

# Pack the right shoe for your summer vacation

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Summer is here and if you're ready to jump in feet first, be sure you're wearing the right shoes. A podiatrist at Baylor College of Medicine offers tips on finding the right shoe for different types of summer vacations.

"The type of vacation you go on will determine the type of shoe you need," said Dr. Ronald Lepow, assistant professor in the Joseph Barnhart Department of Orthopedic Surgery at Baylor.

In general, [shoes](#) depend on the type of activity rather than the weather.

## Walking

If you'll be getting your 10,000 steps a day in this summer, the best option is to find a walking shoe that offers good support. Avoid clogs, slip-ons, flip-flops and high heels. Also consider the types of streets that the city or cities you'll be visiting will have. If you're strolling through cobblestone streets that have an uneven terrain, you'll want to be more aware of the flexibility of the shoe compared to if you're visiting a modern city where the terrain is more level.

## Beach

If you're headed to the beach this summer, Lepow suggests packing flip-flops or clogs. Try to find out about the type of sand that will be on the

beach since harder sand will require a more supportive shoe. Avoid walking barefoot on the hot sand as this can cause blisters, and don't forget your [feet](#) when applying sunscreen. For evening walks along the water, consider packing an athletic shoe.

Water shoes can help avoid injuries from stepping on foreign objects while in the ocean. In addition, they can help prevent injury if the surface is uneven under the water.

Always rinse off at the foot and ankle showers that are available as you leave the beach to prevent potential contaminants from remaining on your feet, Lepow said.

## **Pools, rivers and lakes**

Public areas such as pools are good places to pick up contaminants that can lead to athlete's foot, nail fungus and warts, which are all contagious. Wear shoes or flip-flops when walking around outside of the pool.

It's sometimes difficult to spot foreign objects in rivers and lakes, so consider packing a water shoe for the trip.

## **Hiking**

While some people may think that an athletic shoe will suffice on a hiking adventure, Lepow said hiking boots are best. These boots are well insulated and provide good heel and arch support. You are more prone to spraining your ankle during a hike, so a hiking boot that comes above the ankle will provide additional support.

## **Find the right fit**

When you set out to find the right shoe, try going in the afternoon hours after you have been on your feet. Because your feet tend to be swollen at the end of the day, this will help you find an appropriate shoe that accommodates this swelling.

Any shoe that you purchase should be broken in a couple of weeks ahead of the trip. To do this, Lepow suggests walking around the house in the shoes, massaging leather shoes, bending your shoes and using shoe inserts to stretch the shoe.

## **Treating injuries**

If you experience an issue with your feet while on vacation, give them a chance to heal using the RICE method – rest, ice, compression and elevation. If the injury is debilitating, Lepow said to cut back on activities the next day and take an over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medication. Swelling in the feet is usually a result of too much activity, so if the RICE method does not work, stay off your feet for 24 hours.

Provided by Baylor College of Medicine

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