

XCV/38954

Kickstool safety

Kickstool Safety: Pamphlet XCV/38954

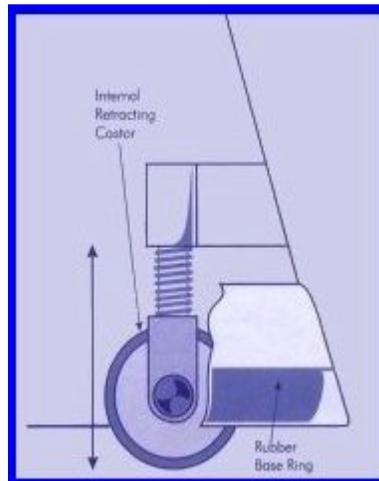
The kickstool is a versatile piece of laboratory and office equipment that is an invaluable part of any workplace, and key to combating discrimination against short people and high shelves. Like all machines, though, the kickstool can be dangerous when used incorrectly, or by inexperienced feet. Here are a few tips for you to get the most out of your kickstool.



A typical kickstool

Section 1: Know your kickstool!

Before first using your kickstool, take a few minutes to examine it carefully and familiarise yourself with its function. Refer back to the instruction booklet to understand the workings of your kickstool. Below is a simple diagram of a kickstool. We strongly recommend that you **study and understand** this diagram before proceeding.



Remember to also inspect your kickstool before every use, to check that there are no hidden defects or damage.

Here are some questions you should ask:

Are all the wheels present? Do they rotate freely? (Test this with your hand)

Is there any material clogging the mechanism?

Are there any cracks or other sign of damage?

Is the surface of the platform free from contamination by dirt or fluids? (This is particularly important if the last person to use the kickstool had previously trodden in radioactive or chemical waste, chewing gum or dog faeces).

Remember: these simple checks only take a few minutes to perform, and could save your life.

Section 2: Operation of your kickstool

The kickstool is deliberately designed for ease-of-use, without the need for special training or equipment. Bear in mind these few simple rules, and you will always have success with your stools.

Before moving your kickstool, look around to make sure there are no obstacles in its path, and all people are clear of the area. It is best to give verbal warning of an impending kick, for example by saying, loudly and clearly: "I am kicking my stool, please watch out!". Some modern kickstools come equipped with an automatic movement sensor, which triggers a repeating warning that sounds when the stool is kicked. This will usually take the form of: "This kickstool is traversing! This kickstool is traversing!" etc.

If it is safe to move the stool, propel it with a sharp, but not hard, kick. **Important:** Aim your kick at the **base** of the kickstool. (See illustration).



Kicking at the top could cause it to topple! Once the stool is still, make sure that it is in exactly the right position for you to reach the desired article. Make adjustments by moving it with your hand, if necessary.

Always make sure your stool has ceased motion before attempting to mount it!

Once the stool is completely still, step firmly up, one foot at a time. Hold any item to be lifted firmly in both hands. Make sure you stand **in the centre of the stool's platform**, otherwise, you may unbalance the stool and topple. This is particularly important for those stools that do not have spring-loaded castors which lock them into position once a large weight is on them, and which can unexpectedly start moving again if unbalanced.

Once you have mounted your stool and are in a comfortable position, reach up or down the required object. **Never attempt to lift very large or heavy objects, as you may unbalance and fall, or just drop them.** If you are unsure, ask a second person to stand by to hand you the item, or to hand down the object to them, before dismounting. **Do not over-stretch whilst trying to reach a great height, or stand on only one foot. It is important to keep both feet firmly on the stool at all times** (see illustration).



Dismount slowly and carefully, one foot at a time. Do not jump off the stool, it may become unstable and resume motion. If you have many items to lift, remember that you can use your stool as a handy seat to rest on if you feel tired (see illustration)



Do not continue to mount the stool if you feel tired or unwell; you could have an accident.

Follow these instructions carefully, and you will be a safe stool user. A quick way to learn the order of procedure is to remember this acronym:

KISS: Kick, Stop, Step!

Section 3: Appropriate kickstool use

Your kickstool is safe and easy to use, **when used for the correct purpose**. Your kickstool should only be used to relocate items above arm-reach. These items should be **non-hazardous**. **If you cannot comfortably reach where you intend to lift, use a step-ladder to reach the required height.** (See Safety leaflet FDBS/8490: Step-ladder safety).

Your kickstool must not be used for:

A permanent chair

A doorstep

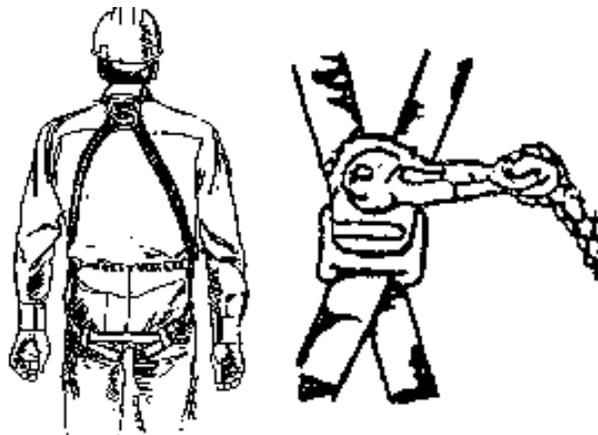
A space to store things

A form of transport

A table

As a mechanical aid, other than for its stated purpose

Your kickstool should also not be used in conjunction with any other equipment. However, **safety accessories** may be used as an extra precaution, or for inexperienced users. We stock a number of articles of **certified safety assistance equipment**. The safety harness is recommended for new kickstool users, or when working alone (see illustration)



If you have any questions about the use of your kickstool, or are unsure, **always ask your workplace safety supervisor.**

You can also phone us for free safety advice on our helpline, where one of our fully-trained safety consultants will be happy to address your concerns:

0800-KICKASS

or email kick@analretentives.org