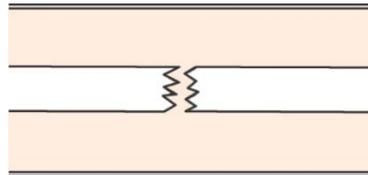


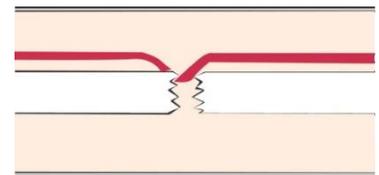
FRACTURES

Dealing with fractures;

If someone has broken a bone it may be very obvious or it may be difficult to detect.

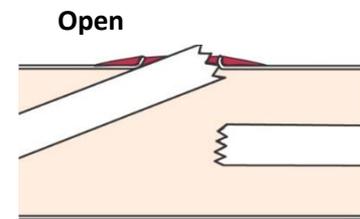


Closed

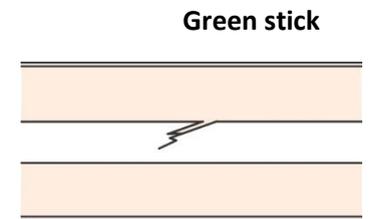


Complicated

The idea that 'if you can move it, it isn't broken' is not actually true. A person may be able to move a broken limb but it is likely to cause some pain. Without an x-ray it is difficult to diagnose a broken limb.



Open



Green stick

1 - When dealing with an open fracture deal with blood loss first. Only apply pressure if blood loss is severe, otherwise *gently* cover open fractures with a sterile dressing to keep them clean.

Signs a limb is broken can include:

Pain	Beware painkillers, medication alcohol etc may mask the pain
Loss of power	Cannot use the fractured arm
Unnatural movement	Anything moving where it shouldn't
Swelling or bruising	Swelling and colouring around the injury site
Deformity	Arm bends the wrong way
Irregularity	Lumps and depressions
Crepitus	Casualty feels or hears bone rubbing together
Tenderness	At the injury

2 - Immobilise the injury.

Keep your casualty still and reassure them. It is likely that the casualty will be very carefully keeping the injury still. Assist them to do this. You can use a makeshift sling or if you know how, use a triangular bandage to make a support sling or elevation sling.



Elevation sling



Support Sling

Pictures cutesy of Qualsafe awards First Aid Made Easy

FRACTURES

Which sling?

The casualty will be holding their arm in the most comfortable position, follow their lead and secure it in that position if they are happy for you to do so. If they can keep it still without a sling it may be best not to intervene.

Immobilising a fractured leg.

In order to reduce the chances of the leg being moved move the good leg to the broken leg and secure them both together. Only do this if you are going to be waiting a long time for help. Check circulation and loosen ties if required.



3 – Make them comfortable and help them to keep warm.

4 – Keep talking to your casualty, reassure them and look out for signs of shock (see wounds and bleeding unit)

Things to consider:

Should I move the casualty?	How serious is the injury? Is head, neck or spine at risk? Are they safe where they are? Can I safely keep them still?
Should I put a sling on the injured arm?	Are they able to keep it still without a sling? Are they going to walk or stay still? Intervene as little as possible.
Should I call 999?	Is there a lot of pain/blood? Is it a lower limb injury? Are there other complications e.g. breathing problems/head injury? YES call 999
Should I bandage the injury?	Open fractures should be gently covered rather than bandaged.
Should I immobilise the fractured leg?	How long will the ambulance be? What the likelihood of them trying to move their leg? Do I need to help them keep it still?
Can I give them food or drink?	No, they may need an operation.