

The Ideal Shoe

Nowadays different types and styles of footwear are available. However the primary and the most important function of footwear still remains one; that is Protection

Wearing ill-fitting shoes is considered to be the commonest cause of problems in the feet; including toe deformities and pain. Although it cannot be claimed that suitable shoes correct foot problems, they can certainly alleviate or even prevent most; including corns, fungal infections and foot pain. So wearing the right shoes is vital to foot health and is an essential part in the treatment of foot problems.

Heel Counter

- Necessary to control the heel
- Must be stiff (can barely be squeezed)
- Must fit well and not gape
- Should not be too low
- Well padded (collar as shown recommended)

Fastening

- Necessary to tie the foot firmly to the shoe and prevent foot from sliding forward
- Laces (minimum 3 eyelets), buckles or Velcro are all suitable fastenings
- Slightly padded tongue prevents pressure to top of foot

Toe Box

- Must be roomy enough to wiggle your toes in
- Must be as wide as your toe area
- Must be lined in leather or cotton
- No palpable stitching to be felt on the inside

Material

- Leather uppers are more porous to air and moisture and stretch more easily to prominent joints
- For bunions, hammer-toes, etc... the Toe-Box may be made of stretchable material to accommodate the deformity

Innersole

- Cushioned to absorb the impact of walking on hard surfaces
- Hard arch cushions should be avoided as they may alter the way your feet bear weight (if necessary custom made ones should be used or prescribed)

Heel

- Ideally height should not be more than 4cm: as more height loads the ball of the foot
- Should have a broad base as possible to enhance heel stability

Outer Sole

- As thick as possible in front to cushion ball of foot
- Flexible only at ball of foot (widest span of sole)
- Should be wider than your feet



Finding the Right Shoe For You

Use the following tips to get the right shoe:

- Always buy shoes late in the afternoon. Feet swell to their largest by then.
- Shoes should fit comfortably in the shop. Don't plan on shoes stretching with wear.
- Feet grow wider with age. Have your feet measured every time you buy shoes.
- Do not insist on a certain shoe-size, as make and style cause shoes to fit differently.
- Make sure that it is of the correct length. There should be a gap of around 12mm between the front of the shoe and the longest toe.
- Make sure that there is sufficient width and depth to allow your toes to rest flat without being compressed.

Unfortunately, most shoes today are narrower in the front than the foot is. You can check this by standing on paper and tracing around your bare foot. Try introducing this cut out shape into your shoe and check if it fits without creasing.



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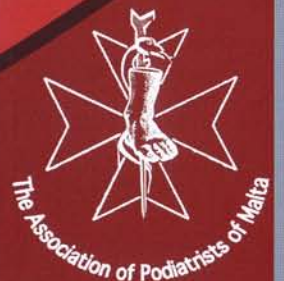
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Footwear

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