



## Using a walker

It is important to start walking soon after a leg injury or surgery. But you will need support while your leg is healing. A walker can give you support as you start to walk again.

### How to Walk with Your Walker

Follow these steps to walk with your walker:

1. Push or lift your walker a few inches, or a few centimeters, or an arm's length in front of you.
2. Make sure all 4 tips or wheels of your walker are touching the ground before taking a step.
3. Step forward with your weak leg first. If you had surgery on both legs, start with the leg that feels weaker.
4. Then step forward with your other leg, placing it in front of the weaker leg.

Repeat steps 1 through 4 to move forward. Go slowly and walk with good posture, keeping your back straight.

### Going from Sitting to Standing

Follow these steps when you get up from a sitting position:

1. Place the walker in front of you with the open side facing you.
2. Make sure all 4 tips or wheels of your walker are touching the ground.
3. Lean slightly forward and use your arms to help you stand up. **DO NOT** pull on or tilt the walker to help you stand up. Use the chair armrests or handrails if they are available. Ask for help if you need it.
4. Grab the handles of the walker.
5. You may need to take a step forward to stand up straight.
6. Before starting to walk, stand until you feel steady and are ready to move forward.



### Going from Standing to Sitting

Follow these steps when you sit down:

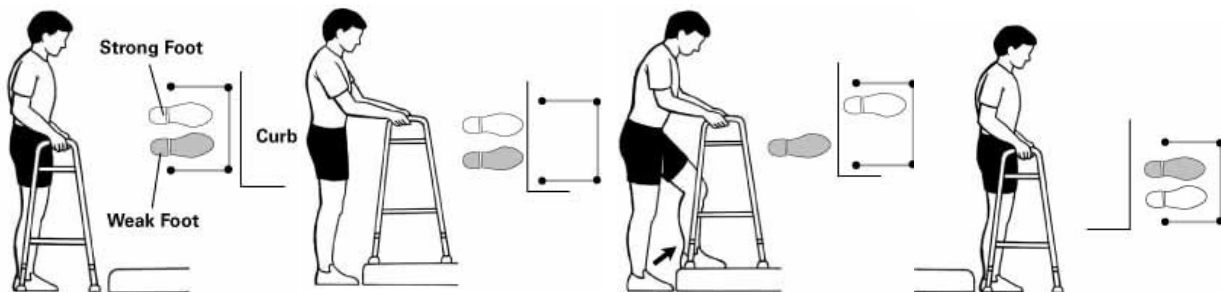
1. Back up to your chair, bed, or toilet until the seat touches the back of your legs.
2. Make sure all 4 tips or wheels of your walker are touching the ground.
3. Reach back with one hand and grab the armrest, bed, or toilet behind you. If you had surgery on both legs, reach back with one hand, then the other hand.
4. Lean forward and move your weaker leg forward (the leg you had surgery on).
5. Slowly sit down and then slide back into position.



## Stepping Up or Down a Step or Curb

When you go up or down stairs:

1. Place your walker on the step or curb in front of you if you are going up. Place it beneath the step or curb if you are going down.
2. Make sure all four tips or wheels are touching the ground.
3. To go up, **step up with your strong leg first**. Place all your weight on the walker and bring your weaker leg up to the step or curb. To go down, **step down with your weaker leg first**. Place all your weight on the walker. Bring your strong leg down next to your weaker leg.



## Safety Tips

When walking, start with your weaker leg. If you had surgery, this is the leg you had surgery on.

When going up a step or curb, start with your stronger leg. When going down a step or curb, start with the weaker leg: **"Up with the good, down with the bad."**

Keep space between you and your walker, and keep your toes inside your walker. Stepping too close to the front or tips or wheels may make you lose your balance.

Make changes around your house to **prevent falls**:

- Make sure any loose rugs, rug corners that stick up, or cords are secured to the ground so you do not trip or get tangled in them.
- Remove clutter and keep your floors clean and dry.
- Wear shoes or slippers with rubber or other non-skid soles. **DO NOT** wear shoes with heels or leather soles.

Check the tips and wheels of your walker daily and replace them if they are worn. You can get replacements at your medical supply store or local drug store.

**DO NOT** try to use stairs and escalators unless a physical therapist has trained you how to use them with your walker.