

Children's Shoes

The Foundation for Healthy Feet

Parents often worry about their children's teeth, eyes and other parts of the body, but do not worry so much over the developing foot. Many foot problems adults suffer from can have origins from their childhood. Attention to footwear in children can minimise the risk of these problems in adults.

Importance of the right shoes

Preventing problems begins with a child's shoes fitting properly. Preferably, children's shoes should be fitted by someone who has special training in the fitting of children's footwear.



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Growth of the Child's Foot

A child learning to walk receives important sensory information from the soles of their feet. Shoes, particularly those with hard and inflexible soles, can make walking more difficult. Your toddler doesn't need shoes until they have been walking for a couple of months, and then only to protect their feet from sharp objects.

It is important to allow your child to go barefoot regularly to help them develop balance, coordination and posture.

Under age 16-18 months: Grow more than half a foot size every two months

16-24 months: Grow an average of half a foot size every three months

24-36 months: Grow an approximate half a foot size every four months

Over age 3: Increase half a foot size every four to six months

Types of Children's Footwear

Pre-Walkers: Babies and those still crawling do not need shoes. They need booties or prewalking shoes that do not restrict the foot's movements. They should be flexible and not supportive and conform to the shape of the foot.



First pair of 'Real' Shoes: Used when the child first starts to walk unaided (between 9 - 18 months). Fitting toddlers should follow the 'Fitting Guide' below. Continue to encourage barefoot in protected environments.



Sneakers: Soft and pliable sneakers are usually the ideal footwear for children at most ages, as long as it has plenty of room for the toes.



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Fitting Childrens Footwear - Advice

Shoes for your children should ideally have features including:

- A firm, comfortable fit both in length and width
- Rounded toe
- Plenty of room for the toes
- Flexible, flat sole
- Heel support
- Laces, straps or similar to prevent too much movement or slipping of the foot inside the shoe
- An absorbent insole as children's active feet sweat a lot



Fitting Guide

LENGTH

There should be a thumb width between the end of the shoe and the end of the longest toe = **length is correct.**

WIDTH/DEPTH

You should be able to pinch the upper of the shoe between the thumb and forefinger (this may depend on the nature of the material) = **width is correct.**

GOOD FIT

Does the shoe fit snugly around the heel and instep? How stable is the shoe when trying to 'pull off' the shoe? = **good fit.**



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Sports Shoes



At Highett Podiatry, our Sports Podiatry team is focused on delivering footwear advice to ensure the sport shoes you choose keep the feet secure and help avoid injury.

Your feet are as unique as a fingerprint and your sports shoes should be chosen based upon the structure of your particular foot and the sporting activity you participate in. In the absence of a podiatric shoe recommendation, runners may unwittingly contribute to their own injuries by purchasing shoes that are not suited to their particular foot type.

Kids Football Boots

A common foot condition in children we see as podiatrists is a growth condition called Sever's disease. It is an inflammatory condition which is caused by irritation of the growth plate in the heel.

Sever's disease, particularly affects kids around the age of 8-14 but can vary slightly depending on development.

Inappropriate footwear, with an insufficient or absent heel height can be a contributing cause of Sever's disease. Football boots, ballet flats and canvas shoes are all types of shoes that generally have minimal or nil heel height present.



At Highett Podiatry, we can assess your child's biomechanics and footwear to aid in the management of this condition.



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ALWAYS CONSULT A TRAINED PROFESSIONAL

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