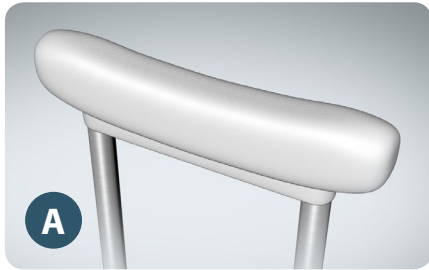


## Using Your Crutches: Parts and Making Sure They Fit

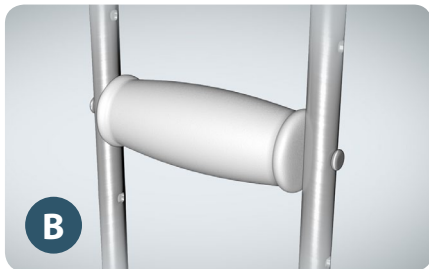
**Crutches** help you move around without having to put weight on your injured foot or leg. These instructions will teach you about the parts of crutches and how to make sure they fit your body correctly.

### Parts of Crutches

- A** The top part of the crutch is called a crutch pad.



- B** The handle in the middle is called a handgrip.



- C** The rubber bottom that touches the floor is called the crutch tip.



### Making Sure Your Crutches Fit You



Before you use crutches, you will need to make sure they fit your body correctly.

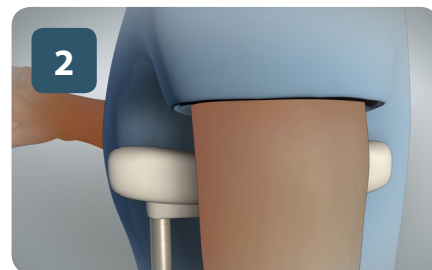
#### Step 1

Put one crutch under each arm at the sides of your body while you're standing.



#### Step 2

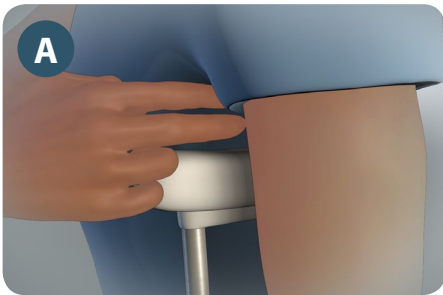
Relax your shoulders, and let your arms hang down over the crutches.



The crutch pads should not touch your armpits.

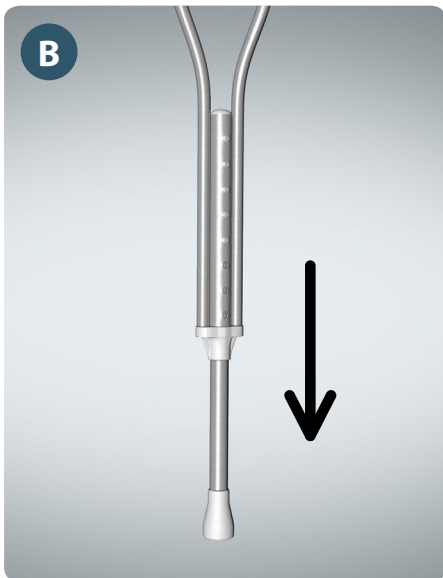
### Step 3

- A** Check the amount of space between your armpits and the crutch pads. There should be 2 inches or 5 centimeters of space between them. This is about two or three finger widths.



- This space helps keep the crutch pads from putting pressure on nerves and blood vessels in your armpits.
- Pressure on these nerves and blood vessels may cause arm tingling and weakness.

- B** If the crutches are not the right height, you can adjust them. Check the instructions that came with your crutches or contact your healthcare provider if you're not sure how to do this.

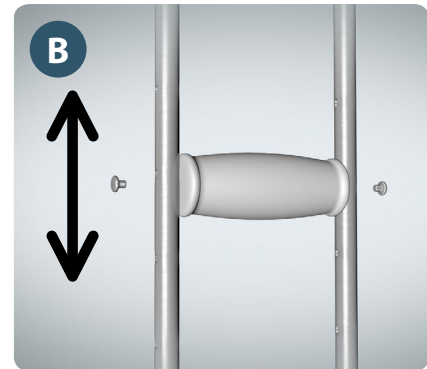


### Step 4

- A** Check the height of the crutch handgrips. Your wrists should be at the same level as the handgrips.



