

## What to Look for When Purchasing a Shoe



A proper shoe should fit well and provide support. Always have your child's foot measured by a trusted shoe store personal to ensure a proper fit and avoid the tendency to buy shoes a size up for your child to 'grow into.' Use the following tips to help you find the best shoe for your child.

**Laces vs. Velcro:** Ideally purchase a pair of shoes with laces as they tend to be more secure. However, if velcro is better suited for your child, look for a shoe with double velcro straps or a combination of laces and velcro – either way, make sure that the velcro extends far enough onto the shoe so that the strap can be secured tightly without easily coming undone.

**Flexibility:** Shoes should have some flexibility to allow natural foot movement but not so much that they don't provide a stable base of support. Try the 'twist test': hold the shoe with one hand at the front and the other hand towards the back and try to twist it. If you can easily twist the shoe in your hands it will do the same when you walk and does not have enough support, however if there is no movement at all then the shoe may be too stiff.

**Heel:** The heel (back of the shoe) should be firm in order to provide support and stability. You should not be able to press and flatten the heel down into the shoe.

**Sole:** Shoes should have a durable rubber sole to provide good traction to prevent slipping and good shock absorption as children tend to participate in more high impact activities such as running and jumping.

**Breathability:** Try finding a shoe made of leather, canvas or the newer mesh materials since children's feet tend to sweat and you want them to be able to breathe comfortably.

**Cost:** Expensive does not mean better. A shoe does not need to be expensive to be supportive. Children's feet are constantly growing so don't break the bank!