

Step Into The Right Shoes

There are hundreds of trainers on the market ranging from value supermarket canvas gazelles to expensive top-of-the range Shox but where do you start?

Work Out Your Foot type

Here's the technical bit!

- **Pronation** is the rotation of your foot downwards and inwards when you land on the ground. Everyone pronates to some degree. It helps your feet to absorb the shock of impact but over-pronation leads to strain on the muscles, tendons, and ligaments of the foot and lower leg and can cause permanent problems and deformities.
- **Supination** means you have a high arch and underpronate. This can lead to rigid feet that don't absorb shock very well. Excessive supination predisposes the ankle to injury because the stabilising muscles on the outside of the lower leg are in a stretched position. It doesn't take much force to cause the ankle to roll over, potentially causing ligament damage.

To find out what foot type you have you could look at where the wear is on your current trainers but the easiest way to work it out is the 'wet test':



What type of shoe do you need?

Trainers are designed for specific activities and sports so remember this when buying trainer shoes. You need to have a shoe that fits comfortably and does the job! If you go running in gazelles beware of the effects of wearing inappropriate shoes with no support or cushioning – you're likely to get shin splints, aching leg muscles and a sore back and that's just the start!

All specialist shops can advise you what type of shoe to use for your chosen activities. It is then up to you to pick something that is affordable, comfortable and supportive.

How much do you want to spend?

The shoe industry is big business and there are many makes of shoe, designs and prices. The most expensive doesn't always mean the best shoe. Many high-street sports stores have good offers on but if there is a shoe you like and it's a bit pricey, shop around and compare online. There are numerous sites from the smaller specialist shoe retailers right up to the American Nike retail stores where you can design your own Shox shoe complete with your name stitched on!

Top Trainer Shoe Tips:

- Ensure you have a thumb-width space at the end of your big toe on the shoe. Your toes should not touch the end of the shoe. Always try on with socks.
- Walk, dance, jump, run around in them in the shop and see if they feel comfortable and fit well. Specialist shops often have a treadmill for you to use if relevant.
- Compare a few pairs to find the best fit then:

Get them on – wear them out!