

Simple device makes walking on ice less precarious

By Kathryn Reed

Ice under tennis shoes and a dog at the end of a leash. And I didn't fall. I didn't even slip. Not once.

This is because I had a pair of Yaktrax on. I've owned a pair of the Walkers for a while, but seem to forget I have them until I'm sliding. Last week a pair of the Pro model arrived in the mail.

I'm keeping these in my car so I have them with me in case I'm in an icy parking lot or I'm off to walk my friend's dog, AJ.



Yaktrax make walking on ice less scary.
Photo/Kathryn Reed

These simple-to-use devices allowed me to walk my normal pace and normal gait. I walked on ice, hard pack and a mix of white stuff. The surface was level. I didn't run, but the manufacturer says these are good for runners.

Abrasion-resistant steel coils are wrapped around heavy-duty natural rubber that slips over the bottom of shoes. One obvious difference between the Pro model and my old ones is

the nylon hook and loop strap that fits around the top of the shoe for a more secure feeling.

The Yaktrax website says, "The easiest way for most people to install Yaktrax on their shoes is to sit down, cross your legs, pull your foot up near your other knee and slip them over your shoe."

They also say not to wear them inside – which in my mind is the easiest place to sit.

I was outside putting them on because I didn't need them on the street. I needed them to walk along the path in the Upper Truckee Marsh. Sitting was not an option if I wanted to stay dry.

Had it been colder, it would have annoyed me that I needed to take my gloves off to get them on and off. Part of that has to do with the strap, and part is these are tighter than my other pair.

But that was the only issue I had with these winter walking aids that are named after the Tibetan yaks that roam the Himalayas.

After my one test walk of the Yaktrax Pro, I know in the future I will not hesitate to wander into icy areas that normally I would avoid.