

## How to Choose the Right Running Shoe



Running successfully is more than just training successfully. The right running shoe is essential for a proper training program. People often ask, what is the best type of running shoe to buy? The simple answer—the best shoe is what fits and feels best based on your individual foot type. A good relationship with your local running specialty store can keep aches and pains away and assure you are supported mile after mile.

A helpful tip is to shop for a running shoe later in the day when feet are swollen to avoid buying shoes too small because your feet swell when running. Also, it is a good idea to wear the same socks you wear running.

Knowing about your feet will help steer you in the right direction. Start the process for finding the right shoe at home by doing the "wet test" to determine the shape of your foot. Wet the bottom of one foot and step firmly onto a paper towel on a flat surface. A flat foot will leave a wide, complete footprint. A high arch footprint appears severed in half vertically, so that virtually no print from your arch is visible. A "normal" foot is somewhere in between and will show about half the arch. If you run regularly, bring your shoes to the store, along with any custom or over the counter orthotics.

Some people ask if there are specific tests performed to determine your foot type and running gait. Although not an exact science, examining wear patterns offers clues about which shoes will fit you best. Knowledgeable running store employees will ask how many miles you run per week, on what terrain, and your running experience and goals. The staff will look at the shape of your foot and measure it standing and seated. This will help tell them how your foot measures both weight bearing and non-weight bearing. Looking at the shape will give them a starting point for determining the degree of stability you'll need. You may have to try on several pairs and brands before finding the one that fits and feels best. The staff should watch you run in each pair to make sure the shoe supports your individual needs.

Ultimately, it comes down to fit and feel. Once you determine the style that will best support you, finding the most comfortable model is that last step. The shoe should feel comfortable the minute you put it on. If it doesn't, keep trying on shoes!

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