

# The Sports Academy's Weekly Fitness Tip

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## Tips for safe shoveling



For most, shoveling may seem more like a simple chore rather than a potentially dangerous activity.

However, shoveling can put undue strain on your back and muscles and may lead to a higher risk for heart attacks. According to the Consumer Products Safety Commission, 70,000 people in 2008 had severe enough shoveling-related injuries to trigger a doctor's visit.

**Protect yourself from injury by following these shoveling safety tips:**

- 1. Prepare:** Warm up inside, stretch your muscles (particularly your hamstrings) and warm up your core muscles with crunches or working with an exercise ball. Cold muscles are more likely to be strained.
- 2. Use the right equipment:** Use a curved handle shovel, which allows you to keep your back straighter while shoveling.
- 3. Push, don't lift:** By pushing instead of lifting, less strain is put on your back.
- 4. Take breaks:** Don't try and shovel the whole driveway all at once. Take frequent breaks to stretch your back, arms and legs and relax your muscles.
- 5. When lifting, use your legs:** If you must lift, bend your knees and lift with your legs rather than with your waist. Walk to where you want to dump the snow, never twist or throw over your shoulder.
- 6. Avoid slips:** Falls from slipping on the ice beneath the snow can also be hazardous. Wear shoes with good traction to prevent falls.



**When done safely and properly, shoveling can be great exercise!**

Weekly Fitness Tips are created by Dan Smith and Karlie Brand. If you have additional questions or would like more information please contact the Sports Academy at 435-753-7500 or by email at [dan@sportsacademy.com](mailto:dan@sportsacademy.com).