

Orthotics

Footwear Advice

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The aim of this leaflet is to give you some idea of what to look for when purchasing a pair of shoes in order to accommodate your orthosis as well as providing adequate support for your feet. Our feet support all of our body weight when we are standing and walking, it is therefore important that our feet are supported well by wearing the correct footwear.

What are 'good' shoes?

The most important point about a well fitting shoe is that it is the correct length for your foot. This means there should be about 1cm (1/2 an inch) between the end of your longest toe and the end of the shoe. Remember that all manufacturers use different shaped lasts when they make their shoes, so one make may fit very differently to another even though they say they are the same size. **Other good points to look for in a shoe are shown below.**

Heel counter

This is the reinforcement around the heel of the shoe to stabilise the foot on the ground; this should be nice and firm

Insole

A removable insole will allow extra depth to accommodate an orthosis

Fastening

Laces, buckles or touch close fastenings (like Velcro®) all help to hold the shoe securely on your foot and support orthotic inserts. It is sometimes easier to get your foot into the shoe if the fastenings extend further down towards your toes

Upper and linings

These should be made from leather or breathable materials and be as smooth as possible. You should be able to pinch the upper over the ball of your foot

Heel

The heel of the shoe should be broad and under 4cm (1.5 inches) high.

Pitch

If your feet are painful it is better to aim to have a heel that is 15-20mm (3/4 inch) thicker than the sole under the ball of the foot. This helps your foot and ankle function with less strain.

Width

The shoe is designed so that the widest part of your foot sits in the widest part of the shoe

Sole

This should be thick enough to provide some cushioning when walking and have enough grip to prevent slipping

Toe Box

This should be wide enough not to squash toes and deep enough to allow your toes to wriggle in the shoe

