

Fit Feet

Are you suffering with sore, tired feet?

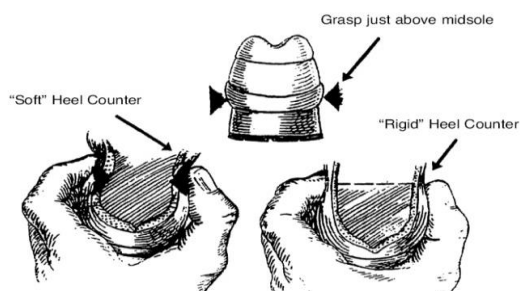
Evidence has shown nurses can walk up to 5 miles on a day shift and 3 miles on a night shift. It is said our feet carry us the equivalent of 5 times around the earth in our lifetime, yet we give them less attention than they deserve. Feet are adaptable; they are designed for movement and exercise. Below are some tips that we can use to ensure that we keep our 'feet fit'.

- **Footwear**

Did you know that your feet house a quarter of the bones in your entire body; this is why it is important to ensure your shoes fit properly and are replaced regularly. When purchasing footwear for work you may want to consider the following things.

Does it provide support?

Push the back end of the shoe inwards, if it remains firm or 'rigid' the heel counter is robust and will help provide support to your foot.

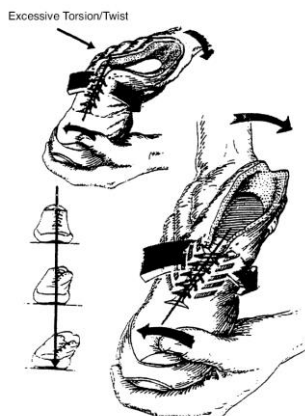


Is it flexible where it counts?

Check it bends and flexes at the front but does not bend excessively through the midsole.

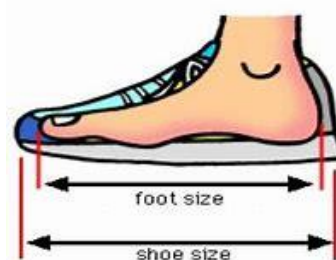


Your shoe should remain stable and firm through the midsection – ensure the shoe doesn't twist excessively.



The rule of thumb, does it fit?

Buy shoes for fit not by the size on the box. You should leave about one thumb width (1.5 cm) of space between the longest toe and the front end of the shoe when standing.



- **What is a good shoe?**

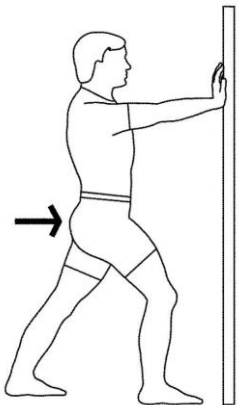
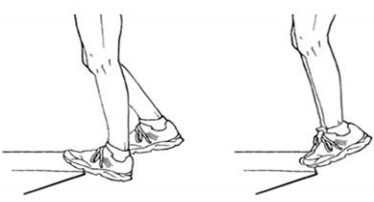
The shoe should be the correct length, width and depth for your foot. The upper should be soft with no hard seams or ridges and be made from a natural fibre such as leather which allows moisture to evaporate.

The shoe needs to hold your foot firmly in place and the toe box should be round and deep to give the toes room to move. The heel should be less than 4cm or 1.5 inches high, broad and stable.

The shoe needs a firm heel counter that fits snugly around the back of the heel and helps to maintain and stabilise the heel in place as the shoe makes contact with the ground. Ideally the shoe will have a thick, lightweight, flexible rubber sole of a non-slip material.

- **Flexibility**

Often when we experience heel or foot pain it can be because our calf muscles are tight. Carrying out these simple exercises regularly can be enough to alleviate your symptoms. Why not give them a try?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a stride stance, point the toe of the rear foot toward the heel of the front foot, and maintain the arch of the back foot while undertaking a small lunge of the hips toward wall. • Keep your rear knee straight with heel contacting the floor. • Hold exercise for 30 Seconds. Repeat 4 times twice a day.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing with both forefeet on the edge of the bottom step with hands positioned on the hand rail to provide support. • Raise your heels up. • Lift the one leg away and lower your weight slowly back down through the other leg until the calf is on a full stretch (see first picture). • Alternate legs and repeat.

Try these simple steps to help alleviate any symptoms of foot pain and if your problems are ongoing contact our Occupational Health Physiotherapy Department for further advice if needed.

You can find other information on footwear/footcare from: <https://cop.org.uk/>