

Focusing on:

The Right Shoes



If the Shoe Fits...

Get Sneaker Savvy

Selecting the right pair of walking shoes is crucial to both the effectiveness and comfort of your workout. Fortunately, getting a good pair isn't a difficult task—as long as you're aware of a few key points.

Before You Go...

- Choose an athletic or specialty store with a large inventory. They will have a variety of sizes available to meet your specific needs.
- Try to get fitted for footwear at the end of the day, when foot size is at its maximum. It is not unusual for an individual's foot to increase one-half a shoe size during the course of a single day.
- When you try on the shoes be sure to wear the socks you would wear to work out.

Once You Get There...

- If you have high-arches you'll most likely require greater shock absorption than those with average feet. Conversely, if you have low-arched, "flat" feet you'll probably want shoes with less cushioning but greater support and heel control.



- Allow 1/2 inch, or the width of your index finger, between the end of your longest toe and the end of the shoe. If one foot is larger than the other, buy the larger size.
- The shoe should be as wide across the forefoot without allowing slippage in the heel. If the shoe has variable-width lacing, experiment with the narrow and wide eyelets to achieve a custom fit.
- A good walking shoe should be mostly leather, to absorb shock, while running shoes are mostly made of lightweight, nylon fabric. If you're walking in running shoes you "run" the risk of getting painful shin splints.

Walk it Off

One of the many benefits of walking is its simplicity—you can literally just get up and go. However, to maximize your walking and minimize injuries you'll need the right shoes—just keep in mind that there is no perfect shoe for everyone. Everyone's feet are different and require specific features, however, the right pair of shoes for every walker should have:

- good arch support
- appropriate tread
- sufficient durability
- flexibility
- cushioning

Above all your shoes should be comfortable!

Wear it out

It is important to be aware of when your shoes need to be replaced because, if they are no longer absorbing the pounding and jarring action of the sport, you are more likely to sustain knee and ankle injuries. Shoes normally need to be replaced every three to six months. However, if your budget doesn't allow new shoes that often, try replacing your insoles—they can provide additional support for a fraction of the cost.



This Week's Challenge

Sign up for an organized walk/run. Examples include Walk for Life, MS Walk, and Corporate Cup.

Five Questions

Here are five questions for you to consider as you progress through this campaign.

1. Are there others pressuring you to become more physically active? If so, who?
2. In what ways would being more physically active benefit your family?
3. What personal, health, or social problems have poor physical condition caused for you?
4. List the past three previous attempts you have made to become more physically active. Why have they failed?
5. What sacrifices have you made to fit regular physical activity into your schedule?



The foot might seem simple enough, but it has 26 separate bones, 30 different muscles, 56 tendons, 250,000 sweat glands, and 33 joints.

—*Too Busy to Exercise*, by Porter Shimer