

# Back-to-School Shoe Shopping Tips



Before you head to the store to buy your kids' shoes, follow these helpful guidelines from the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons to help prevent or minimize foot problems from poorly fitting or worn-out shoes.

## SHOES SHOULD FIT

Best fit is about a finger's width from the end of the shoe to the tip of the big toe.

Children's feet can grow up to two sizes in six months, so account for growth when buying shoes. Don't buy shoes too big, though. Oversized shoes can cause the foot to slide forward, putting excessive pressure on the toes.

Tight shoes can cause blisters, corns and calluses, and ingrown nails, which can become infected. Signs of infection include: pain, redness or fluid draining from the nail area. If you notice any of these symptoms, call your foot and ankle surgeon for treatment.



## CHILDREN WITH FLAT FEET

Children with flat feet need shoes with a wide toe box, maximum arch support and shock absorption. The best shoes to buy are oxford, lace-up shoes that have enough depth for an orthotic insert, if necessary.



## SHOES WEAR OUT

Shoes lose their shock absorption over time, so inspect new and old shoes for proper cushioning and arch support. Worn-out shoes elevate the risk for heel pain, Achilles tendonitis and even ankle sprains and stress fractures.

Replace any shoes with wear and tear around the edges of the sole and make sure the toe area (toe box) on your child's shoes flexes easily and the shoe doesn't bend in the middle of the sole.

For more health information and tips, visit [FootHealthFacts.org](http://FootHealthFacts.org)—the patient education website of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons.



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