

Footwear Advice

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Firm heel counter: This is the cup around the back of your heel. A stiff heel counter gives stability and limits excess movement. Test it by squeezing or pushing it forward—it should feel firm. Check the height is adequate for accommodating foot orthoses.

Rocker Sole (if advised): This type of shoe has a thick, curved sole that helps the foot roll forward. It reduces pressure on the front and middle of the foot, which can ease pain in these areas. Many sports trainers, walking shoes, and boots have mild rockers; however, there are more specialised Rocker Sole shoe types available. Ask your podiatrist for advice.

Robust and Stable Sole: The shoe's sole should resist twisting and bending in the mid-section, maintaining its structure to support the foot effectively.

Removable liners: Shoes with removable liners give more flexibility for using foot orthoses. Some liners are lightly glued and can be lifted out easily. Ask your podiatrist if you need any help.



Cushioning and Shock Absorption: Look for shoes with thick cushioning in the heel and midsole, which helps absorb shock and reduces impact when walking.

Wide, deep toe box: Gives your toes space and reduces pressure. Check by standing on the removable liner—it should be wider than your foot.

Proper fit: The shoe size number is not important. Ensure there is a thumb's width between your longest toe and the front of the shoe. Check by standing on the removable liner or pressing the end of your toe with your thumb while standing.

Adjustable fastening: Laces, straps, 'quick laces' or Velcro allow you to adjust the fit, holding your foot securely in place and reducing excess movement and friction.

Wearing The Right Footwear

One general recommendation that will ease the discomfort of most common foot problems is proper fitting shoes. Poorly fitting shoes can make symptoms of foot pain worse and in many cases be the primary cause of the problem. It is important to purchase footwear that fits properly from the moment you buy them. Never buy footwear hoping they will “break in” later.

Getting The Correct Fit

- Trying on shoes later in the day is always best. This will ensure your footwear fits correctly even if your feet have become more swollen throughout the day.
- Always fit the larger foot. Adjustments can be made to your footwear to help fit the smaller foot.
- Purchase footwear that matches the general shape of your foot (don't try to fit a square peg in a round hole).
- The footwear must allow adequate toe room while standing. There should be 10-15mm of space between your longest toe and the end of the shoe (approximately a thumb's width).
- The widest part of your foot should sit in the widest part of the shoe.
- Shoes should have a comfortable snug fit but should not feel tight or binding.
- Your heels should fit comfortably in your shoes with minimal slippage.
- Walk around in the shoe and be sure they feel comfortable. Make sure there are no pressure points from seams.

If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet, please contact Podiatry Services.

For more information about our services and how to manage common foot problems at home, please visit our website:

www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/project/podiatry

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