

Guide to Common Gaits in Lesson Guests

Revision 09-01-2024

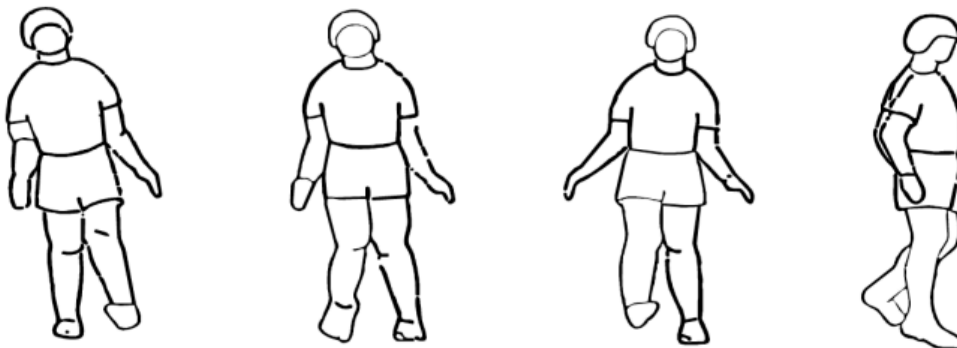
Gait. Manner of walking.

Careful observation of students as they walk into the ski lodge can reveal what muscles are affected and the degree of impairment. Sometimes impairment of gait may be caused by mechanical factors, such as disease of bones, tendons, joints, or muscles. Damage or lesions at different levels of the nervous system can also be causes of gait abnormalities. A few of the most common gaits are listed and illustrated below:

Cerebellar gait. Irregularity of steps, unsteadiness, and tendency to reel to one side. Problems are increased when the ground is uneven. Two examples of someone who may have a gait similar are a person with ataxic cerebral palsy or Friedreich's Ataxia.



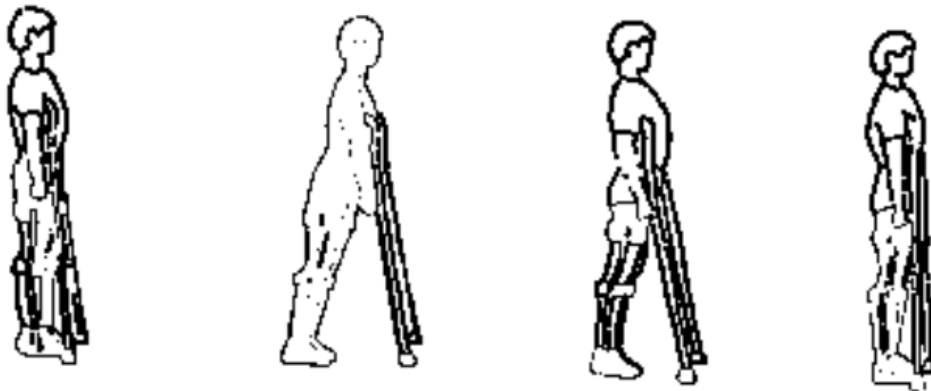
Hemiplegic gait. Both arm and leg on the same side are involved. Individuals lean to the affected side, and arm on that side is held in a rigid, semi-flexed position. An example of someone who may have a gait similar is a person with hemiplegic spastic cerebral palsy.



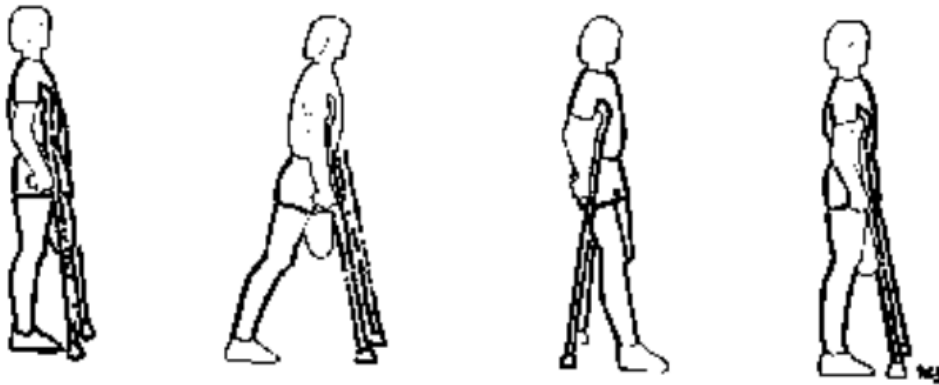
Scissor gait. The legs are flexed and abducted at the hip joint causing them to cross alternately in front of each other with the knees scraping together. An example of someone who may have a gait similar is a person with quadriplegic spastic cerebral palsy.



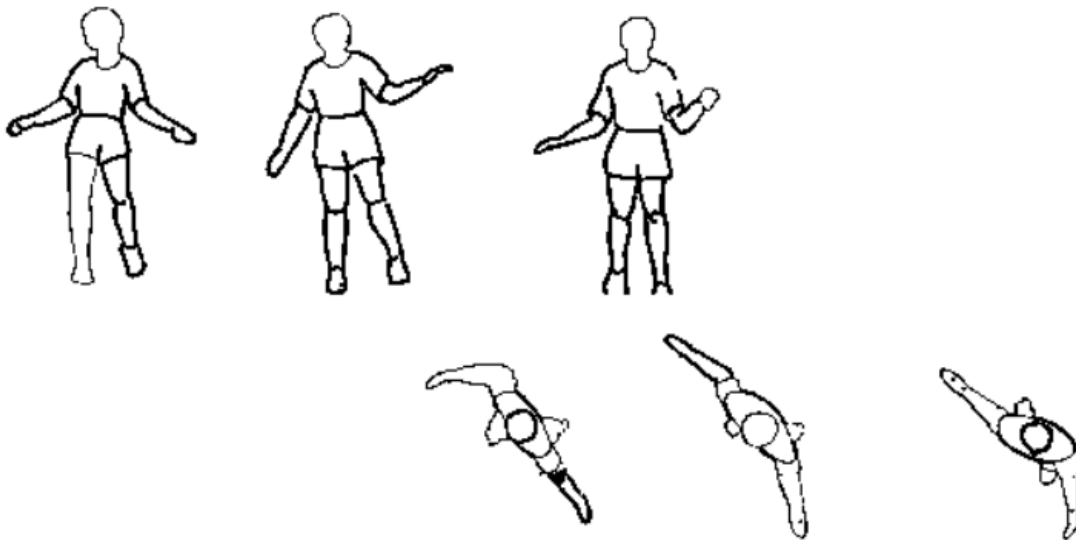
Step to, swing to, or drag to gait. All the weight is taken by the arms while the legs are lifted and swung or dragged forward. The pattern is lift and drop, lift and drop. An example of someone who may have a gait similar is a person with spina bifida in long leg braces.



Swing through gait. The body is swung through the crutches so that the good foot lands in front of the crutches. Then the crutches are brought forward, and the sequence is repeated. An example of someone who may have a gait similar is a person who has an amputated leg.



Waddling gait. Characterized by awkward side to side waddle, sway back, arms held in backward position and frequent falling. An example of someone who may have a gait similar is a person who has muscular dystrophy.



Illustrations by Katheryn Bevier



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