

# How the Industrial Ergonomics Software Calculates MSD Risk

VelocityEHS Industrial Ergonomics assesses the magnitude of the primary MSD risk factors—**force, posture, duration, and frequency**—to calculate an overall risk priority score for a task being assessed. The Advanced Whole-Body Assessment uses 3D motion capture technology to analyze human body postures, and duration and frequency of those postures, in a video of an operator performing the task. It combines this information with force data to determine the overall risk priority score.

Force, posture, duration, and frequency are scored for each of nine individual body regions based on the thresholds described in the following sections. These scores are added together to provide a score for each **body region (0-11)**.

The body region scores are then added together to produce an overall **risk priority score for the job (0-99)**.

One (1) additional point is added to the overall score if vibration is present, for a **maximum score of 100**.

Advanced Tool Priority Score				
Lower 0 - 9	Low 10 - 19	Moderate 20 - 29	High 30 - 49	Higher 50+

  

Body Area Score				
Lower 0 - 1	Low 2	Moderate 3	High 4 - 6	Higher 7+

Score key

Advanced Whole-Body Assessment
[Switch to Manual Whole-Body Assessment](#)

Advanced Tool Priority Score

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	Hands/Wrists		Elbows		Shoulders		Neck	Back	Legs
	Left	Right	Left	Right	Left	Right			
Score ▲	3	3	6	7	7	9	0	2	0
Force	2	2	4	4	4	4	0	2	0
Posture	1	1	2	2	2	3	0	0	0
Duration	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Frequency	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
Risk Rating	Mod	Mod	High	Higher	Higher	Higher	Lower	Low	Lower

Risk score calculation example in Industrial Ergonomics

## Force (Measured)

Each body region (including left and right sides for the upper limbs) receives a **Force** score (0 – 4) based on the highest risk force recorded for the task. Different forces can affect different, and multiple, body regions. For *measured* hand/wrist-only forces (pinch grip, finger press, power grip), if force is present on both sides of the body, the full force value is applied to both hands/wrists. For *measured* elbow/shoulder forces, if force is present on both sides of the body, the force value is divided in half between the left and right sides. **Note:** Metric values are approximate; all metric weight values entered into the software are first converted to pounds (0.45 kg = 1 lb) to determine body region scores and risk levels.

Risk Category	Score	Hands/Wrists	Elbows/Shoulders (Unilateral)	Neck	Back	Legs
High Forces	0	Below thresholds				
	1	Pinch grip ≥ 3 lb (1 kg) Finger press ≥ 3 lb (1 kg) Power grip ≥ 13 lb (6 kg)*	Press down ≥ 6 lb (3 kg) Lift/lower ≥ 4 lb (2 kg) Pull across ≥ 3 lb (1 kg) Push out (shoulder) ≥ 7 lb (3 kg) Pull in (elbow) ≥ 7 lb (3 kg) Pull down ≥ 9 lb (4 kg)	PPE ≥ 2 lb (1 kg)	(Stoop or squat) lift/lower (2 hands) ≥ 25 lb (11 kg) Whole-body push/pull (2 hands) ≥ 50 lb (23 kg)	Squat lift/lower (2 hands) ≥ 25 lb (11 kg)
	2	Pinch grip ≥ 5 lb (2 kg) Finger press ≥ 5 lb (2 kg) Power grip ≥ 19 lb (9 kg)*	Press down ≥ 10 lb (5 kg) Lift/lower ≥ 6 lb (3 kg) Pull across ≥ 5 lb (2 kg) Push out (shoulder) ≥ 10 lb (5 kg) Pull in (elbow) ≥ 11 lb (5 kg) Pull down ≥ 13 lb (6 kg)	PPE ≥ 4 lb (2 kg)	(Stoop or squat) lift/lower (2 hands) ≥ 33 lb (15 kg) Whole-body push/pull (2 hands) ≥ 57 lb (26 kg)	Squat lift/lower (2 hands) ≥ 33 lb (15 kg)
	3	Pinch grip ≥ 8 lb (4 kg) Finger press ≥ 9 lb (4 kg) Power grip ≥ 32 lb (14 kg)*	Press down ≥ 15 lb (7 kg) Lift/lower ≥ 10 lb (5 kg) Pull across ≥ 8 lb (4 kg) Push out (shoulder) ≥ 17 lb (8 kg) Pull in (elbow) ≥ 19 lb (9 kg) Pull down ≥ 22 lb (10 kg)	PPE ≥ 8 lb (4 kg)	(Stoop or squat) lift/lower (2 hands) ≥ 42 lb (19 kg) Whole-body push/pull (2 hands) ≥ 64 lb (29 kg)	Squat lift/lower (2 hands) ≥ 42 lb (19 kg)
	4	Pinch grip ≥ 10 lb (5 kg) Finger press ≥ 11 lb (5 kg) Power grip ≥ 41 lb (19 kg)*	Press down ≥ 21 lb (9 kg) Lift/lower ≥ 12 lb (6 kg) Pull across ≥ 11 lb (5 kg) Push out (shoulder) ≥ 22 lb (10 kg) Pull in (elbow) ≥ 24 lb (11 kg) Pull down ≥ 29 lb (13 kg)	PPE ≥ 16 lb (7 kg)	(Stoop or squat) lift/lower (2 hands) ≥ 50 lb (23 kg) Whole-body push/pull (2 hands) ≥ 71 lb (32 kg)	Squat lift/lower (2 hands) ≥ 50 lb (23 kg)

