The Ultimate Running Shoe Checklist

Deciding on a running shoe is an important step in your running journey. The wrong shoe can reduce comfortability and increase risks of injuries. This checklist consist of the three main starter questions to ask yourself when considering a running shoe:

1. Do I need a stability shoes?
2. Where will I run?
3. How much cushioning do I need?

ASK YOURSELF

The following information includes common technical specifications that will help you answer these questions. To find the best shoes for you, it is important to get fitted at your local Fleet Feet based on your goals and running mechanics. Check out “The Ultimate Running Shoe Guide” for shoe options.

Do I need stability shoes?

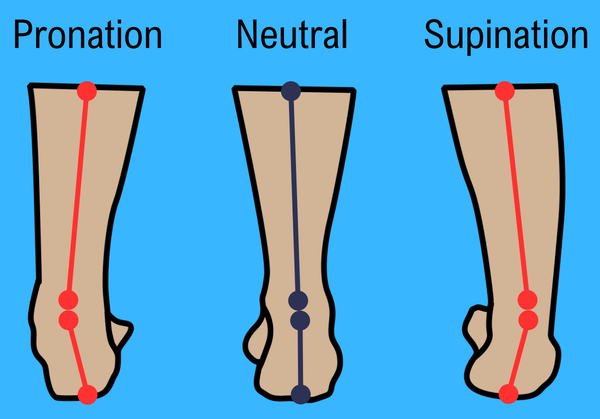
Based on your step mechanics, you need to decide your shoe category, whether it be a neutral shoe or stability shoe.

The main types of step mechanics are:

- Pronation: ankle rolls inward
- Neutral: ankle remains in line with foot
- Supination: ankle rolls outward

Reach out to a member of our team so they can help you identify how you naturally take a step and whether or not you pronate.

RIGHT FOOT



The image above shows the different types of step mechanics. Overpronation generally occurs if you have flat or low arches and potentially requires a stability shoe to support. Neutral and supinated steps can be supported with a neutral shoe, with extra cushion needed for those who supinate.

MOTION CONTROL FEATURES

If you overpronate, you may require a stability shoe. These shoes have motion control features near the arches on the medial side (side that faces the other shoe) of the shoe as indicated by the red outline above. These areas are made from firmer materials to provide extra support.

Where will I run?

The surface you will be running on determines the type of shoe you will need. There are two major categories in surfaces: road and trail. The surface determines the following differences:

- **Lug Size -** The lugs (“the cleats”) are located on the sole of the shoe and help with grip.
- **Weight -** The weight of the shoe can affect performance and comfortability.
- **Flexibility in Upper -** The upper part of the shoe covers the top, back, and sides of foot.

LUGS

UPPER OF SHOE

ROAD

- Smaller lugs
- Lighter
- Flexible upper

TRAIL

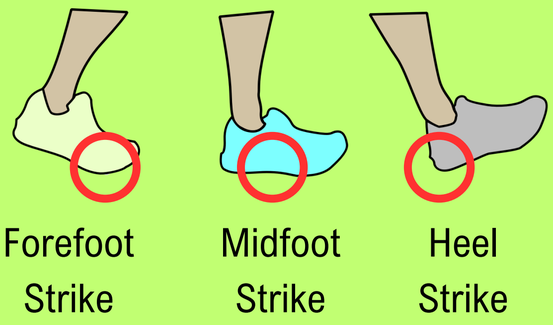
- Bigger lugs for more grip
- Heavier
- Stiffer upper for protection

How much cushioning do I need?

The **cushioning** on a shoe is the material between the foot and the ground. It helps with shock absorption enhancing the comfort level for the runner. From a technical standpoint, the cushioning is identified by stack height.

Stack height: The amount of cushioning, measured at the heel and forefoot. For those who are heel strikers, more cushioning is needed at the heel compared to those who are forefoot or midfoot strikers (see right). Recording your running on a treadmill can help identify your striking pattern. Stack height is noted as (Heel height / Forefoot height).

STACK HEIGHT



Heel Drop/Offset: Heel height minus Forefoot height.

- Higher drop relieves pressure on the ankles, but can add pressure to the knees and hips.
- Lower drop reduces load on knee joints and hips, but can add pressure to the ankles.
- Heel drops are commonly measured in even numbers based on the following ranges: Low (0 - 4 mm), Medium (6 - 8 mm) and High (10 - 12 mm)
- The heel drop measurement is independent of stack height.

The Ultimate Running Shoe Guide

This guide includes shoes from various popular brands and is organized based on the technical specifications discussed in “The Ultimate Running Shoe Checklist”. To find the best shoe for you, reach out to one of our team members and they will help you get fitted by discussing your goals, scanning your feet, recording your running mechanics, and providing you various options to try on. Stack height is noted as (Heel height / Forefoot height).

ROAD
NEUTRAL SHOES

Stack Height
42 mm / 37 mm (w)
43 mm / 38 mm (m)

HOKA Bondi 9
Heel Drop: 5 mm

Stack Height
42.5 mm / 34.5 mm (w)
43.5 mm / 35.5 mm (m)

ASICS Gel Nimbus - 27
Heel Drop: 8 mm

Stack Height
24 mm / 12 mm (all)

Brooks Ghost 16
Heel Drop: 12 mm

TRAIL
NEUTRAL SHOES

Stack Height
38 mm / 34 mm (w)
40 mm / 36 mm (m)

HOKA Speedgoat 6
Heel Drop: 4 mm

Stack Height
39 mm / 33 mm (all)

Brooks Caldera 7
Heel Drop: 6 mm

Stack Height
35 mm / 27 mm (all)

Saucony Ride TR 2
Heel Drop: 8 mm

ROAD
STABILITY SHOES

Stack Height
30 mm / 30 mm (all)

Altra Paradigm 7
Heel Drop: 0 mm

Stack Height
35.5 mm / 27.5 mm (w)
36.5 mm / 28.5 mm (m)

ASICS GT-2000 v13
Heel Drop: 8 mm

Stack Height
31 mm / 21 mm (all)

On Cloudrunners 2
Heel Drop: 10 mm

NOTE: We have no shoes that are trail specific shoes that also classify as stability shoes. Trail shoes tend to have stability features already built in as most people require them for the terrain.

This shoe guide is based on only the technical specifications of each shoe; therefore, it is important to get fitted for shoes based on your running mechanics and goals at your local Fleet Feet. For more information visit our website: https://www.fleetfeet.com/