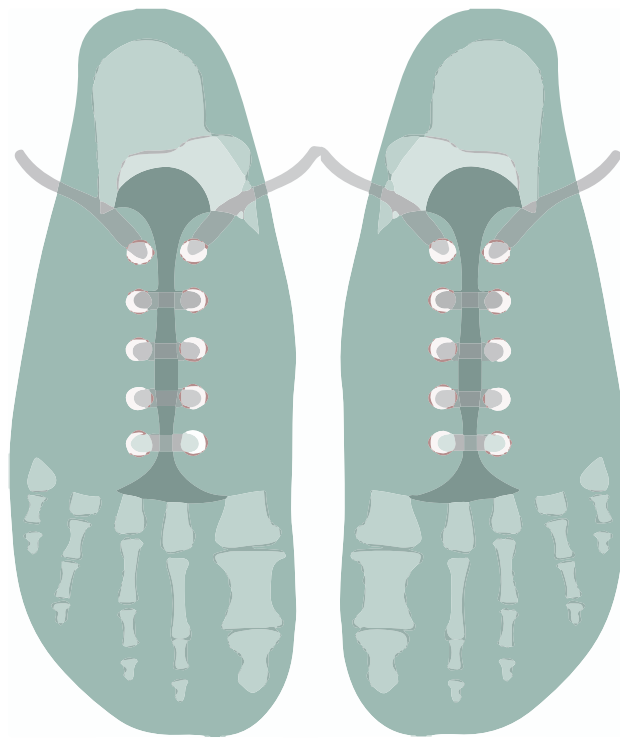




wellbeing | fitness | performance



CHOOSING SHOES

READ THIS TO HELP WHEN BUYING SHOES

Materials

Choose leather or 'breathable' synthetic shoe uppers, as this allows air to circulate around the foot. Plastic or synthetic materials stop sweat evaporating and make the feet hot, which encourages fungal infections, such as athlete's foot.

Do I have to wear sensible shoes all the time?

Wear 'sensible' shoes for 80% of everyday walking or standing and save 'fashion' shoes for special occasions and try not to walk too far in them

Insoles

We may make you special insoles. The ideal shoe for this will have a removable insole. If the insole is not removable you need plenty of depth to the shoe to allow room for the insole without squashing the toes.

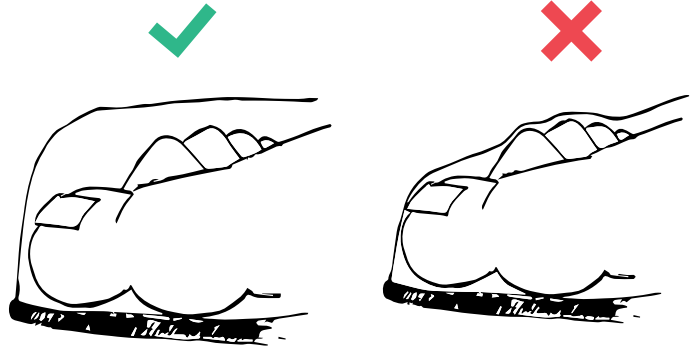
► Shoe shopping tips

- Try on shoes with the type of hosiery you would normally wear
- Shop at the end of the day so your feet will be at their largest if they tend to swell
- If the shoe isn't right when you try it on, don't rely on 'breaking it in!'
- Try shoes indoors on carpet until you are sure they are comfortable so there is more possibility of being able to change them if they are not suitable

Ask the podiatrist for other leaflets on running shoes, children's shoes or shoes for people with diabetes for more detailed information

