

IS YOUR FOOTWEAR FIT FOR FOOTBALL?



What you put on your feet could make the difference between a good game and a bad game and will definitely influence your comfort during and after play.

Pre-season is the ideal time to treat your feet to the protection they deserve, to prevent problems later in the season. The most important things to consider are:

1. The surface you'll be playing on.
2. The fit of the shoe.

1. SURFACES – WHAT TO WEAR AND WHY.....

Surface	Recommended footwear	Why?	What to avoid?
Dry grass/firm ground	Molded studs / blades	To provide optimum traction	Flat soles or 6-stud boots
Wet grass	Molded studs / blades	To provide optimum traction	Flat soles
Light mud	Molded studs / blades	To provide optimum traction	Flat soles
Very muddy and soft	Screw-ins or longer blades	To provide optimum traction. Mud packs less with a 6-stud formation	Molded studs (tend to clog up, causing sliding and injury)
Dry or artificial turf	Indoor 'flats' or turf shoes with small studs	More comfortable than molded shoes on hard ground and work just as well	Molded studs or screw-ins
Indoors	Flat soles – even tennis or basketball shoes.	For grip and cushioning	Running shoes and anything with a non-flat sole

2. GETTING THE RIGHT FIT

Footwear for football should be snug, to maximize 'feel' on the ball, but also comfortable. Footwear that is too small can cause foot pain and other more serious injuries. Remember that:

- Football boots are sized as for regular footwear, but most have a narrow upper to allow better feel and control.
- Leather will stretch when worn and eventually molds to the foot so shoes should be snug when new.
- Leather tends to give a better fit but is more expensive than synthetic materials and is not recommended for repeated use on wet ground.



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IS YOUR FOOTWEAR FIT FOR FOOTBALL? continued...



ADVICE FOR FITTING

- Don't assume your size has stayed the same over the years, or that you will be the same size in different brands.
- Try on footwear at the end of the day as your feet tend to be larger then.
- If you have a wide foot, look at brands that offer wider-fit options.
- Try on footwear with the socks and shin pads that you would normally play in.
- Lace both shoes up properly and move around as much as possible in the shop – jog, jump, etc.

OTHER ISSUES WHEN CHOOSING YOUR FOOTWEAR:

- Try to forget about appearance, what your team-mates wear, etc.
- Remember, it's a personal choice – the best shoe for someone else may be the worst one for you.

LOOK AFTER YOUR FOOTWEAR AND YOUR FEET

- Wear good quality socks and shin pads and wash them both regularly.
- Remove your footwear as soon as possible – have a pair of jandals or slides to change into so that your feet can breathe.
- Look after your footwear (keep it clean, dry and aired) and monitor for damage (i.e. missing/worn studs).
 - Knock off loose mud after every wear and wipe the rest of the boot clean with a damp cloth.
 - Allow boots to dry naturally (heat can damage them) – fill them with screwed-up newspaper to keep them in shape. Once they're dry, polish them up to bring them back to their best.
- Finally, if you have a history of foot problems, see a Podiatrist.

