

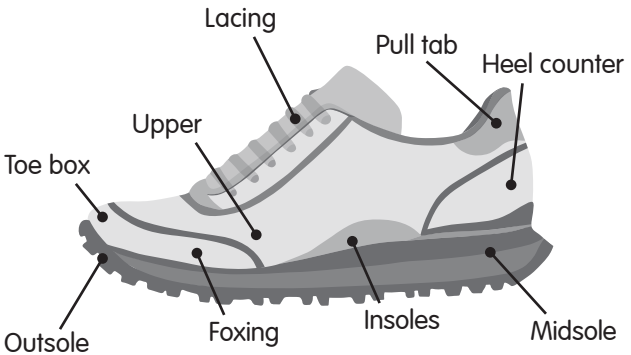
FACT SHEET

Choosing the Right Shoes



Why good shoes matter

Wearing the right shoes keeps your feet healthy, comfortable, and safe from injuries. Good shoes support your feet, help you move easily, and keep you steady. Whether you need shoes for everyday use, sports, or special occasions, choosing the right pair makes a big difference.



What makes a good shoe?

- **Flexibility:** Shoes should bend at the toes, not in the middle, allowing the toes to move.
- **Support:** Avoid minimalist shoes such as jandals, clogs and high heels (no more than 4 cm (1.5 inches) high). A firm heel keeps your foot stable. Fully supportive shoes help prevent injuries.
- **Stiffness:** Shoes should not twist easily.
- **Fit and comfort:** There should be about 1 cm (half-an-inch) of space in front of your longest toe. There should be a thumb's width of space at the toe. Always try shoes on, as sizes vary between brands. Diabetics and those with foot deformities should opt for wider shoes (2E, 4E, 6E) with extra depth.
- **Toe room:** This should be roomy enough to ensure toes have space to move without being squashed.

- **Shoe width:** Ensure the widest part of your foot aligns with the widest part of the shoe.
- **Fastening:** Laces, buckles, or velcro help keep shoes snug and support orthotic inserts if needed. Fastenings extending toward the toes make putting shoes on easier.
- **Sole:** Should provide cushioning and grip to prevent slipping.
- **Upper and linings:** Made from breathable materials, preferably leather, with smooth interiors.
- **Removable insoles:** Allow for orthotic insoles to be removed and adjusted.

Rocker soles: What are they?

Rocker-soled shoes have special soles that help your foot roll smoothly from heel to toe when you walk. They come in different types and can help with various foot and ankle issues.

When choosing shoes, it's important to pick ones with broad, sturdy soles to keep your feet supported and stable while standing and walking.

Shoes with a rocker-shaped sole can help reduce pain and discomfort by controlling how pressure is distributed across the foot. They can also make up for limited ankle movement. Depending on the shape of the sole and where the rocker is placed, these shoes can help with different foot and ankle problems.

Different types include:

- **Forefoot rocker:** Reduces pressure on the front of the foot, useful for conditions like metatarsalgia or post-surgery recovery.



- **Midfoot rocker:** Helps compensate for limited ankle movement or forefoot problems by shifting pressure away from metatarsal heads.



Choosing shoes for kids

- **Learning to walk:** Babies do best barefoot, but soft, non-slip shoes help on rough surfaces.
- **First shoes:** Once a child has walked for six weeks, they need proper shoes for outside. Shoes should fit well and allow for growth.

Everyday vs. occasional shoes

- **Everyday shoes:** Supportive and secure for daily activities.
- **Occasional shoes:** Less supportive (like jandals or dress shoes) and should only be worn briefly.

Buying the right children's shoes

Look for:

- ☐ Secure fastenings (laces, velcro, buckles)
- ☐ Non-slip soles that bend near the toes
- ☐ A snug heel for stability
- ☐ A low heel (under 2.5 cm)
- ☐ Enough space for toes to move
- ☐ Room to grow



For more helpful resources, please visit our website: www.pw.co.nz/resources

Extra tips

If a child has weak feet, trouble balancing, or walking difficulties, well-fitted shoes are even more important. Poorly fitted shoes can make these problems worse. Everyday shoes should be worn as much as possible.

Final thoughts

- Good shoes make walking easier and safer.
- Everyday shoes should fit well and be supportive.
- Occasional shoes aren't meant for long wear.
- Expensive doesn't always mean better – fit and comfort matter most.

Need help?

If you're unsure what shoes to get, ask Peke Waihanga for advice. The right shoes can make a big difference!

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