pinch



Stand



Balance



Smell



Foot Action



Vision / Read



Pull



Write



Walk



Crawl



Speech




Handling of Odd Objects

Physical Demand Element	Measures to Document in the PDD						
Lift/Lower	Frequency	Weight	Start Height	End Height	Hand(s) Used	Reach	Grip Type
Carry	Frequency	Weight	Height	Distance	Hand(s) Used	Reach	Grip Type
Push	Frequency	Average Force	Max Force	Height	Distance	Hand(s) Used	Grip Type
Pull	Frequency	Average Force	Max Force	Height	Distance	Hand(s) Used	Grip Type
Reach	Frequency	Height	Distance	Hand(s) Used			
Grip	Frequency	Force	Height	Direction	Hand(s) Used	Reach	Grip Type
Pinch	Frequency	Force	Height	Pinch Type	Hand(s) Used	Reach	
Write	Frequency	Duration	Height	Surface	Tool Type		
Fine Finger Movement	Frequency	Duration	Height	Finger(s) Used	Hand(s) Used	Precision Level	
Sit	Duration	Seat Height	Dimensions	Surface			
Stand	Duration	Surface	Footwear				
Walk	Duration	Distance	Surface	Footwear			
Kneel	Frequency	Duration	Knee(s) Used	Surface			
Crouch/Squat	Frequency	Duration					
Balance	Duration	Leg(s) Used	Surface				
Crawl	Frequency	Duration	Distance	Surface			
Climb	Frequency	Duration	Distance	Surface			
Taste	Frequency	Food(s)	Precision Level				
Smell	Frequency	Odour Type(s)	Precision Level				
Speech	Frequency	Information	Level of Detail				
Hear	Frequency	Duration	Sound(s)	Sound Level			
Feel/Tactile	Frequency	Duration	Material(s)	Precision Level			
Vision/Read	Frequency	Information	Level of Detail				
Data Entry	Frequency	Information	Technology	Hand(s)			
Driving	Duration	Hand Height	Vehicle	Surface	Surroundings		
Foot Action	Frequency	Force	Height	Object	Foot/Feet		
Handling of Odd Objects	Frequency	Duration	Weight	Height	Object		

Physical Demand Task Details

1. Task Name INSERT PHOTO OF TASK	Task Duration	Description & Comments	Description of the task and environmental factors (what, where, how, etc.)				
	Time						
	Task Frequency						
Frequency							
Task Elements	Measure 1	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7
Element 1							
Element 2	Measure 2	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7
Element 3	Measure 2	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7
Element n	Measure 2	Measure 2	Measure 3	Measure 4	Measure 5	Measure 6	Measure 7

Physical Demand Element	Measures to Document in the PDD					
Sit	Duration	Seat Height	Dimensions	Surface		
Driving	Duration	Hand Height	Vehicle	Surface	Surroundings	
Foot Action	Frequency	Force	Height	Object	Foot/Feet	

<p>1. Driving Loader</p> 	Task Duration	<p><i>The worker will move sand and stone from storage lots on the plant yard to an underground hopper that funnels materials onto a conveyor belt.</i></p>					
	5-15 minutes per material						
	Task Frequency						
	12 – 15 times per shift						
Task Element 1	Duration	Seat Height	Dimensions	Surface			
<i>Sit</i>	5-15 minutes	55-65 cm	45 x 45 x 12 cm	Cushioned			
Task Element 2	Duration	Hand Height	Vehicle	Surface	Surroundings		
<i>Driving</i>	5-15 minutes	80 – 85 cm	Front-End Loader	Loose Gravel	Other Vehicles		
Task Element 2	Frequency	Force	Height	Object	Foot/Feet		
<i>Foot Action</i>	10 times per minute	25-28 kg	15 cm	Accelerator / Break	Both		

REPORTING

Finalize PDD Document

- Does it contain enough useful information for an outsider to understand the situation?
- Additional photos can be added to extra pages.

Distribute for Approval & Sign-off

- Send to everyone who was involved in preparation phase.
- Final opportunity for people to review, verify accuracy, and comment.

File & Backup

- Locked file formats such as .pdf may help to control PDD content.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

Timeline for Review & Updates

- Ideally, have all PDDs reviewed annually

POSSIBLE TRIGGERS FOR IMMEDIATE UPDATES:

- ▶ New machine(s)
- ▶ New tool(s)
- ▶ New product(s)
- ▶ Process change
- ▶ Work reorganization
- ▶ Increase/Decrease in quotas
- ▶ Increase in responsibilities

Use of Data for MDS Prevention

- If the right data is collected, it may be useful in certain risk assessment tools i.e. NIOSH Lifting Equation, Liberty Mutual Tables.

CONTACT OHCOW

OHCOW services are available to anyone with a possible occupational health problem

Call us toll-free at:

1-877-817-0336

E-mail us at:

ask@ohcow.on.ca

Occupational Health
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