

Sneaker Sense

Getting Off On The Right Foot

(NAPSA)—Sneakers may now be a fashion statement unto themselves. But given all the latest dramatic advances in technology, it's especially important that you know exactly what you'll be using them for—walking? running? playing basketball?—in order to get the most bang for what could be your considerable buck.

Some tips, then, for helping you choose:

Walking

- Look for shoes that give you support, flexibility and cushioning
- The heel should be designed to accommodate the natural roll-through motion of walking
- Look for low heel profiles because walkers only need moderate heel cushioning
- The heel should be no more than an inch higher than the sole under the ball of the foot
- The shoe should bend at the ball of the foot, not in the middle of the arch

Running

- Look for shoes that offer cushioning air soles and traction
- The insole should have a deep heel cup and contoured arch support, which will offer additional motion control and improve stability
- The heel should be flared and split into an outer and an inner section to make heel-to-toe running more efficient
- The toe box should provide ample room to allow the foot to flex and make the toe-off portion of the running motion comfortable

Basketball

- The shoe should offer comfort, flexibility and shock absorption
- Determine if you're most comfortable in high-, mid- or low-tops
- The outsole should be flat and moderately wide to create a stable base and help prevent ankle rollover



Athletes—amateur and otherwise—are less likely to know the agony of the feet if they heed a few hints on finding footwear.

Cross Training

- The outsoles should be wide and stable to provide lateral support and stability
- The midsole should be fairly durable and enhance the shoe's overall stability
- The shoe should offer a moderate amount of cushioning, primarily at the heel and forefoot
- Look for secure lacing to keep the foot stable during lateral movement

An invaluable partner to the shoe industry is Atofina Chemicals, Inc., the makers of Pebax elastomer, an advanced plastic engineered for high-performance athletic footwear. The elastomer provides controlled flexibility to govern the movement of the shoe and return it to its original shape at each stride.

You can learn more about this ingenious elastomer online at www.pebaxsports.com or by calling 1-800-225-7788.