- B** If the handgrips are not the right height, you can adjust them. Check the instructions that came with your crutches or contact your healthcare provider if you're not sure how to do this.



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## Using Your Crutches: Standing

**Crutches** help you move around without having to put weight on your injured foot or leg. These instructions will teach you how to stand with your crutches.

### Standing with Crutches

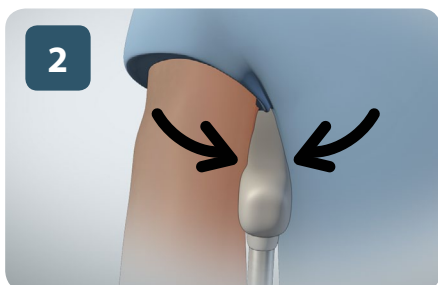
#### Step 1

While standing on your uninjured leg, hold one handgrip in each hand.



#### Step 2

Squeeze the crutch pads between the sides of your chest and upper arms.

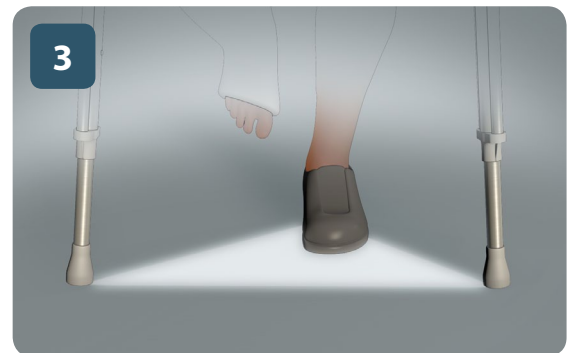


Do not rest your armpits on the crutch pads to support your weight. You will support your weight on the handgrips.

#### Step 3

Spread the crutch tips apart, and put them slightly in front of you on the floor.

This is called a tripod, or three-point stance.



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## Using Your Crutches: Walking

**Crutches** help you move around without having to put weight on your injured foot or leg. These instructions will teach you how to walk with your crutches.

### Walking With Crutches



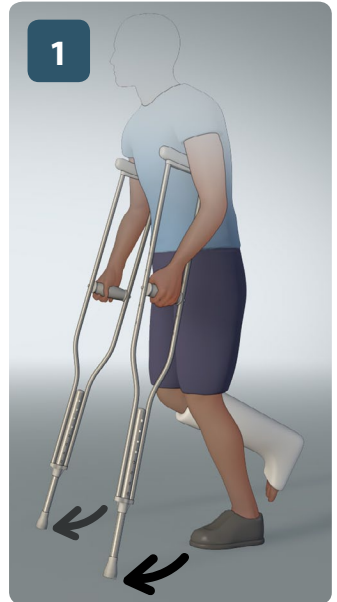
- Be sure to look where you're walking.
- Don't just look down at your feet.



Be aware that you need extra room on either side of your body for your crutches.

### Step 1

While standing with the crutches, move the crutch tips one step in front of you.



### Step 2

Now put your weight onto the handgrips of your crutches. Then swing your injured leg forward.



### Step 3

Take a step with your uninjured leg. Make sure to land level with or just ahead of your crutches.



### Step 4

Move your crutch tips forward a bit to balance your weight.

**Repeat the steps to keep walking.**



## Variations on Walking With Crutches

Sometimes your surgeon may allow you to put weight on your surgical leg when walking with crutches.

You may be instructed to:

- Touch only your toe to the ground for balance, but not put any weight on it.
- Put half of the weight that you normally do when you walk.
- Put as much weight on your surgical leg as you can tolerate.
- Not put ANY weight on your leg when walking with crutches.



Be sure to follow your surgeon's instructions about if and how much weight to put on your surgical leg when walking with crutches.



- Take it slow at first. Give yourself time to get used to crutches.
- Put your weight on the handgrips, not the crutch pads.
- Ask for help when you need it.

