

A Practical Guide to the Use and Care of a Walker

First Things First

It is important that you follow your doctor's orders and put only the amount of weight shown below on your affected side:

- () Full weight bearing
- () Partial weight bearing
- () Weight bearing as tolerated
- () Touch down weight bearing (until sensation returns to knee)
- () Non-weight bearing
- () _____ % weight bearing

Getting Started

1. Make sure that all pads and grips are securely in place.
2. Make sure that all hardware is tight...
(check the screws at least once per week).
3. Clean out the tips to make sure they are free of dirt and stones.
4. Have someone nearby to help you until you get used to it.
5. Remove all small loose rugs from your path to avoid falls;
widen spaces between furniture to allow for walker width.
6. If your tips wear out, please visit your local pharmacy.



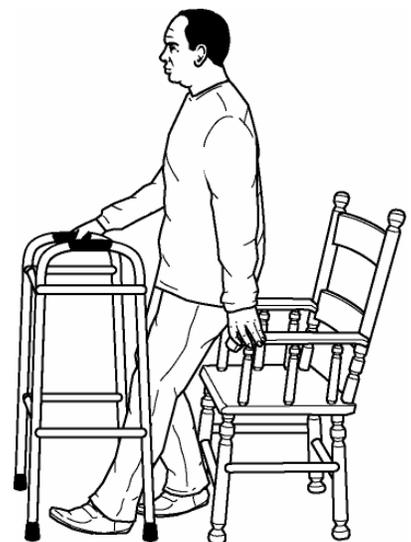
Proper Techniques

To get up from a chair:

- Bring walker directly in front of you; hold with arm of affected side.
- Slide to the edge of the chair.
- Push down on the arm of the chair on your unaffected side.
- Stand up, get your balance, and then grab both handles.
- When balance and confidence improve do not use walker to stand,
This will make it easier to transition to cane or no assistive device.

To walk with walker:

- Hold both hand grips.
- Move walker forward 6 to 12 inches.
- Bring affected foot forward, and bear weight through hands.
- Bring other leg forward to affected leg.
- Push down on walker to relieve weight on affected leg as needed.
- Check your balance before you continue.



To sit down in a chair:

- Back up to the chair until you feel the chair on your legs.
- Reach back for the chair with the arm on your unaffected side.
- Make sure you continue to hold the walker with the arm on your affected side. Until balance and confidence improve then no longer need to hold walker.
- Lower yourself slowly into the chair, bending at your hips.

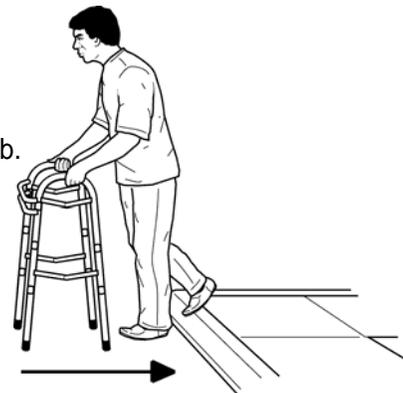
Going up/down a curb/single step with walker (WBAT):

Going Up (Backward):

- Back up to the step/curb.
- Push down into walker as you lift your unaffected leg up onto the step/curb.
- Lift affected leg onto the step/curb.
- Bring walker up onto the step/curb.

Going Down:

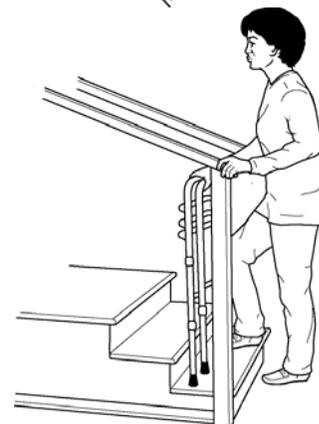
- Come to the edge of the step/curb.
- Place walker down onto the ground.
- Lower affected leg to the ground.
- Push down into walker as you lower the unaffected leg to the ground.



Going up/down multiple stairs:

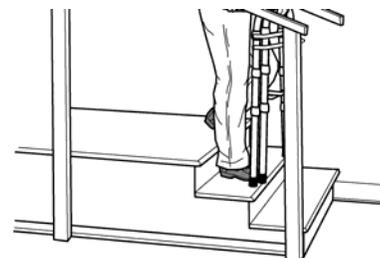
To go up stairs:

- If a handrail is available, it will make things easier for you. Fold the walker and place it in one hand. Place the other hand on the rail.
- Lift the folded walker and set it on the back of the first step.
- Step up to the first step, remembering that the unaffected foot goes up first!
- Bring your affected foot up to the same step.
- Check your balance before you proceed to the next step.
- Make sure someone is there to help if you need it.



To go down stairs:

- If a handrail is available, it will make things easier for you. Fold the walker and place it in one hand. Place the other hand on the rail.
- Set the folded walker near the front edge of the first step.
- Step down with the affected leg.
- Bring the unaffected leg down to the same step.
- Check your balance before you proceed to the next step.
- Make sure someone is there to help if you need it.



When unfolding the walker, make sure you hear the walker “click” into the locked position!

If you are uncomfortable standing on stairs to ascend/descend, you may sit on your bottom and scoot. A physical therapy staff member will demonstrate transition to standing if you would like to utilize this approach.

Tip: When using stairs remember that...

**The “unaffected” foot goes up first when going up stairs and
The “affected” foot goes down first when going down stairs**