

# How to Stay Safe Walking in Winter



If you love walking, don't let winter stop you. Below are some tips to help you stay safe outdoors.

If walking outside isn't appealing but you want to remain active, you can always walk around the mall, or use an indoor treadmill, stationary bike or another type of cardio machine to stay moving year-round.

## Balance is key

- ✓ Practice your balance indoors with single-leg stability exercises. Be sure to use support for these exercises.
- ✓ Take your time and walk slowly when you're outdoors.
- ✓ Keep your knees slightly bent when you walk—this brings your centre of gravity lower to the ground to help stabilize your body.
- ✓ Maintain good posture: keep your head raised and don't lean forward, backward, or walk with your hands in your pockets.
- ✓ Place your entire foot on any slippery or icy surface and keep your feet more than 12 inches apart to create a strong support base.

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## Walking tips

- Grab the handrail when walking up or down slippery steps and slick slopes.
- Avoid carrying heavy items; they can throw you off balance.
- Stay on main roads or other areas that have been cleared of ice and snow.
- Walk in well-lit places—dark areas on sidewalks and streets can be especially slippery.
- Bring a small bag of grit, sand, salt or non-clumping cat litter to sprinkle on icy areas.
- Look around frequently to spot any icy patches you might encounter.



## Gear up

- Use a cane with a **removable or retractable ice pick**, ski poles or a walking stick.
- Get good winter boots: insulated, waterproof, lightweight and with a non-slip, wide and low heel.
- If you use grippers on your boots, be sure to remove them, sitting down, as soon as you get indoors.
- Wear your glasses, sunglasses, or hearing aides to remain aware of what is happening around you.
- Dress in brightly coloured clothing or wear reflective gear to stay visible to others.
- Take your phone with you in case you fall and need to call someone for help.



**\*Removable or retractable ice pick**

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