

# CHILDREN'S SHOES

## Important things to know



There are 3 F's in Footwear: finance, fashion and function. Podiatrists are usually most interested in the function, kids are most interested in the fashion and the parents are most interested in the finance. A balance between these needs to be achieved BUT without good function there is no point.

*"Any good podiatrist will tell you that children's shoes should be selected based on key functions above cost and style."*

## Guidelines for choosing kids shoes

- **Width** – It is important to make sure the shoes are the right shape for the foot i.e problems are guaranteed if we place a child's wide foot into a narrow shoe



- **Depth** – Check that the shoes are the right depth. Signs to look for are creasing in the tops of the shoe which usually means they are too deep, or worn backs of the heels and popping of the heel out of the shoe suggest the shoe is too shallow. Your podiatrist can help with this if you are not sure.
- **Length** – Ensure the child is standing upright. Feel for the longest toe, there should be approximately ½ inch or a thumb’s width between the apex of the toe and the shoe end.
- **Fastening** – Whether it is velcro, laces, buckles or elastic it is important to ensure that the foot is securely fixed to the shoe to prevent any sliding or gripping of the foot.
- **Material** – Lots of kids’ feet tend to be quite sweaty and given the range of terrain kids cover its important to have shoes that are breathable such as leather or canvas. Synthetic/plastic style shoes make for uncomfortable, irritated and sweaty feet.
- **Flexibility** – Avoid the trendy ultra flexible shoes as these provide no support in the often needed areas – a child’s shoe ideally should have firm arch support and a rigid forefoot rocker and shank to provide support and guidance throughout gait / walking and running.
- **Sole** – Avoid anything too slick, ideally choose the most non slip textured shoe to avoid risk of injury.
- **Support** – arch support where needed! Run your hand through the insole and feel the support under the medial side of the shoe, and also compare with the lateral side of the shoe visually. If this is not sufficient, your child may need orthotics! Your podiatrist can help with this if you are not sure.

## ► **Growing feet**

From the ages of 0-3 the feet grow an average of 2 shoe sizes annually and from 3-5 years of age 1.5 shoe sizes annually and so on. So ideally, it pays to check your child’s feet every 3 months. (Foot Ankle. 1983 Jan-Feb;3(4):207-10. Foot growth rate in children age one to six years. Wenger DR, Mauldin D, Morgan D, Sobol MG, Pennebaker M, Thaler R.)

To avoid any major problems or if you have any concerns about your child’s foot posture make an appointment with **mhealth’s Podiatry team** today.

### Recommended shoe stores for children in Melbourne Australia

 [www.theathletesfoot.com.au](http://www.theathletesfoot.com.au)

 [www.ascentfootwear.com.au](http://www.ascentfootwear.com.au)

 [www.clarks.com.au](http://www.clarks.com.au)