\* For any unilateral lift/lower, pull across, pull in, or pull down force ≥ 13 lb (6 kg), a power grip is assumed, and a force score is applied to the hands/wrists according to the power grip thresholds. Example: For a right-hand pull in force of 15 lb (7 kg), power grip force of ≥ 13 lb (6 kg) is assumed, resulting in a force score of 1 for the right hand/wrist.

## Force (Estimated)

Estimated force values are calculated by combining the Borg Perceived Exertion rating (0 – 10) and Operator Strength capability value (below average, average, or above average). The associated **Force** scores (0 – 4) are determined in the same way as for measured forces.

Risk Category	Score	Estimated Force Thresholds
High Forces	0	Below thresholds
	1	≥ 2.5
	2	≥ 3.5
	3	≥ 4.5
	4	≥ 7

## Posture

Each body region (including left and right sides for the upper limbs) receives a **Posture** score (0 – 3), based on the highest risk posture that occurs during the video for that body region.

Risk Category	Score	Hands/Wrists	Elbows*	Shoulders	Neck	Back	Legs
Awkward Postures	0	Below thresholds					
	1	Any bending ≥ 20°	Elbow angle (flexion) > 45° to 65°	Shoulder raised (flexion) ≥ 45°	Forward bend ≥ 25°	Forward bend (flexion) ≥ 30° Backward angle (flexion) ≤ -10° Twist (rotation) ≥ 30° Lateral bend ≥ 15°	Knee angle ≥ 45°
	2	Any bending ≥ 45°	Elbow angle (flexion) > 20° to ≤ 45°	Shoulder raised (flexion) ≥ 90°	Forward bend ≥ 45°	Forward bend (flexion) ≥ 60° Backward angle (flexion) ≤ -15° Twist (rotation) ≥ 45° Lateral bend ≥ 30°	Knee angle ≥ 60°
	3	Any bending ≥ 60° to 90°	Elbow angle (flexion) -5° to ≤ 20°	Shoulder raised (flexion) ≥ 120°	Forward bend ≥ 65° to 80°	Forward bend (flexion) ≥ 90° Backward angle (flexion) ≤ -20° Twist (rotation) ≥ 90° Lateral bend ≥ 45°	Knee angle ≥ 90° to 150°

\* Elbow posture is scored only when shoulder angle > 60°

## Duration

Each body region (including left and right sides for the upper limbs) receives a **Duration** score (0 – 3).

Risk Category	Score	All Body Regions
Long Duration	0	Below thresholds
	1	The percent of time in <b>high-risk postures (with scores of 2 or 3)</b> is $\geq 10\%$ of the frames that have data for that body region
	2	$\geq 20\%$
	3	$\geq 30\%$

## Frequency

Each body region (including left and right sides for the upper limbs) receives a **Frequency** score (0 – 1).

Risk Category	Score	Hands/Wrists	All Other Body Regions
High Frequency	0	Below thresholds	
	1	More than 30 occurrences/minute (average) of any <i>combination</i> of postures scored 1 or higher	More than 3 occurrences/minute (average) of any <i>combination</i> of postures scored 1 or higher