

Running Training

TIP # 7



Historically runners wore a very simple shoe to protect their feet from dangerous surfaces and weather. As an increased number of runners became injured scientists, coaches, athletes and shoe companies started experimenting with the possibility that the shoe could be built to prevent injury. Three categories of shoes were developed: stability shoes for flatter arches, cushioned shoes for rigid, high arches and neutral shoes for normal arches. Today science shows little evidence to support this theory. The new trend in shoes is towards a lighter and more responsive shoe. There are no absolute guidelines but here are a few tips for choosing a shoe:

Start by going to a specialized running store that has a treadmill or track. Talk to the experts. They should watch you run, find out your training needs and then help you choose an appropriate shoe. Measure your foot to ensure correct sizing of length and width. One usually needs the runner to be half a size bigger than street shoes to allow room for the toes to move freely. Run in each potential shoe before buying. Try the shoes on with the socks that you usually wear.

The shoe should feel comfortable right away. Ensure the heel counter is not too high or too rigid that it irritates your Achilles tendon. The tongue should not be too rigid. Beware not to tie the laces too tightly. Good shoe fit protects the foot against blisters and black toenails.

Do not let fashion or price dictate when buying a pair of shoes.

Choose an appropriate shoe for the surface you train on. eg trail shoes, spikes for track. More advanced runners may want a racing flat in addition to their regular shoe.

If you have not been injured stay with the shoe you have currently been wearing.

Change to the new shoe should be progressive to avoid injury. The body must adapt to the mechanical change caused by the new shoe. Start with short, easy runs and progress as comfortable. If you have a race planned allow sufficient time to wear new runners in.

The average life expectancy for a running shoe is 400-1000km(300-500 miles). Keep a log. If you do not change any other factor of training and you start getting sore or if the tread underneath the shoe is totally worn down you may need to change shoes.

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