

Shoes: Choosing Shoes That Fit

Why is a proper fit important?

Our feet take a great deal of punishment every day. They support our weight and carry us from place to place. Many people do not give much thought to shoe selection. If you consider only style and not fit when buying shoes, you may cause lifelong problems with your feet. Shoes need to be fitted for the size and shape of the feet and for the activity. A proper fit will help prevent problems.

What are the guidelines for choosing shoes that fit properly?

Here are some guidelines for choosing shoes that fit properly:

- Once a year measure the length and width of both of your feet. Foot size changes with age. Also, both feet may not be exactly the same size. Measure your feet at the middle or end of the day (after you've been most active) to account for normal swelling. Select the shoe size that fits your largest foot. Be sure that you have one-half inch of space from the end of your longest toe to the tip of the shoe and that the widest part of your foot comfortably fits the widest part of the shoe. If necessary, add an insole to adjust the shoe for the smaller foot. Also, be aware that shoe sizes vary from brand to brand.
- When you try new shoes, wear the kind of socks or stockings that you intend to wear with them. Avoid socks and stockings that bunch up or are too tight.
- Test shoes by standing on one foot at a time. Wiggle your toes and stand on your tiptoes. Shoes should bend at the same place that your foot bends. Walk or run a few steps in the shoes. Make sure your heel does not slip inside the shoe.
- Never buy a shoe thinking it needs to be stretched out or broken in before it will be comfortable. Purchase a shoe that is comfortable right from the start.
- Buy athletic and work shoes that have the stability, support, protection, and cushioning required for what you do.
- Be cautious about high-heeled shoes. You can develop a variety of foot and posture problems from wearing high heels. Shoes should not have a heel higher than 2 and 1/4 inches. Low-heeled shoes with plenty of room in the toe are safer and healthier.

Developed by RelayHealth.

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