

Shoe recommendations for young children

Once your baby starts cruising along furniture to taking their first few steps, it is important to think about what shoes to buy for your new walker. The foot is a complex structure comprised of 26 bones. Children learn to walk by gripping their toes on the ground, as they build intrinsic strength of their foot and arch. So, at home, it is advised to leave your child **barefoot** to promote natural foot development. However, when surfaces are uneven, shoes should be worn to protect their feet.



Flexible, non-skid or skid-resistant soles are one of the most important features to look for in a baby shoe. Children should be wearing shoes that are flexible and allow the foot to bend and move as though the child is barefoot. You also want to make sure your baby's shoes fit correctly and are not too small.

1. Shoes should be lightweight and flexible to support natural foot movement with a stable base of support.
2. Shoes should be made of leather or mesh to allow your baby's feet to breathe comfortably.
3. Shoes should have rubber soles for traction to prevent slipping or sliding.
4. Stiff and compressive footwear may cause deformity, weakness, and loss of mobility.
5. Base your shoe selection for children on the barefoot model.
6. Shoes should have good shock absorption with durable soles as children participate in more high impact activities.

Shoe recommendations

Pre-Walking Shoe: Certain types of shoes are appropriate for your child's age. Babies and crawlers do not need shoes. They need booties or pre-walking shoes that do not bind their feet. The shoe should be flexible rather than providing a rigid support, and it's very important that the shoe be shaped like the child's foot. The function of a shoe at this age is warmth and protection.

Toddler Shoes: Choose a lightweight shoe as children at this age, tend to use a lot of energy walking. A leather or canvas tie shoe is more secure, will stay on the foot, and will fit little feet better. Toddlers can go barefoot in a protected environment such as indoors.

School-Age Children's Shoes: Style and shoe fit is important for school-age children. Their main function is shock absorption and protection. At this age, they can choose from a variety of options including athletic shoes, sandals, hiking shoes, etc. It is very important to wear the right shoes for the right activity to prevent injury. Look for reasonably priced, flexible, well-ventilated shoes that allow plenty of room for growth.

Some good shoe brands



PEDIPED



Pediped: Provides shoes that assist with healthy foot development.



ASICS



ASICS: Offers great supportive sneaker with stable heel cup and arch support.



KEEN



KEEN: Makes well constructed shoe and sandal options with cushioning and support.



STRIDE RITE



Pediped: Offers shoes for growing children that are adjustable, durable and flexible.



NEW BALANCE



New Balance: Makes stylish & supportive sneakers with excellent shock absorption.