



Footwear 101

“No doubt a brain and some shoes are essential for marathon success, although if it comes down to a choice, pick the shoes. More people finish marathons with no brains than with no shoes.”

- Don Kardong, Olympic marathoner

While on the run, your feet will strike the ground as many times as 1700 times per mile. Each foot strike causes your legs to absorb the pressure of several times your body's weight. Because of this, wearing the correct shoes is vital. When it comes to running shoes, look for function rather than appearance.

Some general rules to running shoes to begin with:

- Good running shoes have a lifetime of **300-500 miles**, depending on the model of the shoe and the body type of the runner.
- Try on several pairs of shoes to ensure that you find the best fit for your foot. You'll want about a **thumb's width of space** between your toes and the front of the shoe, and you'll want a heel that cradles your foot & that you don't slip out of with each step.
- **Try shoes on later in the day** when your foot is at its largest. Wear socks similar to the ones that you'll be running in to find the best fit.

When choosing a pair of shoes, you'll need to know your level of pronation. This is where a lot of people get tripped up, but we'll try to keep things simple. With each step, your foot strikes the ground, it rolls forward, the heel rises, and you strike back off of the ball of your foot. At the point when your foot is rolling forward, it has a tendency to also roll either inward or outward. This side-to-side movement of your foot is called **pronation**. Everyone pronates to some degree or another. Some roll too far inward, some roll too far outward. Excessive pronation can lead to injuries as the degree of pronation can cause imbalances elsewhere in the legs and cut down on the body's ability to absorb shock.

Shoes come in three basic categories to deal with different forms of pronation. **Neutral** shoes are for those who underpronate (roll outward) or have a neutral footstrike (very little pronation). **Stability** shoes are for those whose pronation is between slight and moderate. **Motion control** shoes are for those who overpronate (roll inward) a great deal. Often times, a person's foot type has a direct correlation to their degree of pronation —those with high arches often underpronate, those with flat feet are more likely to overpronate.

It can all sound so confusing, but it's relatively simple once you get the hang of it. For a great fit, swing by any Columbus Running Company location & we can provide a gait analysis for you as a way of helping you to find the right shoe for your foot type. Let us know how we can help, and good luck with the running!