

TOCA Tips: Running Shoe Essentials

Feet come in all shapes and sizes. Consequently, running shoes need to be individualized for each runner. In general, common foot types include flat feet, high arches, neutral foot type, pronators, or supinators. There are several ways to determine your foot type. The footprint test allows you to look at an outline of your feet. Many running stores have computerized footplates and video analysis to determine foot type. Additionally, inspecting your running shoes is an accurate way to determine your foot type and strike pattern. Knowing about your foot type is critical to picking out running shoes.

There are several different categories of running shoes. In addition to fitting your foot type, you should also consider your training needs and injury history. [*Motion Control Shoes*](#) are rigid and durable and control pronation. [*Barefoot Running Shoes*](#) have recently gained popularity. Those who prefer these use them for comfort, and feel cushioned running shoes are harmful. *Trail Running Shoes* have increased threads, and help with difficult surfaces. [*Stability Running Shoes*](#) are the most common. They have moderate support and are made for neutral foot types without significant flexibility. *Cushioned Shoes* are typically used for high arches without significant pronation.

Running shoes should be replaced between 300-600 miles, depending on running style, terrain, and weight. It is helpful to alternate shoes to prevent wear and decrease stresses on your feet. Avoid blisters by not wearing new shoes on long runs. Consult a running shoe specialist to determine what shoe is the best for your needs to improve performance and decrease the risk of injury.