

Choosing the correct footwear

Information sheet

Getting suitable footwear

Our feet carry us the equivalent of five times around the earth in an average lifetime, yet we give them less attention than they deserve and rarely wear the best shoes for our feet.

The following information sheet will give you some advice on how to find a well-fitting shoe.

The heel

The broader the heel of the shoe the better it is at spreading body weight.

The heel height should be no greater than 4cm as this will increase the weight on the forefoot.

A low heel height of about 1-2cm (approximately 1/2 inch) can be more comfortable than walking with completely flat shoes.

The back of the shoe should be deep enough for the heel to sit snugly without lifting out of the shoe when walking.

The upper (top part of the shoe)

The upper should be made of a natural material such as leather or breathable fabric.

It should extend to the mid-foot otherwise it may not provide enough support and cause the foot to 'walk out' of the shoe.

The sole

The sole should be made of a cushioning material such as rubber to provide cushioning and shock absorption.

Check the sole regularly to ensure that there is tread. If completely smooth, you could slip.

The fastening

Many designs of slip-on shoes are kept on the foot by either being too small/tight or by encouraging the wearer to claw or spread their toes to hold the shoe on whilst walking.

There should be a fastening on the shoe such as laces, Velcro or a buckle. This prevents the foot slipping forwards in the shoe.

The fit

There should be a 1-2cm gap between the longest toe and the end of the shoe.

The shape of the shoe at the front should match the shape of your foot. The width of the shoe should correspond with the widest part of your foot while standing.

The toe box should be deep enough to prevent the toes from rubbing on the upper.

Slippers

Always wear slippers with a cushioning sole and a fastening to hold them securely on the foot. Do not tread down the back of the heel as this will cause the slippers to be less secure on your foot and you may fall. If wearing slippers for long periods, a house shoe may provide more support.

Recommended retailers of wide fitting shoes

Wide Shoes of Welling

19 Bellgrove Grove, Welling
020 8303 6929

Eltham Care & Mobility

279 Eltham High St, Eltham 020 8859 6070
(stockists of cosyfeet slippers)

Hotter Shoes

0800 083 8490

Cosyfeet

01458 447 275

DB Shoes

01933 359 217

Shoe shopping tips

- Feet tend to swell a little during the day so buy shoes in the afternoon when your feet are at their largest.
- Make sure you can wiggle your toes a little inside your shoes, try on both shoes and walk a few steps to check they do not pinch or rub.
- Wear the socks or stockings you anticipate to wear most often when wearing the shoes.
- Take any insoles or orthotics with you and try the shoes with them.
- Do not think you will have to 'break' or 'wear in' the shoes. Shoes that fit correctly will be comfortable in the shop and will not require 'breaking in'.
- Have your feet measured as our feet are often not the same size as when they were last measured or as a child.
- Remember, sizes may vary from shop to shop or for different styles so your shoe size may differ.

Contact us

Oxleas Adults' Community Greenwich Podiatry Service

0208 320 3550

Monday – Friday

8:30am – 4:30pm

It is not always possible for us to answer the phone straight away. Please leave a message and your call will be returned.

Please let us know if you require an interpreter or have any additional needs.