

Choosing a walking aid

Walking aids are designed to give confidence to people with long-term mobility issues and those recovering from an injury or operation. So, which is the right solution for you?

From a simple walking stick to a multi-wheel walker, there is a wide range of apparatus on the market. Getting the right equipment is essential, so you might need to consult a medical professional such as a physiotherapist or Occupational Therapist.

To help you, we have devised this quick guide...

Walking sticks

Designed for people with slightly reduced mobility or balance, walking sticks have a single point of contact with the floor. Weight and height are the main considerations for any walking stick, so take time to find the right one for you.

Traditionally made from wood, modern versions are metal and are therefore much stronger and more adjustable. There are also lightweight folding sticks which make storage easier, perfect for a large handbag or car boot. These contain tough elastic inside the shaft to keep the stick stable.

Other walking stick variations include ones with a seat, ideal for people who need to rest while they are out and about. Please be aware that the seat size is small and does not provide a lot of support.

For those seeking a more stable walking stick, you might wish to try a three or four-legged version. These are made of metal and can be adjusted for height, while the wider base provides a more stable platform.

Walking frames

For those with more severe mobility issues, walking frames offer more points of contact with the ground so can take much more of your body weight.

Standard walking frames, also known as zimmer frames, are metal and designed for indoor use. Rubber feet on the four legs aim to prevent slipping on smooth surfaces. However, these frames need to be picked up to move.

Another solution is a wheeled walking frame, which has two small front leading wheels, so the frame can glide across the floor.

Wheeled walkers

For people seeking a more mobile frame, the three and four-wheel walkers are very popular walking aids. The larger wheels also mean they are suitable for both indoor and outdoor use.

Three-wheel versions are easier to move than four-wheel versions because they can be steered using the front wheel. The brakes, applied using the handle grip, are an important safety feature so the walker can be used for support when stationary.

The major benefit is that walkers allow a more natural walking pattern, however they may not suit people who need the frame to carry a lot of their weight.

Need help?

For honest, practical advice on walking aids, contact a member of our friendly team.

Call 020 8370 7888 or email office@directmobility.co.uk Alternatively, you can pop into the showroom at 15 Church Street, Hertford, SG14 1EJ.

