

Types of Walkers

There are many types of walkers.

Some walkers have no wheels, 2 wheels, or 4 wheels.

You can also get a walker with brakes, a carrying basket, and a sitting bench.

Any walker you use should be easy to fold so that you can transport it easily.

Your surgeon or physical therapist will help you choose the type of walker that is best for you.



Walker Basics

If your walker has wheels, you will push it forward to move forward. If your walker does not have wheels, then you will need to lift it and place it in front of you to move forward.

All 4 tips or wheels on your walker need to be on the ground before you put your weight on it.

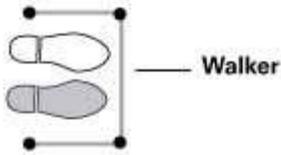
Look forward when you are walking, not down at your feet.

Use a chair with armrests to make sitting and standing easier.

Make sure your walker has been adjusted to your height. The handles should be at the level of your hips. Your elbows should be slightly bent when you hold the handles.

Ask your health care provider for help if you are having problems using your walker.

How to Walk with Your Walker



Follow these steps to walk with your walker:

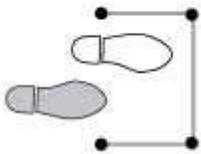
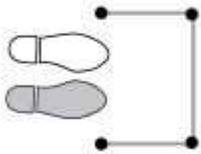
Push or lift your walker a few inches or an arm's lengths in front of you.

Make sure all four tips or wheels of your walker are touching the ground before taking a step.

Step forward with your weak leg first. If you had surgery on both legs, start with the leg that feels weaker.

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:

Place the walker in front of you with the open side facing you.

Make sure all four tips or wheels of your walker are touching the ground.

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.

Grab the handles of the walker.

You may need to take a step forward to stand up straight.

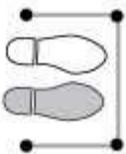
Before starting to walk, stand until you feel steady and are ready to move forward.

Going from Standing to Sitting

Follow these steps when you sit down:

Back up to your chair, bed, or toilet until the seat touches the back of your legs.

Make sure all four tips or wheels of your walker are touching the ground.



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.

Lean forward and move your weaker leg forward (the leg you had surgery on).

Slowly sit down and then slide back into position.

Stepping Up or Down a Step or Curb

When you go up or down stairs:

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.

Make sure all four tips or wheels are touching the ground.

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 the leg you had surgery on, or your weaker leg.

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.

Attach a small bag or basket to your walker to hold small items so that you can keep both hands on your walker.

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