



GoodbyeCrutches
Hello Freedom!

KNEE WALKER

BUYER'S GUIDE





Know Your Options

So you've been told you will need to stay off your foot or ankle for an extended period. This could be because of surgery, an injury, or a wound. If you have used crutches, you know how difficult it can be to use and the limitations it can put on your lifestyle.

Don't be condemned to crutches! You have choices. Perhaps your health care provider suggested a knee scooter or a knee walker. You've searched the Internet and are left with even more questions.

Finally, while this guide will help outline the various options and steps you can take to do your due diligence, please remember **this guide does not provide medical advice**. If you have questions of that nature, which go beyond the scope of this guide, please **consult your doctor**.

What is a Knee Scooter?

A knee scooter is a wheeled cart-like device that completely takes weight off the user's lower limb as it bears weight on their knee. It's also commonly referred to as a "knee walker" or a "Roll-a-bout" (the original manufacturer).



Features to Consider

While all knee scooters are similar in their basic functions, there are important design features that directly affect safety, comfort, and mobility.

Safety: Do not compromise safety – this is the most important feature to consider!

When you purchase a car, comfort is great. Speed and acceleration are wants to consider. However, you first look at safety. How the brakes work and how it handles in bad weather is vitally important. What good is a knee scooter if it doesn't do its job safely?

These are the most important safety features:

- **Must Turn Easily:** The original models required the user to lift the front to pivot left or right. Not only did this take strength, but balance, which medications can often compromise. Newer models turn like a bicycle to improve safety and make it easier to use.

This feature is so vital that **some insurance companies will not reimburse for non-steerable (non-turning) models** and many suppliers no longer offer them. Also, avoid models that have caster-like wheels (like those to those found on a shopping cart). These can unexpectedly move sideways (laterally away from you), causing your legs to split apart and maybe even cause you to fall.

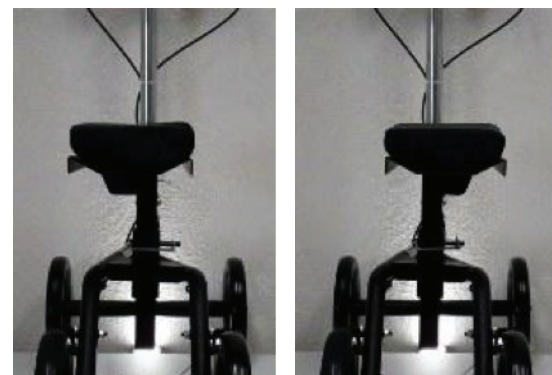
- **Big Wheels:** You want bigger wheels. This is because larger wheels make it easier to maneuver through carpet, uneven surfaces, or the outdoors. Again, **some insurance companies will not cover units with wheels smaller than five inches in diameter.**

Large or fat off-road tires are available on all-terrain models, but are only necessary for rough terrain, gravel, or sand; and most of you won't be hiking in your knee scooter! The ideal standard is the eight-inch wheel.



- **Offset Knee Platform:** Stability is both a physical and a psychological safety feature. A product that shakes or feels “loose” will likely leave you feeling less confident in your movement. Stability comes from both the width of the unit and the offset of the knee platform.

Higher-end models allow the knee platform to offset toward your good leg. Not only does this allow more of the unit to support your injured leg, it also keeps your pushing leg from kicking the knee scooter, which is annoying and potentially dangerous. You will also want to consider wider knee scooters, because some units are so narrow, you get that “unstable” feeling. However, a unit that is too wide could have its own problems. Some units are so wide that it won't fit through a doorway.



Offset Right for Left Leg Injury
Offset Left for Right Leg Injury

- **Location of Seat Post:** Simply put, if a seat post is protruding from the bottom, it can cause abrupt stops, which are dangerous. This safety warning is especially important for shorter users. In addition, with the knee platform in a lower position, some cheaper models could contact the ground when going over uneven surfaces. When this happens, the knee scooter stops abruptly, potentially causing the user to lose control.





