

## Footwear

Choosing the correct shoe is one of the most important features to get right when you have foot & Ankle pain – They are like the foundations of a building – everything else you do that follows will rely on the correct shoe being used.

### Recommended footwear features

A Well-fitting shoe with a robust sole (bottom of shoe) that resists twisting and bending at the mid section which also has laces or fastening straps to keep it secure will give your feet the best support and protection.



- Fastenings such as laces or Velcro straps will keep your foot firmly placed, preventing slipping & rubbing.
- The sole unit (bottom of shoe) should be a 1 piece or continuous unit which is best for walking & running.
- Ensure sufficient space (width and depth) in the toe-box to prevent squashing & rubbing of the toes.
- The heel should not be more than 25mm or 1 inch high.
- The uppers (top) of your shoes should be made from a supportive but supple material, to reduce rubbing and provide suitable support.
- **Avoid** slip-on shoes and slippers.
- **Avoid** very flat – flexible – unsupportive or worn out shoes
- **Avoid** separate heel and sole type shoe



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## Rocker-soled footwear

Sometimes we recommend rocker soled shoes to help with certain foot and ankle problems.

These shoes mainly help to reduce pressures to the forefoot but are helpful for lots of foot & Ankle problems.

They have thick soles which taper toward the toes from just behind ball of the forefoot. This allows the shoe to rock forward as you walk -or if you press down on the toe area.



Rocker soles are commonly found on shoes and boots with stiff soles – such as walking boots and shoes – but there are lots of other options available

Be careful – Lots of shoes roll up at the toe – this is called **toe spring** – and it helps your foot to clear the ground when you walk. If the sole is not sufficiently stiff the shoe will not function as a rocker.

## New shoes

You should never have to 'break your shoes in' if they are not comfortable when you try them on, they are not right for you.

It is reasonable to wear your new shoes in for a while, this helps you adjust to a new style that you may not have worn before.



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You can wear them around the house for short periods (20-30 minutes) to acclimatise to them and then check your feet. Look for problems such as redness from rubbing/pressure. If this happens you can usually return them if they are not soiled or been worn outside.

If you're happy with your new shoes start wearing them outdoors for a few hours at a time and gradually build up the use.

### **How do I know if my shoes are worn out?**

Look at the wear and tear such as loss of tread pattern, compressed sole and torn stitching or ripped seams.



A robust shoe is one that maintains its structure under the pressures of walking & running to support the foot. Give the shoe a firm flex & twist to the middle section of the sole to see how well it retains its structure – see our footwear video.

If shoes are showing signs of wear and tear it is best to replace them and discard the old ones.

Don't be tempted to use your old shoes for D.I.Y or gardening – there is a reason why they are your old shoes!!

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