



The Human foot is one of the most complicated parts of the body - it has Thirty-three joints, 107 ligaments, 19 muscles and tendons hold the 28 bones of the foot together and help form it's intricate structure to allow it to move in a variety of ways. The 56 bones in both feet make up one fourth of all the bones in your body.

The feet of a young child are soft and pliable; abnormal pressure can cause deformities. A child's feet grows rapidly during the first year, reaching almost half their adult foot size. Podiatrist, consider the first year to be the most important in development.

What age do most kids need a good pair of shoes, & How do I get my toddler's feet measured?

Step1

- ➔ Wait to buy shoes until your child starts to walk. Research suggests that children develop healthy, well-developed feet when they learn to walk barefoot, or in soft and pliable shoes that let new walkers feel the ground. Make sure the shoes aren't too big, which can **cause a baby to trip**.
 - Keep their feet toasty and unrestricted with soft booties or warm skid-free socks

Step2

- ➔ When it's time for your baby's first pair of **REAL shoes**, take your well rested, recently fed child to a **quality children's shoe store** (Stride Rite):
 - ***where the Staff is well trained on fitting childrens feet and is well educated in the difference between individual fit of each shoe they carry.***
 - They should Measure the **length and width** of both of the child's feet (foot size can differ from Left to Right) with a shoe fitting gauge (a Brannick Device). Many babies have an extra wide foot and may need a special size.
 - First shoes should be
 - The associate should feel the foot to see where the big toe reaches, to check if the width is adequate and to determine if there is enough room on the top of the instep (the waist / or Vamp) of the shoe.

Should I buy more than 1 pair of shoes?

- Just like adults – **DIVERSITY** allows for the feet to function in different situations, and keeps the feet from adapting to one environment.
- As your child becomes **more active** this becomes even **more important**. You certainly want to give your **sweaty adolescent's shoes** time to **air out** after wearing them...a good way to do that is **Rotating shoes**.

Can my toddler wear open toed sandals?

- ➔ Absolutely, but proper fit, especially length is even more important.

How often will my toddler need a new pair of shoes (how fast do their feet grow?)

- on a regular basis.
 - Toddler's feet can grow an entire size or more every 2-4 months.
- **Check for space in the shoes at the end of the toe** → a Rule of Thumb (one size)
 - Toes should have a 1/2-inch (1-cm) clearance [**thumb width**], but not much more.
 - Examine young children's feet regularly for red spots or blisters, evidence that their shoes don't fit right & it is time for a change

Proper Fit:

- Measure from HEEL to Toe and across the middle of the shoe for **both** feet!
 - HOW: Have specialist measure with a shoe fitting gauge (a Brannick Device). Many babies have an extra wide foot and may need a special size.
 - WHY: foot size can differ from Left to Right.

Checking From Toe to Heel

1. **FRONT:** Toe room

Feel for a **thumb's width** (approx 1/2-inch) of room in the toe, for growth.

- **Don't buy shoes more than one size too big** for your toddler. You don't want your **child to trip**, and often he or she will wear them out before they actually grow into them.
 - If your child wears orthotics, bring them with you when trying on shoes.

2. **MIDDLE:** Width across the Waist / Vamp (top of shoe, and at the ball of the foot)

Feel across the ball & Waist of the foot, to check that the shoe is **not too loose or tight**.

3. **BACK:** The heel (or counter)

Seeing a **gap at the back of the shoe, around the achilles, is normal**, but **You should be able to get a pinky finger (up to the first knuckle) in the shoe**, behind the achilles tendon, since the achilles needs some freedom of movement. Check how the back counter holds the foot around the heel.

4. **FINALLY:** Watch the child walk. Watch from the back and front.

Make sure the **child isn't tripping (too much room in the toe) nor walking out of the shoe (heel too loose).**

Finally, a word about sizes: Don't worry if the size number you get for our shoes is the same or smaller as your child's current size. **There is NO worldwide standard for shoe sizes,**

- **your child to vary 1-2 sizes between brands and/ or styles.**

As they grow

Step1

- Have your child's feet measured on a regular basis at a shoe store that specializes in children's shoes.
 - Kids grow fast, and shoe sizes can change from month to month.

Step2

- Always have your child try both shoes on. Shoes vary in fit, even within the same brand.

Rules to Live By

1. Try on in the afternoon or early evening, when the feet are at their maximum size.
2. Wear the same socks that will be worn with the shoe.
3. Fit the larger foot
 - a. you may need a heel insert or metatarsal pad for the shoe on the smaller foot, if there is a half-size or more of difference between the feet (such a difference is normal).

Final Word

Pain is not NORMAL. Pain, Limping, walking on toes, difficulties participating in usual activities or sports, and even awkward posture are warning signs that a child has a condition that deserves attention.

- Troublesome feet don't just cause a child to walk awkwardly, but may cause additional problems later with knees, hips and the back.