

Is the shoe high enough?

The depth of the shoe should be high enough to accommodate the front of the foot without excessive pressure.

Do the shoes have sufficient padding?

The soles, in particular, should be cushioned adequately to decrease heel pain.

Are the soles excessively slippery or grippy?

Soles that are too slippery, or the opposite, too grippy can cause falls. A crepe sole is one recommendation because it also absorbs the shock.

Are the heels too high or too low?

In general, high heels should be avoided. Half an inch is an ideal height for a heel. However, when an older adult wears high heels all of the time, the calf muscles become shortened. Therefore, the older adult would gradually decrease the height of the heel.

Material modified with permission from Roberta Newton, PhD, PT, Temple University



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ENA INJURY PREVENTION INSTITUTE/EN CARE PRESENTS

Feet and Footwear Check

Falls Prevention Program
for Older Adults



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why do a check?

Proper shoes can lead to pain-free mobility, reduce the potential for some foot problems, and assist in the correction of some foot problems, help the individual stay active, and may reduce the risk of falls. When should the older adult buy a pair of new shoes? Here are some criteria an older adult can use when selecting the appropriate footwear:

what is the condition of your current shoes?

Check the wear pattern and slipperiness of the soles as well as the inside of the shoe for wear.

are you very active?

Walking shoes or other leisure activity shoes may be more appropriate for regular activities.



Can you afford to have more than one pair of shoes?

If it is financially feasible, several pairs of shoes allow you to alternate among them. This helps to prevent callus formation that can lead to imbalance and falling.

Do you wear open-back shoes or house slippers?

Such footwear can be hazardous and cause falls.

What is the condition of your feet?

Calluses or pressure areas can cause pressure or rubbing.

Do your feet swell?

Shop for all the shoes in the afternoon when swelling usually occurs. This can decrease the chance of buying shoes that become too tight with swelling.



How do your feet feel inside your shoes?

Numbness in your feet and/or toes can indicate improperly fitting shoes.

Is the shoe wide enough?

Purchase shoes that are wide enough to accommodate your foot. A shoe that is too narrow can cause the toes to overlap or result in callus formation. Proper fitting shoes minimize pressure or rubbing on the skin.

Is the shoe long enough?

If the toes reach the front of the shoe, it is too short. The shoe should not be long enough to allow a finger width between the end of the great toe and the front of the shoe. When squeezing the shoe at the base of the toes, a slight give should occur prior to feeling the base of the toes.