



# Footwear for Safety

Wearing the appropriate sport shoe can help prevent injury

Choosing the right shoe for your sport or physical activity may seem like a simple task, but keep in mind the correct footwear can possibly reduce the likelihood of a painful sports injury.

Choose a shoe for function not fashion or fad. Make sure your shoe is correctly measured and fitted.

Every time your heel strikes the ground your foot is subject to impact forces which can sometimes be between 3-5 times your own body weight.

## Tips for buying athletic shoes

There is some basic information you need to consider before you purchase your sports shoe:

- Your activity
- Your weight
- Your foot positioning on standing
- How you have worn out your previous shoe

There are four shoe features which can be simply tested when in the shoe store:

### Torsion

The greater the twist of the shoe the more the foot will roll. Most people want a shoe with minimal movement. To test, grasp the sole and the front of the shoe near the ball of the foot and twist lengthways.



### Midsole density

With your two thumbs, compress the rubber of the midsole. If it compresses by more than a third it may be too soft. Soft shoes with lots of cushioning are only good for walking. If you are a pronator (foot rolls inwards when you walk) you may need a shoe with dual-density midsoles - where the sole on the outside of the heel is soft and the sole on the heel is hard. If you are a supinator (foot rolls outwards when you walk) you may need a neutral midsole.



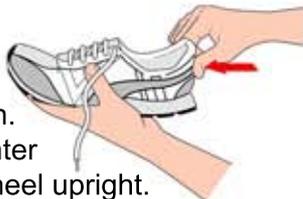
### Flexion



The shoe must bend right at the ball of the foot. If it doesn't, neither will your foot. The shoe should remain stiff from the back of the heel to the ball of the foot. To test, grasp the heel and toe of the shoe and push together.

### Heel counter

With your thumb, squash down on the heel counter - it shouldn't squash very much. The strength of the heel counter is important in keeping your heel upright. Make sure the heel counter is made of plastic, not cardboard. Cardboard disintegrates with sweat and loses support. Plastic provides more support and will last longer.



The medial (big toe side) should be firm and the lateral (little toe side) should be soft to limit excessive pronation.

### Durability

If the rubber tread on the sole is worn smooth it must be upgraded as it becomes very slippery on wet or smooth surfaces. The foam between the tread and fabric upper wears out first. When it appears to wrinkle, or feel firmer, the shoe is almost worn out and should be replaced.

## For further information contact

Sports Medicine Australia – Victorian Branch | Sports House, 375 Albert Road, | Albert Park, VIC 3206  
Phone: 03 9674 8777 Website: vic.sma.org.au | Website: www.smartplay.com.au |  
Email: smartplay@vic.sma.org.au

The Smartplay program is funded by the Department of Planning and Community Development (Sport and Recreation Victoria).

The information contained in this fact sheet is general in nature and does not constitute medical advice from your doctor or health professional. While all reasonable attempts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this fact sheet, Smartplay and associated parties, cannot accept responsibility for loss, injury, claim or damage resulting from the use or application of information within this fact sheet.