

Adjusting crutches for comfort

The height of the crutches and the position of the handgrips should be adjusted to suit individual dimensions.

When standing upright there should be a 3 finger gap (3-4cm) between your armpit and the top of the crutch.

The most stable position you can adopt with your crutches is the form of a triangle with your unaffected leg and the crutches.

The handgrip should be positioned so that your elbows are slightly bent when standing relaxed. When walking or resting, your body weight should be taken through your hands, forearms and upper ribs, **not your armpit**.



Sitting down

- ✦ Step back close enough to feel the bed/chair behind your knees.
- ✦ Transfer both crutches to your affected side, holding onto the hand grips.
- ✦ Reach for the arm of the chair with your free hand.
- ✦ Place your injured foot forward
- ✦ Lean your body forwards and slowly lower yourself down.

Sitting down



Standing up and sitting down

Standing Up

- ✦ Hold both crutches on your injured side using the hand grips.
- ✦ The other hand should be positioned to push off from the bed/chair.
- ✦ Place your injured foot forward.
- ✦ Lean your body forwards and stand up.

Remember:

- ✦ Avoid walking on smooth or / and wet surfaces
- ✦ Wear shoes!
- ✦ Take care on uneven or steep surfaces.
- ✦ Keep rubber tips clean
- ✦ Replace worn rubber tips at your chemist for a small cost as soon as possible to minimise the risk of falls

How much weight can I take through my leg?

After a fracture or surgery to your leg, there may be restrictions with how much weight you can put through your affected leg.

Partial weight-bearing means that you may take part of weight through your affected/injured leg. Your doctor or physiotherapist will instruct you on how much weight to take.

- ✦ Place both crutches about a step in front of you to form a stable triangle.
- ✦ Place your affected leg forward to the level of the crutches.
- ✦ Begin the step by sharing the weight between your hands and your affected leg.
- ✦ Step the good leg through.

Non weight-bearing means that you are not allowed to take any weight through your affected leg for a specified period of time.

- ✦ Hold your affected leg off the ground.
- ✦ Place both crutches about a step in front of you to form a stable triangle.
- ✦ Take your body weight through your hands, hop forward to the level of your crutches.
- ✦ As you improve, you may be able to hop past the level of your crutches.

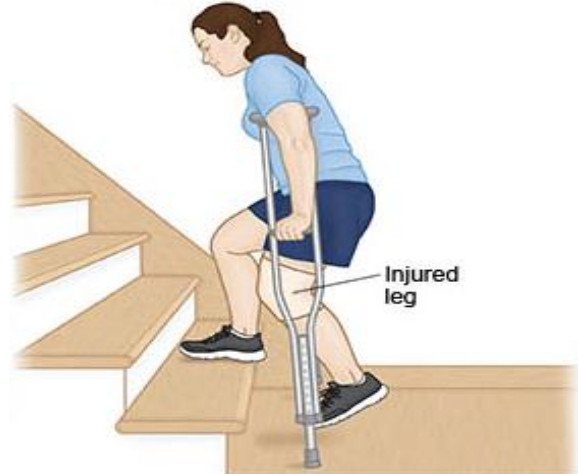
Turning tips

- ✦ Always turn towards your good / uninjured side. This ensures that if you overbalance, your strong leg will support you.
- ✦ Step around slowly and evenly to turn.
- ✦ Avoid twisting on your leg when turning.

Stairs / Kerbs / Gutters

- ✦ Start close to the edge of the step.
- ✦ Use a handrail on one side if available. With the other hand, you can hold both crutches together.

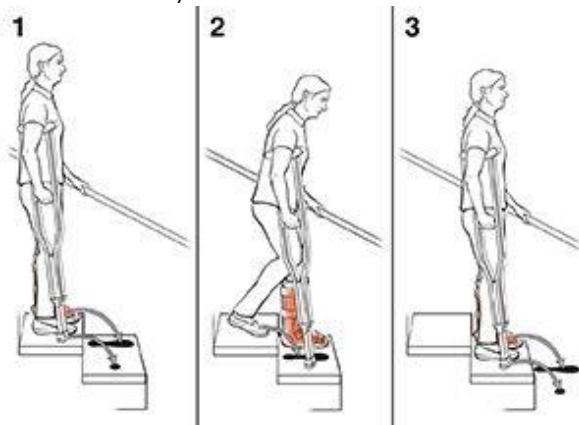
Going upstairs



1. Lock your arms and shoulders to support your body weight as you slowly hop your good leg up onto the next step.
2. Push through your good leg to bring your injured leg up beside the good leg.
3. Support your weight on your good leg as you bring your crutches up.
4. Get your balance before going onto the next step.

Going downstairs

1. Position and ready yourself at the top of the stair
2. Lower the crutches and your bad leg to the lower step – put the weight through your good leg and the crutches to lower yourself down



To remember which leg should lead, the good leg goes to heaven (leads to go up) and the bad leg goes to hell (leads to come down).