

Shoveling Tips

1. Dress in warm layers and proper seasonal attire. You should be able to remove a layer if needed. Shoes (boots) should have tread on them to prevent slips or falls.
2. Stand with your feet at the width of your hips while facing the direction you are shoveling. This will help keep your balance and keep the shovel close to your body reducing strain. Pivot your body towards the direction you are moving snow.
3. Keep a wide grip on the shovel handle - one hand near the top and the other closer to the shovel, giving yourself better control.
4. Push, rather than lift snow to help avoid back injury and possible heart attack. If the snow is wet and heavy, take smaller loads. Avoid twisting your back and lifting snow over your head. Also remember to bend with your knees.
5. Take frequent breaks to avoid fatigue and possible overheating. Stay hydrated and drink water frequently while shoveling.
6. Waxing or lubricating the shovel blade will prevent ice and snow adhering (sticking) to it.
7. Put the piles of snow a good distance away from driveways and parking lots to prevent repetitive shoveling of the same snow when piles fall down.

Picking the right shovel

- A curved handle or adjustable handle length will minimize bending.
- Small and light plastic blades help reduce the weight of what you are shoveling.

Heavy Equipment Usage

- Always ensure that safety guards are in place prior to starting the equipment you're using. Make sure that the machinery is working properly and that all hazards have been eliminated.
- Keep a strong, steady grip on the equipment. Make sure to not overload machinery with too much snow too quickly while also ensuring no one is in the way of machinery while in use.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The American Journal of Emergency Medicine reported over 195,000 injuries treated at hospitals around the country due to shoveling snow from 1990-2006. Some of the most frequent injuries reported were overworking muscles, falling and being hit with a shovel. Numerous cuts and broken bones were also reported with the most common breaks being in the hands and arms.
- Heart problems made up only seven percent of injuries reported but every fatality reported during this time occurred as a result of a heart condition.*

*Statistics courtesy of The American Journal of Emergency Medicine - [ajemjournal.com/article/S0735-6757\(09\)00371-4/fulltext](http://ajemjournal.com/article/S0735-6757(09)00371-4/fulltext)