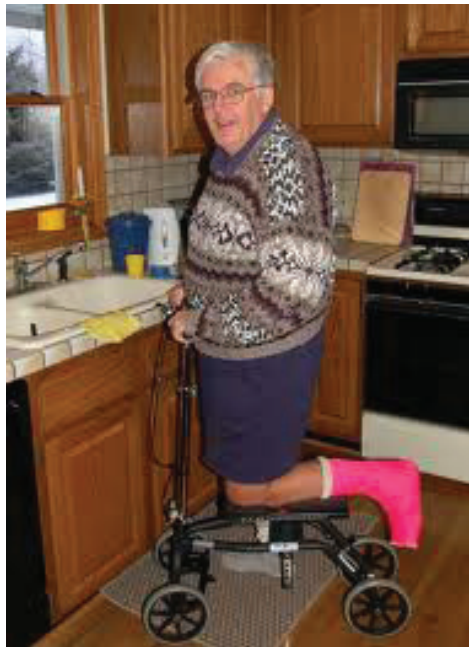
- **FDA Registered:** Because it is a medical device, all knee walkers must be registered with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to be sold legally in the United States. Recently, there has been cheap import models brought in from China not registered with the FDA. In addition to safety concerns, failure to have FDA registration may make the device ineligible for insurance reimbursement, or to count as a medical expense for tax purposes.

Comfort and Mobility: Now that you have addressed the safety issues, now you can look at what features best fit your lifestyle. There are many variables to consider, but two that should top your list are simplicity and versatility.

- **Adjustable Knee Pads?** Your needs can change as you adjust your cast or dressing. That is why many people want a unit with two adjustable pads. The ability to adjust the location of the pad can greatly affect your comfort. You will want to avoid units that only offer a single fixed pad.
- **Folds for Easy Storage:** Most units fold easily for easy storage and transportation. It can be put in the back seat of a car, a trunk, or even in the first-class closet on an airplane (though you will want to call the airline for size and permission to do so beforehand). Avoid the very large units that are too big for most cars and any plane; only use these if the need for a large unit outweighs that of a smaller one.
- **NO Tools Needed:** Make sure that the knee scooter can be adjusted without tools. To this day, some new models (and many older) units require wrenches, which are not included, to adjust for height and size.
- **NO Bolts to hit your good ankle:** Another case where smaller is better. Avoid units that have large nuts protruding from the back wheels. Your good leg or ankle will tend to kick these as you move (and adjusting your current walking gait will be difficult and inconvenient). Having the bolt hit your ankle or leg is annoying and can be painful – and you will have this happen more than once.



- **Accessories:** What are your daily needs to get through a day? Do you carry a purse, phone, book, lunch, laundry? Look for accessories that address your day-to-day needs. A large, removable basket may be handy, or you may only need small bags that attach to the sides. While the basket is often more versatile and practical for many people, if you only carry small items, you may appreciate the space savings from the bags.
- **Cup Holder!** Another small, but vital, accessory is a cup holder. One that attaches to the handle bars can be helpful getting you going with that morning coffee and hydrated throughout the day with a water bottle.





Getting Your Knee Walker

You've found the perfect scooter for your needs. Now you need to determine how you will acquire it. There are many more variables to consider, which often come down to cost.

- **Rent or Buy?** If you only need the unit a short time, renting might be an option. Rental prices range from \$35 to \$80 a week and \$100 to \$300 a month. Since prices vary greatly, make sure you do your research. Some suppliers will allow you to apply rental charges to the purchase should you need it longer than you originally expected.

If you will need the unit for a longer time (or anticipate needing it in the future), buying it makes more sense. Again, the purchase price of a new, quality unit ranges from \$400 to \$800, depending on vendor and features. While you want the options that best suit your safety and convenience requirements, don't purchase a product with features you don't need.

If buying a used unit from an individual, make sure it is safe. Any manufacturer's warranty will most likely not transfer with the unit. Buyer Beware! Instead, look for an authorized distributor who will ensure the refurbished knee scooter meets all manufacturer's specification and will include a warranty.

- **Deposit:** Some suppliers require a deposit up to the full purchase price of the unit. At the end of the rental period, once the unit is returned, any credit is reimbursed. Many suppliers ask for a more modest (\$100-\$200) deposit, while some require no deposit. Obviously, the lower deposit, the better.
- **Insurance:** Insurance companies refer to knee scooters by the generic term "crutch alternatives" under HCPC Code E0118. They may cover them for patients who must keep weight off their healing foot or ankle and are unable to use crutches due to balance issues, upper body limitation or other issues. While some suppliers will bill your insurance company, many will provide you with a blank Letter of Medical Necessity for your doctor to review and complete. This will help you in submitting a claim for consideration of reimbursement. Even if



the knee scooter is not a paid benefit, it may count towards your deductible or be able to be charged to your health care spending account.

