

SNOW SHOVELLING TIPS

CHOOSE A SHOVEL THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

A shovel with an appropriate length handle is correct when you can slightly bend your knees. A plastic shovel blade will be lighter than a metal one, putting less strain on your spine.

WHEN YOU GRIP THE SHOVEL, MAKE SURE YOUR HANDS ARE AT LEAST 12 INCHES APART

This will increase your leverage and reduce strain on your body. Always keep one hand close to the base of the shovel to balance weight of the lift and lessen the lower back strain.

LIFT THE SNOW PROPERLY

Squat with your legs apart, knees bent and back straight. Lift with your legs. Do not bend at the waist. Scoop small amounts of snow into the shovel and walk to where you want to dump it. Holding a shovel of snow with your arms outstretched puts too much weight on your spine.

STEP IN THE DIRECTION IN WHICH YOU ARE THROWING THE SNOW

This will help prevent the low back from twisting and “next-day back fatigue”.

TACKLE HEAVY SNOW IN TWO STAGES

Begin by skimming off the snow from the top and then remove the bottom layer.

TAKE FREQUENT BREAKS WHEN SHOVELING

Stand up straight and walk around periodically to extend the low back. Do standing extension exercises by placing your hands on the back of your hips and bend backwards.

DRESS WARMLY TO CONSERVE YOUR BODY TEMPERATURE

For example, wear mittens (not gloves); wind-proof, water resistant, many-layered clothing that will wick perspiration away from your body; two pairs of socks (cotton next to skin, then wool); and a scarf and a hat that cover the ears to avoid heat loss through the scalp.

WEAR PROPER FOOTWEAR

With good tread to help avoid slipping or falling.