

SHOE BONANZA

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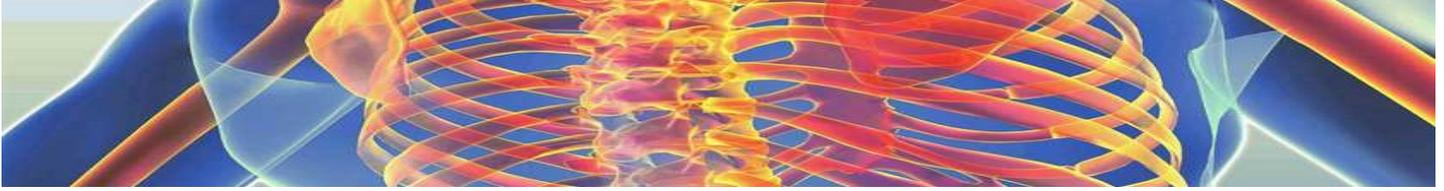
BUYING YOUR PERFECT TRAINERS

If you had walked into a store to buy running trainers 20 years ago and asked for a stability running shoe to compensate for your over-pronation, you probably would have been laughed at. Today we are much more familiar with terms such as pronation and gait and we expect to be asked questions about our arches ... whether we like medium support trainers ... or what sort of running style we have. I remember the biggest decision we used to face was choosing a shoe's colour. Most of us are now tuned into our needs as runners and are always on the hunt for the perfect trainer.

In the past decade the minimal support shoe has been popular amongst running enthusiasts thanks to it's lightweight design and barefoot feel. If you're thinking of moving to a minimal shoe you should look at the pros and cons involved and, if you make the switch, make sure you decrease your mileage as your body adjusts to the lack of cushioning and lower drop. Many people have been using these shoes when in fact they require greater support and are now dealing with the consequences.

“Have a look at the soles of your current trainers. Are they worn out on the outside or inside edges or none of the above?”





Currently, many of the major running shoe brands are releasing new cushioned shoe models. So with all these different options available, how do you find the best running shoe for you?

Foot Type

Have a look at the soles of your current trainers. Are they worn on the outside edges (overpronation), inside edges (under-pronator) or none of the above (medium/normal pronation)? This is a good guide to the type of shoe that might suit you best.

Foot Type	Foot Movement	Support Needed	Features
High arch	Under-pronator	Cushioned shoe	Softer midsole to control pronation
Flat foot	Over-pronator	Motion control shoe	Mid foot support
Normal	Medium arch	Cushioned shoe	Cushioned for shock absorption

Type of Shoe

Make sure you have the correct shoe for the job. Don't attempt to use your road shoes for trail running as they'll lack the tread, stability and support needed to get you through the run, injury free. Trail running shoes will be too heavy for road running and you'll regret lacing them up partway through your run. Identify which of the following will fit your needs.

Trail running shoes

These will give greater support for the foot and ankle, will provide better weather resistance and be suitable for more rugged terrain.

Cushioned shoes

Lack of movement and pronation of the foot requires a shoe that will absorb shock, as does a foot with a high arch. Lack of proper shock absorption can lead to excessive stresses travelling up the leg and may lead to hip, knee and ankle complaints.

Motion control shoes

Overpronation, inward roll of the foot, will be well managed with this type of shoe. It also offers increased mid-foot support as well shock absorption.

Shoe Size

Once you have chosen the correct style, try on a variety of brands and see which one is the best fit. If you are someone who loses toe-nails after long runs you might want to go up at least one shoe size or try a running shoe with a more generous toe-box. Remember that your feet swell when you run so there needs to be some room at the end of the shoe, about the width of your thumbnail. Ensure you have a little jog around the store, wear the socks you'd normally train in, check that there is no excessive rubbing of any of the toes and that the heel fits snugly with no slippage.

Now that you have found 'the pair' you can focus on breaking in your new shoes by walking around your house in them first, then doing a few short runs before taking them out for any serious mileage.

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