

# Stair Climbing for People Who Walk

After a spinal cord injury, climbing stairs can be difficult. Practicing a good technique can help you learn to get up stairs alone or with help. Always practice using stairs with your therapist before trying it alone.

### Going Up Stairs

1. Go up one step at a time.
2. Use the railing only to keep your balance. Try not to pull yourself up using it.
3. Place your stronger leg and cane on the higher step.
4. Make sure your foot is fully on the step.
5. Push with your cane and strong leg to bring your weaker foot onto the same step.



### Going Down Stairs

1. Go down one step at a time.
2. Use the railing only to keep your balance. Try not to lean on it.
3. Place the weaker leg and cane on the lower step first.
4. Make sure your foot is fully on the step.
5. Follow with the stronger leg.



Contact your Physiotherapist for more information.

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**Tip:** You can use the phrase "The good go up and the bad go down." This helps you remember how to do stairs. Start with the strong leg going up and the weak leg going down.



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### Climbing Stairs with Assistance

If someone is helping you to do stairs, they should be there only to guide you. Your helper can also make sure you do not fall by giving you a little support. With a helper, you use the same technique as described above. Only go up and down one step at a time.

#### Going Up

Your helper should be near the railing and one step behind you. They should always be ready to stop you from falling backwards. They can give you gentle assistance to help you go up.

#### Going Down

The helper should be positioned in front of you to prevent you from falling forward. They can also gently place their hand above your knee to keep it steady as you step down.



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