

Choose your running shoes carefully

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(HealthDay)—If you're a runner, the wrong running shoe could sideline you, a foot expert says.

Choose carefully, or you risk discomfort, pain and injuries such as [shin splints](#), [plantar fasciitis](#), [stress fractures](#), irritated nerves or the loss of a toenail, warned Dr. Christina Rowe-Bauer, a podiatrist with Penn State Health Sports Medicine.

If you're new to running or an experienced runner with foot or leg pain, see a doctor to learn about your [general health](#), foot type and running style.

"Bring old athletic shoes; the wear patterns can give the doctor clues about things like foot overpronation (rolling inward) or supination (rolling outward)," Rowe-Bauer said in a Penn State news release. "Be honest about any pain experienced during or after running."

When it comes time to buy shoes, there are certain factors you should consider, such as [foot](#) type, running style and terrain, she suggested.

Are your feet high-arched, flat or neutral? What is

your running style? Some runners strike the ground first with the heel and roll through to push off the toes to their next stride, while others strike first with the forefoot and push immediately into the next stride.

And, finally, what type of surface are you running on? Shoe tread and cushioning should be appropriate for the surface, whether it's treadmills, asphalt or dirt trails, Rowe-Bauer said.

When buying shoes, do so in-person at a store, preferably one with knowledgeable staff who encourage trial runs in the shoes at or outside the store.

Shop in the late afternoon because feet swell as the day progresses and as a run progresses, Rowe-Bauer said. When trying on shoes, wear the socks you wear while running. Choose shoes that fit well, regardless of size. Foot size changes over the years, and [shoe](#) sizes vary by brand and even by model within the same brand.

Select shoes with a wide toe box so that your toes aren't constricted during running, she added.

Once you've found a good pair of shoes, consider buying a spare pair to have when the first pair wears out.

"Don't stock up for lifetime running, though, since the correct pair of shoes today probably will not be the correct pair five years from now," Rowe-Bauer said.

More information: The American Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Society has more on [choosing athletic shoes](#).

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