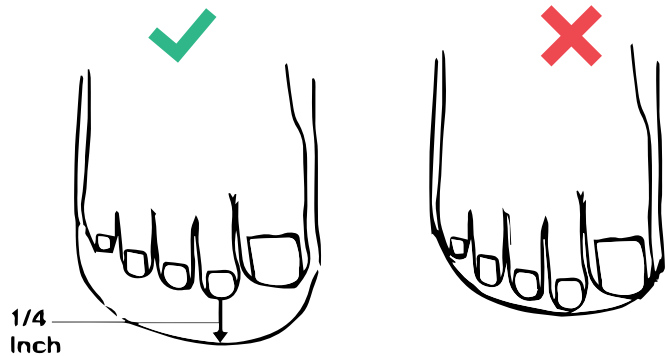
Depth of toe box

The front of the shoe needs to be deep enough not to press on the tops of the toes otherwise corns can occur. Clawed toes need extra depth. A stretchy, soft front part of the shoe may help,



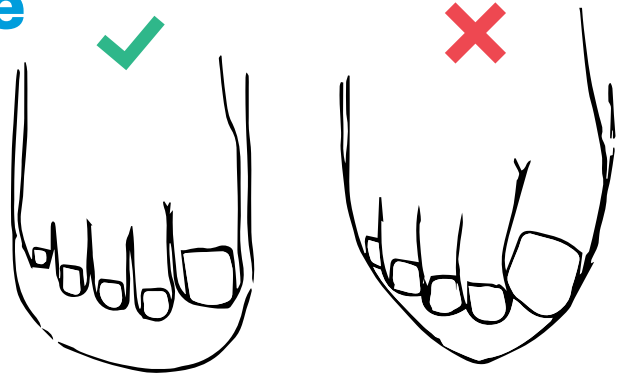
Shoe length

A ¼ inch space between the end of your longest toe and the end of your shoe is ideal. Feet stretch as you walk so if you can feel toes touching the end of the shoe when you are standing, it's too short



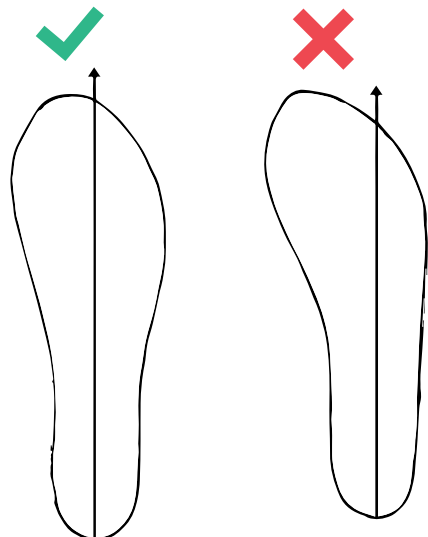
Width of shoe / toe shape

Narrow shoes can squash the foot. Over time, this can cause nail problems, corns or damage to nerves. 'Wide-fitting' shoes give more space across the ball of the foot, but the front needs to be round or square or it can still squeeze the toes.



The 'last' of the shoe

If you have wide shoes but your little toes still get squashed, look at the bottom of the shoe. Imagine a line or hold a pencil in the centre of the heel, does the front of the shoe curve inwards compared to the heel? Many shoes are made like this, a straighter shoe shape will help avoid squashing the little toes.



The sole of the shoe

Hard surfaces like pavements are unnatural. To give your feet some shock absorption, buy shoes with thicker soles and soft padding. Trainers are ideal for this, plus often they have a rocker at the front that acts like a wheel, helping the toes to propel forward. To check to see if a shoe has a 'rocker' sole, see the diagrams below (Ask the mhealth Podiatrist for more information on running shoes).



Fastening

A shoe needs to hold on to you, not you to it. Slip on shoes have no fastening. These hold on by fitting tightly round the toes and the foot muscles tense to keep the shoe on at the heel. Laces or Velcro allow the shoe to be fastened on the arch of the foot. This allows enough space for you toes to function properly.

Heel height

We know that high heels throw your body weight forward causing foot problems and often back problems too. Try to limit heel height to under 1½ inches and have a wider base heel

If you have worn high heels for a long time the calf muscles can shorten so you can't walk comfortably without them. If you suddenly change from years of heels into flats, ask your Podiatrist if you need to stretch your calf muscles or strengthen the muscles on the top of the foot.