- **Free Delivery and Return:** You could try to find a local supplier with knee scooters in stock. Styles, price, quality and service vary greatly. Availability is limited and you could be placed on a waiting list. Once you find a supplier, it may require three visits to their location during their business hours to order, pick-up, and return the unit. Some stores will deliver to your home or hospital for a fee.

An increasingly attractive option is ordering online and having the knee scooter shipped directly to your home, office or hospital room. Look for suppliers that offer free round-trip shipping and will even pick it up at your doorstep. Having your knee scooter shipped directly to you is especially convenient if you are already injured, can't drive, live in a rural location, or you have a busy schedule or other limitations.

- **Satisfaction Guarantee:** Make sure you can return any knee scooter you rent or buy if it doesn't fit your needs. Be cautious of suppliers that don't allow you to try it outside or offer at least a three-day trial period. Compare to this [industry standard satisfaction guarantee](#).
- **Expert Advice and Service:** When using your knee scooter and you have a question (which you will) who will you call? Working with an expert that specializes in crutch alternatives should ensure a better experience by offering a knowledgeable staff that's available to answer questions and share tips. Avoid getting stuck with a "big box" supplier that has everything from beds to bedpans, but limited experience with knee scooters.



In summary, look for these for an ideal recovery:

Safety

- It turns
- Big wheels
- Offset knee platform
- Nothing protruding from the bottom, causing sudden stops
- FDA Registered

Comfort and Mobility

- Adjustable knee pads
- Foldable for transportation and storage
- No tools needed to adjust
- Nothing sticking out from the wheels
- Accessories that fit your lifestyle

Services

- Rent or purchase options
- Rental fees that apply to purchase
- Free convenient delivery and return
- Satisfaction guarantee
- Customer service

Doing your due diligence in obtaining a knee scooter will make sure your purchase (or rental) is safe, convenient, and best fits your budget (and that of your insurance company). Do not skimp on these steps! Recoveries can be hard; do what you can to make it less difficult.



What Does A Knee Scooter Cost?

The first question is whether to rent or buy (and if you haven't yet read it, please check out Page 6). Since most people will only be non-weight bearing for up to two months, renting becomes a cost effective option. If you have any doubt, read this article **Should I Rent or Buy A Knee Scooter?**

When looking at the price of renting it is important to **consider the total cost**:

- Rental Fee
- Delivery
- Return shipping
- Accessories like cup holder and basket

It is also important to consider **out-of-pocket costs** when you order, including whether the supplier charges a deposit, which can run as high as the full retail price.

Here is an example of charges for a one-month rental of a turning knee scooter (one month is the typical rental minimum for most providers):

Goodbye Crutches:

Rent (1 month): \$140

Refundable deposit: \$0

Cup holder: \$0

Basket: \$0

Delivery: \$0 (2-day delivery) or \$47 (next-day delivery) in the contiguous US

Pick up: \$0

Return shipping: \$0

Total: \$140 (or \$187 if you choose next-day delivery)

So, keep ALL the costs in mind. If a rental is \$99 a month, but there are delivery costs, heavy deposits, and fees for pick-up or return shipping, you may find that this deal is anything but a good deal.



Does My Insurance Cover a Knee Scooter?

Yes, No, and Maybe

Every insurance company is different, and every plan within the insurance company may be different.

It is best for you to **call your insurance company directly and ask them:**

- Is “**HCPCS Code E0118** - Crutch alternative with or without wheels” a covered benefit?
- What percentage or dollar amount will they cover?
- What are the other requirements? Some pay for purchase and not for rentals, others may require you to go to an in-network provider.







They may also want to know your procedure code. This informs them of the injury and/or surgery that made it necessary to rent or buy a crutch alternative. You can get this directly from your doctor’s office. For example, your insurance company may cover a scooter or knee walker if you are recovering from an Achilles repair surgery, but not for tooth extraction.

Regardless of their answer, be sure to include a **paid receipt, signed prescription and Letter of Medical Necessity for a knee walker from your doctor when you submit a claim.**










Product Comparisons

The following is a comparison chart of various types of knee walkers. In the first two categories, we have bolded those sections that do not have the safety features we believe you should seek in a product.

