

# Athletic Shoes

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## KEY POINTS

- There are different kinds of shoes for different sports. If you take part in a sport 3 or more times per week, a shoe designed for that sport can allow proper movement and help prevent injuries.
  - It helps to go to a store with staff that are knowledgeable about your sport and can help you choose the right shoes. Try on both shoes and walk or jog in them. Make sure the shoes are comfortable right away.
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## What is the best shoe for me?

Choosing the right athletic shoe for a sport can be confusing. If you take part in a sport 3 or more times per week, you may need a shoe designed for that sport. It helps to go to a store with staff that are knowledgeable about your sport and can help you choose the right shoes.

There are different kinds of shoes for different sports:

- Running shoes: Running shoes should be lightweight and should provide good cushioning and stability. Running shoes should also be fitted to the shape of your foot and to your running style.
- Walking shoes: Walking shoes are stiffer than running shoes. When you walk, your foot rolls from heel to toe. Walking shoes have more cushioning in the front part of the shoe than running shoes do.
- Basketball shoes: Basketball shoes have a thick stiff sole and support your ankle when you stop, start, and move side to side. Basketball shoes support the inside and the outside of your foot and ankle.
- Tennis and other racquet sport shoes: These shoes allow for quick side-to-side movements and support the inside and outside of your foot. They need to be flexible and the bottom of the shoe should have a good grip.
- Field sport shoes: These usually have cleats, spikes, or studs. They are used for sports such as track and field, golf, soccer, football, and lacrosse. The length of the cleats, spikes, or studs is based on the playing surface, such as grass or artificial turf.
- Cross training shoes: These shoes can be used for different sports. They have some cushioning, some support, and some flexibility.

## What should I do when trying on shoes?

Select a shoe based on comfort, fit, and cost. Shoes that fit right decrease the chance for injury. Follow these guidelines when trying on shoes:

- Try on shoes at the end of the day or after a workout. Feet tend to swell and this will help you find shoes that are big enough to feel comfortable with this natural swelling.

- Measure both feet while you are standing, with your weight evenly divided between both feet. If you are young and are still growing, always get your feet measured before buying new shoes. If you are an adult, your shoe length should not change, but your foot width may change if you gain weight. It's a good idea to get your foot measured every time you get new shoes.
- Wear the same type of sock you will be wearing with the shoes.
- Try on both shoes and walk or jog in them.
- If you wear orthotics, put them in the running shoes when you are trying them on.
- Make sure there is a half inch between your longest toe and the end of the shoe.
- Make sure your heel doesn't slip.
- Make sure the shoe is comfortable right away. There should be no "breaking in" period.
- Consider taking a pair of worn shoes to the store when you are looking for new ones. The salesclerk can then see your pattern of wear on the shoes and help you know which shoes are best for your foot type.

Women with wide feet may want to consider buying men's shoes, which are wider through the heel and the ball of the foot. If you have a bunion or hammertoe, look for shoes with a wide toe area so that your toes can move freely.

## **How often do I need to replace athletic shoes?**

Soles tend to lose their effectiveness after 300 to 500 miles of use, depending on how much you weigh and the material used in the shoe. Some people buy 2 pairs of shoes at a time and alternate them from day to day. However, after a while the sole loses its ability to absorb shock even if the shoes haven't been worn a lot.

Brands and styles change every year, so the model of shoe that works for you this year might not be the best shoe for you next year.

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Developed by Change Healthcare.

Published by Change Healthcare.

Produced in Cork, Ireland.

# Pronation and Supination

Supination



Ankles lean outward



High arch

Neutral



Ankles do not lean



Normal arch

Over Pronation



Ankles lean inward



Low arch (flat foot)

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