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## Using Your Crutches: Sitting Down and Standing Up

**Crutches** help you move around without having to put weight on your injured foot or leg. These instructions will teach you how to sit down and stand up with your crutches.

### Sitting Down With Crutches

#### Step 1

Stand next to or in front of the chair.

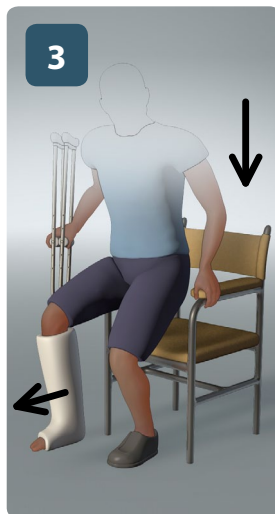


#### Step 2

Move both crutches from under your arms to just your injured side. Hold them by the handgrips with that hand.

#### Step 3

Grab the chair's armrest or seat with your other arm.



#### Step 4

Extend your injured leg in front of you, and lower yourself into the seat.

### Standing Up With Crutches

#### Step 1

While seated, extend your injured leg in front of you.



#### Step 2

Move both crutches to your injured side. Hold them by the handgrips with that hand.

#### Step 3

Put your other hand on the chair seat or armrest.

#### Step 4

While supporting your weight on the chair and crutches, scoot your body to the edge of the seat, and then push yourself up to a standing position on your uninjured leg.

#### Step 5

Put one crutch under each arm so that you are now in a tripod stance.



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## Using Your Crutches: Going Up and Down Stairs With a Handrail

**Crutches** help you move around without having to put weight on your injured foot or leg. These instructions will teach you how to use your crutches to climb up and go down stairs with a handrail.

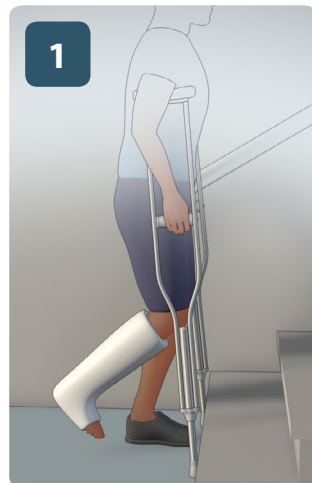
### Using Crutches to Climb Stairs With a Handrail

#### Step 1

Begin as close to the stairs as possible.

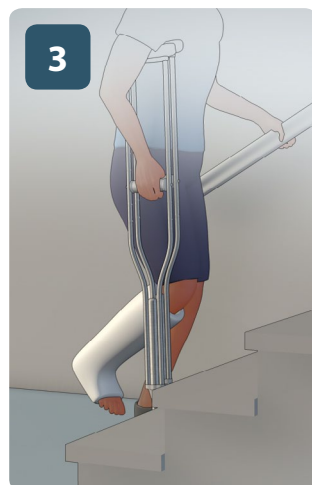


It does not matter which side the railing is on or which leg is injured.



#### Step 2

Move the crutch nearest the railing to the opposite arm. Hold both crutches by the handgrips with that hand.



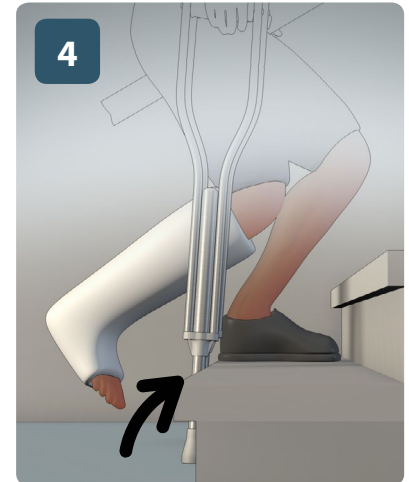
#### Step 3

Grab the railing with your free hand.

Lean your weight on the railing and the handgrips of your crutches.

#### Step 4

Lift your uninjured leg onto the next stair step.



#### Step 5

Pull your crutches up with you onto the stair step.



Repeat this process for each stair step.

## Using Crutches to Go Down Stairs With a Handrail

### Step 1

Begin as close to the stairs as possible.



It does not matter which side the railing is on, or which leg is injured.

### Step 2

Move the crutch nearest the railing to the opposite arm. Hold both crutches by the handgrips with that hand.