	Turns	Big Wheel	Offset Knee Platform	Adj. Knee Pads	Folds Small	No Tools Required	Accessories (Wt. Limit)
 Roll-about	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	None (250 lbs)
 Roll-about	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Basket (500 lbs)
 Drive	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No (300 lbs)
 Knee Bop	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Basket (250 lbs)
 Free Spirit	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Small Bag (400 lbs)
 Invacare	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Basket (300 lbs)



	Turns	Big Wheel	Offset Knee Platform	Adj. Knee Pads	Folds Small	No Tools Required	Accessories (Wt. Limit)
 Spry Knee Cruiser	Yes	Yes	No	No	Folds but bulky	Yes	None (250 lbs)
 Nova Knee Walker	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	None (275 lbs)
 Roscoe Knee Scooter	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Basket (350 lbs)
 Roller-Aid	No Swivel caster wheels	No	No	No	Folds but bulky	Yes	Basket Water Bottle
 RAMM Pathfinder	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Basket (350 lbs)
 Roller Foot	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	None (Not stated)
 <p>1. Tubular chrome handle 2. Plastic coated aluminium shin and knee rest, padded with foam 3. Electro plated lightweight box section steel supports up to 150kg 4. Height fully adjustable 5. Double thrust bearing castor wheel</p> K-9 Trolley	No Swivel Caster Wheels	No	No	No	No	No	None (Not Stated)



	Turns	Big Wheel	Offset Knee Platform	Adj. Knee Pads	Folds Small	No Tools Required	Accessories (Wt. Limit)
 Weil Knee Walker	Yes	Yes	No	No	Folds flat but very long	Yes	Basket (400 lbs)
 Goodbye Crutches (Turning Knee Scooter)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Basket & Cup Holder (350lbs)
 Goodbye Crutches (All Terrain Knee Walker)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Basket & Cup Holder (400lbs)
 Goodbye Crutches (Bariatric Knee Walker Scooter)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Basket & Cup Holder (500lbs)
 Swivel Mate	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Basket (400 lbs)
 Knee Rover	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Basket (400 lbs)



Additional Resources

While we at Goodbye Crutches think the above guide is sufficient to address many of your concerns, we want to make sure you have ALL of your questions answered. The following videos and articles will give you a better idea of how to use a knee walker, the features in action, and many other questions you may have.

General

[What to Look for in a Knee Walker](#) (video)

[Make Sure Your Satisfaction Is Guaranteed on your Knee Walkers](#) (article)

[Can Children Use Knee Walkers?](#) (article)

[What is the BEST Knee Walker?](#) (article)

[Traveling with a Knee Scooter](#) (article)

[Frequently asked Questions about the Knee Scooter](#) (article)

[How the BBB grades Knee Scooter Suppliers](#) (article)

[How to Drive with a Knee Walker](#) (video)

Rent vs. Buy

[Should I Rent or Buy a Knee Scooter?](#) (article)

[How to Rent a Knee Walker](#) (video)

[Beware these Rental Policies](#) (article)

[Returning your rented Knee Walker](#) (article)

[Never Pay a Deposit When Renting a Knee Scooter!](#) (video)

Insurance

[Insurance Tips and Assistance](#) (video)

[Does Insurance Cover Knee Walkers?](#) (article)

[5 Tips to Get your Insurance to Pay For Your Knee Walker](#) (article)

[Letter of Medical Necessity for your physician to review and sign](#)



Deciding which crutch alternative is best for you

[Which is Best for You: Knee Scooter or Hands-Free Crutch?](#) (article)

[Which is Best for You: Knee Scooter or Seated Scooter](#) (article)

[Find the best crutch alternative for you.](#) (Online Quiz)

Silly things!

[Why You'll Never See a Zombie on a Knee Walker](#) (article)

[6 Ways Getting a Knee Walker is Like Buying Crack](#) (article)

[Funniest Knee Scooter Questions](#) (article and link to video)

Product Reviews

[Drive Knee Scooter Review](#) (article)

[Drive Knee Scooter](#) (video)

[Free Spirit Knee Scooter Review](#) (article)

[Invacare Swivel Knee Scooter Review](#) (video)

[Spry Knee Cruiser Review](#) (article)

[Spry Knee Cruiser Review](#) (video)

[Roll-about Original Review](#) (article)

[Roll-about Turning Review](#) (article)

[Roller-Aid Knee Scooter Review](#) (article)

[Wiel Knee Walker Review](#) (article)



Did you get all of your questions answered?

This is the fifth edition of the Knee Walker Buyer's Guide. As we receive feedback from you, we continue to add and clarify the guide so you have the most accurate and current information.

If you would like to share your feedback, click here. It's our honor and privilege to serve you.

Please visit our website: www.goodbyecrutches.com.

877-266-3995



GoodbyeCrutches

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