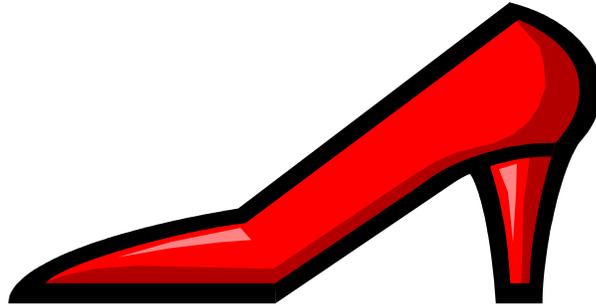
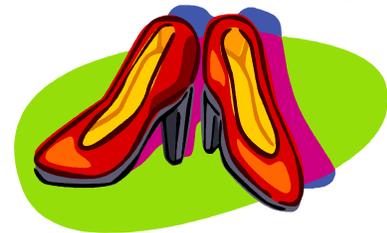


FOOTWEAR CONSIDERATIONS



Although you are certainly free to choose the types of shoes that you wear, you only get one pair of feet. And your feet deserve a standing ovation for all of the work that they do! They carry the average person more than 100,000 miles in their lifetime and absorb tons of force each day. All too often, however, our feet are crammed into shoes that look better than they fit and feel. It's no wonder that foot problems in America today are as common as headaches and common colds.

Shoe designers introduce many new shoe styles into the American market each year, with 3 out of every 4 new styles designed for women. However, for the most part, the shoe industry is interested in selling fashionable shoes at a considerable profit, not comfortable shoes offering good support and slip-resistance. Also, it is essential that you plan on taking the time to look for quality shoes that will be kind to your feet, and that will hold up under the stressful conditions that they will sometimes be under. Sadly, many of the shoes marketed today are mass-produced, and little attention is apparently paid to quality or durability



Foot experts offer the following suggestions for buying shoes:

1. Avoid buying shoes from a catalog. The best way to buy shoes is from a large, well-stocked shoe store with trained, experienced salespeople.

2. Shoe sizes vary among brands and styles. The size 7 ½ shoe that you wear in one brand may be larger or smaller than the 7 ½ shoe of another brand. You should judge the shoe by how it fits your foot, not just by the size marked on the box.



3. Try to shop for shoes in the late afternoon, when your feet may be at their maximum size.

4. Leather is generally recognized as the best material to look for in a shoe. In addition to its rich look and feel, leather is more "breathable" and allows perspiration to escape.

5. Never accept a different size or width than the one you wear because the shoe store doesn't happen to have your correct size or width in stock. Also, it is recommended that you compare the sole of your foot to the bottom of the shoe, making sure that the shoe is both wide enough and long enough. When you stand up with the shoe on, you should be able to easily wiggle your toes. Do not accept the salesman's statement that a snug shoe will stretch. There is no guarantee of this. [A proper fitting shoe should feel comfortable the first time that you put it on.](#)

6. Be sure to walk in the shoes to make sure that they feel comfortable. You should have between 3/8 and 1/2 inches of space beyond your longest toe.

7. Your heel should fit comfortably in the shoe, with minimum slippage.

8. In general, the wider the heel of the shoe, the more stability that you're going to get. Be sure to check the heels of any shoe that you're interested in buying. Slip-resistant rubber heel tips are best. If you really like the shoes but they have plastic heels, you can take them to your local shoe repair shop and have the plastic heels replaced with slip-resistant rubber.



No matter what type of shoes you wear, check the soles and heels regularly and have them replaced if they become worn.

For many women, foot pain is the price of wearing high-heeled shoes. In the USA, women visit orthopedic surgeons for foot problems 4 times as often as men, and women undergo about 87% of operations performed to correct foot problems such as bunions and hammer toes.

Foot experts have determined that narrow, pointed shoes and high heels contribute to foot problems by compressing the toes and increasing forces on the forefoot during standing and walking. Also, a women's foot survey conducted by the American Foot & Ankle Society indicated that 88% of the women surveyed were wearing shoes that were too narrow – by an average of $\frac{1}{2}$ inch ! **While most women's feet are between $3\frac{1}{4}$ and $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide, fashion shoes are usually only 3 inches wide !**

In summary, foot experts generally agree that wearing shoes with high heels and narrow toes can increase your risk of:

- * Slips and Falls
- * Twisting and Spraining Your Ankle
- * Foot Problems
- * Knee Arthritis

Your feet will appreciate your providing them with comfortable, slip-resistant shoes, and you will be less likely to experience foot problems and slips/trips/ and falls.