

Occupational Requirements Survey

Visual Overview for Physical Demands

Physical demands refer to the physical activities required to perform the critical tasks of a job. The assessment is focused on the physical demands of the job - not the physical capacities of the worker. Physical demand refers to the level or duration of physical exertion generally required to perform occupational tasks (sitting, standing, lifting, carrying, reaching, pushing, and pulling).

This document offers a general overview and basic descriptions of the physical demands elements that are collected and published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) for the Occupational Requirements Survey (ORS).

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Sitting and Standing

Sitting

Sitting is to remain in a seated position. Lying down, including active lying down like a mechanic lying on a dolly to do maintenance under a vehicle, is included in sitting. If workers are able to choose between sitting or standing for a task, that is counted as time spent sitting.



Standing

Standing is to remain on one's feet in an upright position without moving about. Walking is to move about on foot and is included in standing. Time spent in low postures (crawling, crouching, kneeling, or stooping) is also included in standing.



Choice of sitting or standing

The ability to alternate between sitting and standing is present when a worker has the flexibility to choose between sitting and standing as needed. Jobs that only allow this choice during scheduled breaks, such as a lunch period, would be excluded.



Lifting or carrying

Lifting is raising or lowering an object from one level to another. Lifting can include an upward pulling motion. Carrying is to transport an object – usually by holding it in the hands or arms, or wearing it on the body.



Pushing or pulling

Pushing is exerting force upon an object so that the object moves away from the origin of the force. Pulling is exerting force upon an object so that the object moves toward the origin of the force. Pushing or pulling may involve use of hands or arms or feet or legs done with one side of the body or both sides.



Keyboarding

Entering text or data into a computer or other machine by means of a traditional keyboard. Traditional keyboard refers to a panel of keys used as the primary input device on a computer, typographic machine or 10-Key numeric keypad.



Manipulation

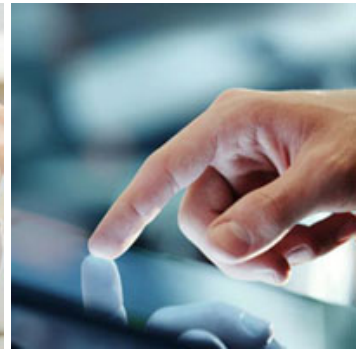
Gross manipulation

Seizing, holding, grasping, turning, or otherwise working with the hand(s). It is often present when lifting involves the hands. Note: Fingers are involved only to the extent that they are an extension of the hand to hold or operate a tool such as tin snips or scissors.



Fine manipulation

Touching, picking, pinching, or otherwise working primarily with fingers rather than the whole hand or arm as in gross manipulation.



Foot or leg controls

Use of one or both feet or legs to move controls on machinery or equipment. Controls include, but are not limited to, pedals, buttons, levers, and cranks.



Driving

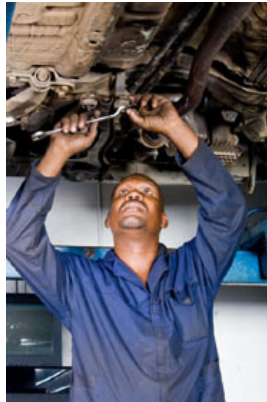
Driving is the operation of a motorized passenger vehicle or other vehicles such as tractor trailers, buses, equipment (for example, forklifts, golf carts, or riding mowers), trains, boats or aircraft.



Reaching

Reaching overhead

Extending the arm(s) with the hand(s) higher than the head and one of these conditions exist: (1) A person bends the elbows, and the angle at the shoulders is about 90 degrees or more, or (2) A person keeps the elbow extended, and the angle at the shoulder is about 120 degrees or more.



Reaching at or below shoulder level

Reaching at or below the shoulder is present when a worker extends the hand(s) and arm(s) in any direction, straightening the arm(s) and elbow(s) and engaging the shoulder(s), but it does not meet the threshold for reaching overhead. Reaching overhead and reaching at or below the shoulder can be present in the same task.



Low postures

Crawling

Moving about on hands and knees or hands and feet.



Crouching

Bending body downward and forward by bending legs and spine.



Kneeling

Bending legs at knees to come to rest on knee(s).



Stooping

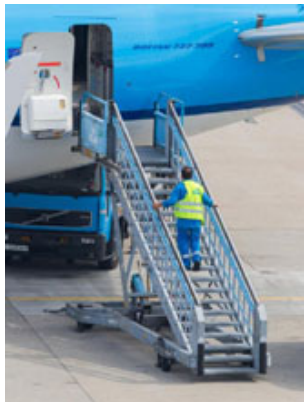
Stooping is bending the body forward and down while bending the spine at the waist 45 degrees or more either over something below waist level or down towards an object on or near the ground.



Climbing

Climbing ramps or stairs

Ascending or descending ramps or stairs using feet and legs. Hands and arms may be used for balance (for example, to hold a railing). Note: Climbing stairs into buildings with elevators or ADA-compliant ramps is voluntary and therefore not included. Stairs onto a vehicle or a piece of machinery or equipment are included.



Climbing ladders, ropes or scaffolds

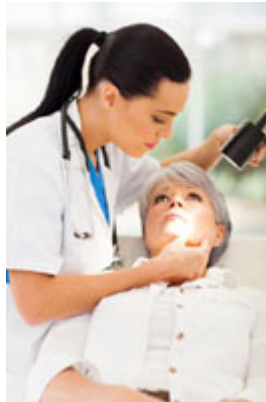
Ascending or descending structures like ladders, scaffolding, ropes or poles that require the use of both the upper and lower body to climb.



Vision

Near vision

Clarity of vision at approximately 20 inches or less (that is, working with small objects or reading small print), including use of computers.



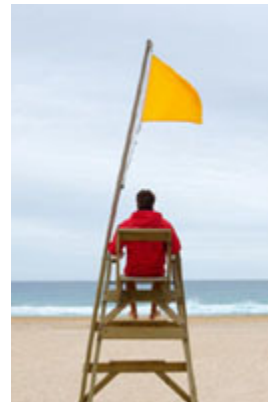
Far vision

Clarity of vision at 20 feet or more. This is not just the ability to see a person or object, but the ability to recognize features as well.



Peripheral vision

Observing an area that can be seen up and down or to right or left while eyes are fixed on a given point.



Speaking

Expressing or exchanging ideas by means of the spoken word to impart oral information to clients or the public and to convey detailed spoken instructions to other workers accurately, loudly, or quickly.



Hearing requirements

The ability to hear, understand, and distinguish speech or other sounds (for example, machinery alarms, medical codes or alarms). The presence of four hearing requirements are measured:

- In person speech
- Telephone
- Other remote speech
- Other sounds

