



Suffolk Podiatry

Children's Footwear Advice

Children's feet are different to adult's due to changes associated with growth and development at various stages of their lives.

It is important that you get your child's shoes fitted correctly and it is advised to get a shoe fitter within a shoe shop to do this. Regular visits to check on your child's shoe size and fit are recommended.

The society of shoe fitters recommends children from the age of 4 should have their feet measured every 10-12 weeks

Children's Shoes Should:

- ✓ Provide a stable platform for your child to run and play on
- ✓ Should be secure to your child's foot allowing for normal movement – adjustable fastenings are recommended, a toggle can be used if your child struggles with laces.
- ✓ Provide grip to prevent falls
- ✓ Have a stable heel and heel counter (back of the heel of the shoe)
- ✓ Should have flexion in the sole – not rigid



Useful information when buying shoes for children

- **Have feet measured by a qualified fitter:** Both feet should be measured for size and width. The larger foot usually indicates the size.
- **Feet should be measured when standing:** To allow for the spread of bones and soft tissues when weight bearing
- **Footwear ideally should be made of natural materials:** Leather is a breathable material and moulds to your foot. Man-made materials like plastic and canvas return to their original shape and make your feet perspire; this can lead to fungal infections and skin irritation.
- **Choose shoes that are available in different width fittings:** Young children ideally need a shoe which is slim at the heel and wide at the front.
- **Children's shoes need to have adjustable fastenings:** Lace/Buckle/Velcro
- **"Hand-me-down" shoes:** Never allow your child to wear second hand shoes; they take on the shape of the previous wearer. This risks rubbing of skin, providing inadequate support and possibility of harbouring infection

- **The sock drawer:** Socks should be cotton or wool and any misshapen or outgrown socks should be discarded.



General advice for buying shoes

- Shoes sizes are a guide and may well vary – check the shoe accommodates your foot without pinching
- Make sure you can wriggle your toes inside the shoes
- Try on both shoes and walk round the shop a little
- Don't buy shoes that pinch or rub or slip at the back
- Feet tend to swell a little during the day so buy shoes in the afternoon when your feet will be at their largest.

To have healthy, comfortable feet, it is important to wear the right footwear!

When choosing shoes to bring to the Biomechanics clinic please bear in mind that slip on shoes are NOT suitable.

- ⇒ Fastenings are essential – laces or wide Velcro/ buckle straps
- ⇒ Heels should have a broad base and be no higher than 2.5 cm
- ⇒ Heel counters should be firm
- ⇒ Soles should be thick and cushioned
- ⇒ Uppers should be soft leather and breathable
- ⇒ Toe box should be deep enough to allow your toes "wriggle" room
- ⇒ Best if the footbed (insole) of the shoe is removable (allows room for an orthotic/insole)



IMPORTANT!

Wearing shoes that follow the guidance in this leaflet is important for maintaining good foot health and helping to reduce symptoms. For some people, changing your footwear is the only treatment you need, to have pain free feet.

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