### Step 3

Grab the railing with your free arm.



### Step 4

Place your crutches together onto the step below.

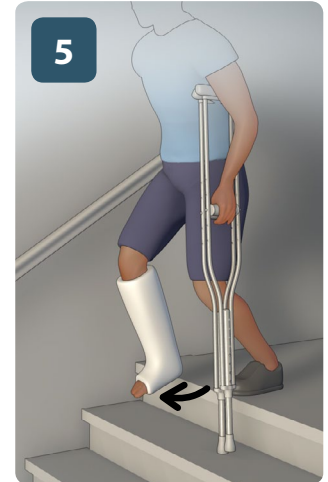


Be sure to place your crutches in the middle of the stair to help you balance your weight.

### Step 5

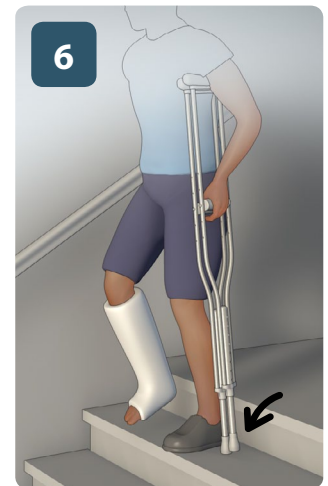
Move your injured leg forward slightly.

Lean your weight on the railing and the handgrips of your crutches.



### Step 6

Using your uninjured leg, step down onto the next stair step.



**Repeat this process for each stair step.**



- Take it slow at first. Give yourself time to get used to crutches.
- Put your weight on the handgrips, not the crutch pads.
- Ask for help when you need it.

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## Using Your Crutches: Going Up and Down Stairs Without a Handrail

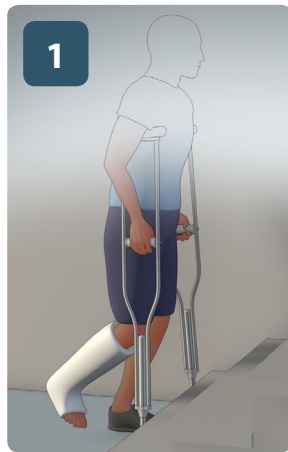
**Crutches** help you move around without having to put weight on your injured foot or leg. These instructions will teach you how to use your crutches to climb up and go down stairs without a handrail.

### Using Crutches to Climb Stairs Without a Handrail

#### Step 1

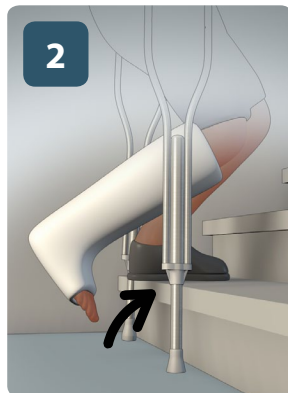
Begin as close to the stairs as possible. Keep one crutch under each arm.

Lean your weight on the handgrips of your crutches.



#### Step 2

Use your uninjured leg to step or hop up onto the next stair step.



#### Step 3

Pull your crutches up with you onto the step.



**Repeat this process for each stair step.**

### Using Crutches to Go Down Stairs Without a Handrail

#### Step 1

Begin as close to the stairs as possible. Keep one crutch under each arm.

#### Step 2

Lean forward and place your crutches in the middle of the step below you.

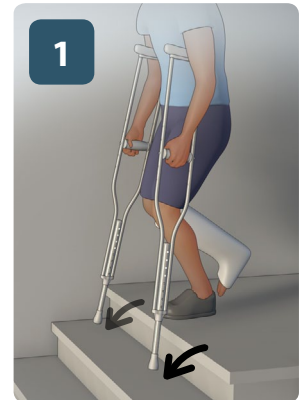
Lean your weight on the handgrips of your crutches.

#### Step 3

Move your injured leg forward slightly.

#### Step 4

With your uninjured leg, step down onto the next stair step.



**Repeat this process for each stair step.**



- Take it slow at first. Give yourself time to get used to crutches.
- Put your weight on the handgrips, not the crutch pads.
- Ask for help when you need it.

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