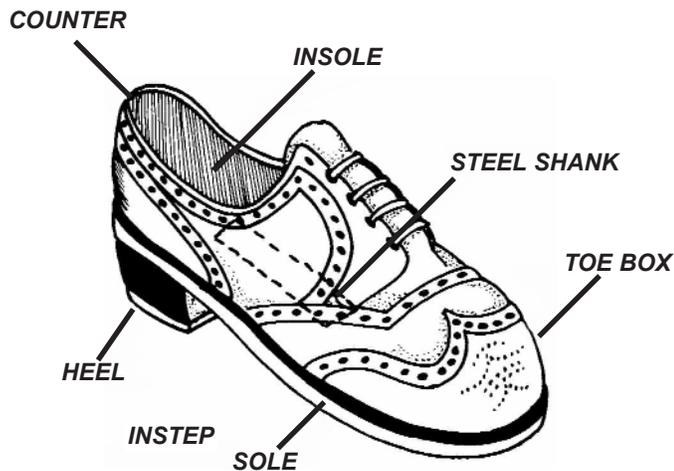


## Shoe Construction

- Leather is best because it breathes well and molds to your foot.
- Soles should be strong, flexible and cushioned, with a good gripping surface.
- Insoles should be well cushioned to absorb the impact of walking on hard surfaces.
- Good arch supports distribute weight bearing of the foot over a greater area.
- Rigid shanks give extra support.
- High heels can change body posture, cause backaches and shift weight bearing to the forefoot and cramp the toes.
- A strong heel counter keeps the foot in position inside the shoe



## Women's Shoe Survey

The Council on Women's Shoewear of the American Orthopedic Foot and Ankle Society has reported on a series of 356 women. The width of the bare foot while standing was compared with the width of the shoe that she was wearing at the time that she was seen.

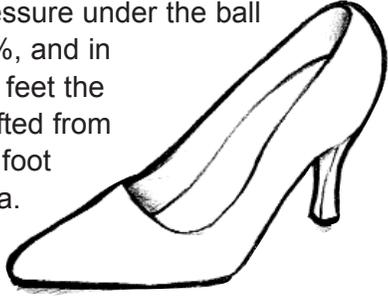
The authors found that 88% of those studied had shoes that were more narrow than the foot by more than 1/2 inch (1.3 cm). 80% of the women stated that they had some foot pain. Of those who had no pain, the shoe measured only 1/4 inch (0.6 cm) smaller than the width of the foot, on average. 76% of the women had some forefoot deformity such as a bunion, hammer toes, calluses under the metatarsals, or some other deformity. Of those who had no deformity, the average discrepancy between weight bearing foot width and shoe width again was on 1/4 inch (0.6 cm). The average foot width was 3 2/3 inches (9.3 cm) with a range of 3 to 4 1/2 inches (7.6 to 11.4 cm).

## The Cinderella Complex

Do American women have a Cinderella complex when it comes to high fashion shoes? This is a tempting analogy, but most women state that the shoe has to be snug in the front to stay on the back! This makes sense anatomically because the foot has only one bone in the heel, and this bone does not enlarge after the growth of the foot is complete (between the ages of 12 and 14 years). Therefore, the heel stays narrow throughout life. The front of the foot, in contrast, is made up of many bones connected by ligaments. Over the years, these ligaments stretch; as a result, the front part of the foot widens, the arch may sag, and the foot becomes longer as well. The women's shoe survey revealed that with every decade, more women noted that their foot size had increased. Remember that the average foot width was 3 2/3 inches (9.3 cm) and the range of widths was 3 to 4 1/2 inches (7.5 to 11.4 cm). As it is very hard to find shoes that measure more than 3 inches (7.6 cm) in width, many women have a problem buying proper shoes.

## High Heels

What happens when high heels are worn? Irish orthopedic surgeons have studied the effect of heel height on the forefoot. They compared the metatarsal loading of 60 feet when the subjects were barefoot, wearing a shoe with a 3/4 inch (1.9 cm) heel, and wearing a shoe with a 1 3/4 inch (4.4 cm) heel. They found that the higher heel increased the pressure under the ball of the foot by 50%, and in addition, in many feet the pressure was shifted from the middle of the foot to the bunion area.



- The instep should not gap.
- The heel counter should fit snugly to keep the foot in position. Try walking and running to ensure a snug fit.
- If you cannot find properly fitting shoes, consult your doctor or a certified Pedorthist.
- The shoe should fit the natural outline of the foot. It should be snug but not tight.
- Your forefoot should not be wider than the shoe.
- To check this use the Forefoot Test:
  - Trace your foot on a piece of paper while standing.
  - Place the shoe you're evaluating over the tracing.
  - If the shoe doesn't cover every part of your foot, it is too narrow. Do not buy that shoe.

## Correct Fit

- Only you know if a shoe fits. If they are not comfortable, don't buy them!
- Shoes will not stretch with wear. They will not fit better after you break them in. They should feel comfortable the day you buy them.
- Go shopping late in the afternoon. Feet are swollen to their largest then.
- When shopping for shoes, wear the type of stockings or socks you plan to wear with the shoes.
- Because feet get wider (spread) and possibly longer with age, you should have BOTH feet measured every time you buy shoes.
- Size depends on the shoe make and style. Do not insist on always wearing the same size.
- Both feet may not be the same size. Always buy shoes for the biggest foot, and try both shoes on, fully laced.
- The toe box should allow you to wiggle your toes. It should also be 3/4 inch beyond the tip of your longest toe when standing.

