

General Advice: These instructions are general advice only and do not take into account your specific circumstance. These instructions are to be used in conjunction with the information provided by your health professional and any instructions provided by the equipment manufacturer. Do not exceed the Maximum User Weight specified by the manufacturer. If you are unsure on how to use or fit a piece of equipment, please contact your Health Professional or Country Care Store.

Walking Stick Use

- A walking stick is a type of mobility aid that is designed to help individuals who have difficulty walking or maintaining balance. It typically consists of a long, straight pole or shaft with a handle at the top, and it is often made from materials such as wood, aluminum, or carbon fiber
- Walking sticks are used to provide support and stability while walking, helping to reduce the weight bearing load on hip and knee joints
- Walking sticks come in a variety of styles and designs. Some walking sticks have a contoured handle, a swan neck shape, and others have a quad base for added stability
- A contoured handle is designed to fit the shape of the hand. Make sure that the handle is comfortable and secure in your hand. A swan neck instead of a straight pole puts less pressure on the wrist for any user with decreased wrist strength. A quad base adds stability to the stick and also allows it to stand straight (and not fall) when it is not being used

Fitting a Walking Stick

1. Stand up straight and place your arm by your side
2. Typically have the walking stick handle at the same height as the crease of the wrist
3. Adjust the height of the walking stick using the steel buttons to slide the internal piece up or down to the appropriate height. If you have a wooden stick you will find it is not height adjustable which can be an issue when ensuring the stick is at an appropriate height
4. The walking stick should go on opposite side that needs the support, it should go on the strong side and move with weak side, Using the walking stick on the opposite side to the weak leg allows the user to shift their weight more to the stronger side
5. If you have trouble using a walking stick, you may want to consider using a rollator, which provides more stability and support

How to Use a Walking Stick

Using a walking stick can help you to maintain your balance and stability while walking. Here are the general steps for using a walking stick:

1. With the walking stick on the strong side move the weak leg and the stick together at the same time. This way each side of the body shares the load
2. As you step forward, your walking stick and the opposite foot should hit the floor at the same time. Then step forward onto the stronger leg, through the middle



3. This may take practice as it is like having three legs, but persevere as walking this way will mean a smooth and even step, reducing stress on the rest of your body
 4. Keep as straight a posture as you can while looking forward and not down at the ground. Try not to lean too far to one side or too far forward
 5. If going upstairs always step up with the strongest leg first and then follow with the stick and the weaker leg. When walking down use the stick and weaker leg first, this will ensure that you can manage the descent with your stronger leg
 6. It's important to remember that using a walking stick requires balance, coordination and strength, so it's important to use it correctly and under the guidance of a healthcare professional
 7. It's also important to make sure that the walking stick is adjusted to the right height for the user and the rubber tip is in good condition before use
- **Note:** If you need assistance with finding the right Walking Stick, the correct height or how to use it, please consult your Allied Health Professional or a member of the Country Care Group service team

PRECAUTIONS & SAFETY

- For safety, have someone help you until you have gained your balance, mobility and confidence
- Walk at a safe, comfortable pace and do not turn too quickly
- Be careful when walking over uneven or wet ground
- Wear well-fitting, comfortable, flat shoes with non-slip soles
- After adjusting the length, check all adjustment buttons are fully protruding

MAINTENANCE & CLEANING

- Please check the product label / user manual for specific cleaning instructions
- Keep rubber tips in good condition and attached securely
- DO NOT store timber sticks in direct sunlight or damp places
- If the equipment appears damaged, **DO NOT USE.** It may require replacing