

# *Fit for Purpose - Why Get Proper Running Trainers?*

Running is one of the cheapest sports you can do. You don't need expensive equipment or to hire out a hall or court to play, you can just head out the front door and go. But one thing you should invest in to ensure you can run without pain or risk of injury is decent running trainers. Most cost between £50-90. Here's our advice on how and why you should find the perfect running trainers for you:

## **How do running shoes help prevent injury?**

Running causes a lot of impact on your joints and specialist running trainers have extra cushioning to lessen this impact. This means you are far less likely to have sore knees, shins and hips during and after your run.

## **Which shoes are right for me?**

To determine this you must work out if you are a neutral runner or an over-pronator. This is to do with how your foot strikes the ground when you run. The foot of a neutral runner will hit the floor evenly, while an over-pronator's foot will roll excessively inwards. Running trainers for over-pronators compensate for this by having extra support, motion control and cushioning in the left side of the heel of the shoe.

## **How do I know if I over-pronate?**

Visit a specialist running store where their trained assistants will be able to tell by watching you run (many shops have treadmills for this purpose). Or they might have a floor mat you can run across which is connected to a computer to analyse how your foot hits the ground. You can also do a simplified version of this at home by getting your bare foot wet and running across a piece of paper. If the mark left by your foot is a foot print with the shape of your forefoot connected with a wide curve to your heel, then you are a neutral runner, if there is no a chunky footprint with no definition between the forefoot and heel, you are an over-pronator.

## **What fit should I get?**

Make sure there is plenty of room around your toes to avoid blisters, damaging your toenails or getting bunions. You might want a half a size larger than you would normally wear. There are also different width fits you can get if you have narrow or wide feet. Make sure they aren't too loose or too tight at your heel as this could also cause blisters and make your achilles sore. Also, ensure you are wearing the socks you would wear to run when you go to a shop to try them on.

## **Why should I go to a specialist running shop not just any sports store?**

Specialist running shops will have a far better range to choose from and their staff will be able to offer you a lot more advice about which will suit your running style best. Many will also allow you to run on an in store treadmill or around the shop/car park to see if you find them comfortable before you buy them.

## **What shoes should I race in?**

Racing 'flats' are available for road and track races. These are a stripped down version of a usual running trainer and are made of more lightweight materials. As your feet will be lighter, you will shave a few seconds of your time. Therefore, you only really need to worry about wearing lighter racing shoes if you are running competitively and going for a fast time. It is not advisable to wear lightweight racing shoes for distances over 10k as they have less cushioning so your legs will tire faster. Whatever you do, never race in a pair of brand new trainers. Always wear them in first so you don't get blisters.

## **What about for off road running?**

If you are running across countryside, grass or in wet or snowy conditions, fell running trainers could be a better alternative for you as they will provide better grip and many are water resistant so will keep your feet dry. If you are racing in a cross country event when it's likely to be very muddy and hilly, wear running spikes as these will give you excellent grip, are slightly lighter than running shoes and you can change the size of the spike depending on the conditions.

## **How often should I change my running shoes?**

It depends on how often you run and how heavy you are, but in general, you should aim to replace your running shoes after wearing them to cover 300-500 miles. Running in old shoes is not a good idea as the cushioning will have gone, making you more likely to get injured, and the grips will have worn away. Not only that, they probably won't smell too good either!

Also see out article [http://www.lsf.it.co.uk/lifestyle\\_health\\_running.html](http://www.lsf.it.co.uk/lifestyle_health_running.html)