

DIY

Don't Injure Yourself

We are a nation of DIY enthusiasts; every weekend and bank holiday, hundreds of thousands of people rush to get to grips with their latest home improvement project.

Inevitably, there will be DIY disasters; injuries that could have been avoided. According to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), 3,900 people are treated in hospital every week as a result of DIY related injuries.

Reach for the sky

- When painting a ceiling, think about how to get the largest amount of paint on the ceiling in the shortest space of time.
- Use a large paint pad or a roller with an extended handle (hold it at chest height.)
- Keep your head in as neutral position as possible and keep facing forward; don't over stretch your neck.
- If you can lie down to do the job using a platform, do!

Don't twist again

- If you need to use a ladder, make sure you are always facing it and move the ladder regularly rather than leaning to reach your goal.
- Always keep your shoulders, hips and knees pointing in the same direction

If you are laying a patio

- If laying a patio keep the slab close to your body and bend your knees when lowering it to the ground. It is sometimes better to bend down on one knee, as the supporting leg gives you a position of strength.

Treat DIY like normal exercise

- Warm up and warm down to lessen the chance of muscle strains.

Dress appropriately

- Don't wear tight, constricting clothes – be comfortable and make sure your clothing has plenty of room for you too.

Take a break

- Vary your activity and try to spend no more than 20-30 minutes on any one thing. If painting, you can still take short breaks without causing a

problem. It is important to take breaks to avoid being in the same position for too long.

- Plan ahead
- If you are planning a trip to the local DIY store and buying heavy items like cement, buy smaller bags rather than one big bag. Smaller items are easier and safer to carry.
- If you do buy heavy items, ask someone else to help carry it to and into your car. When you get home, dry material such as sand, gravel, compost or cement can be shovelled out and into smaller containers.

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