

# Shoe Buying Guide

When buying shoes, think about the activities you will be doing in them. Your foot is also a key factor when considering what type of shoe to buy.

Pronated or flat feet require a straight last shoe with rear foot stability, and firm midsoles. Supinated or high arch feet require a curved last, and cushioned mid-foot and rear-foot soles.

Have your feet assessed by one of our chiropodists to find out what foot type you have.

Qualities to look for in a walking shoe:

- Soft, breathable uppers
- Snug fitting heel with no slipping
- A wide, low heel (less than an inch high)
- A rocker heel and sole
- Velcro or laces to keep the foot in the shoe
- An inside lining with no ridges
- Rubber, non-slip, shock-absorbing soles
- A round toe area with enough depth to wiggle your toes
- Shoes should fit your ankles as well as your foot
- Sole of shoe should be firm in the heel area and flexible in the toe area
- A strong heel counter (back of the shoe should be firm to support the heel)

Here are some guidelines to follow when buying shoes:

- Buy shoes at the end of the day, when your feet are larger
- Have both of your feet measured when standing
- There should be a half inch gap from the tip of your longest toe to the end of the shoe
- Buy a shoe that is designed specifically to the activity you will be doing
- Bring your orthotics, if you have them
- The shoe should be comfortable in the store and *should not* have to be broken in

## Shoe Stability Test

Once you have found a pair of shoes you would like, try doing a stability test. A stability test is quick and has only 3 steps:

1. Try to bend the shoe in half by bending heel toward toe.  
If the shoe did not bend, then the shoe is too stiff and is not recommended.
2. Try to twist the middle of the shoe.  
If the shoe bent significantly, then it is unstable.
3. Try to bend the toe box of the shoe by the big toe.  
If the shoe only bent in the toe box you have likely found a stable shoe!

## Children's Shoes

The features of children's shoes vary depending on age. Children under 3 years old should have a shoe with a flexible sole. After 3 years of age the heel-toe gait is established and the child should have a shoe with a firm midsole and be flexible in the toe area.

## Sports Shoes

Sports and activity put greater demands on you and your footwear, it is important that you pay more attention to prevent injury. Examine for wear patterns. Sports shoes are designed for specific types of movement. Wear the appropriate shoe for the activity and get fitted properly by a knowledgeable salesperson. Replace your shoes after approximately 800 miles or 75 hours of activity.