

## Outdoor footwear jargon can be confusing!

Most hiking boots and shoes fall into three basic categories:



### Backpacking Boots

High-cut with better balance and ankle support, designed to carry heavier loads on multi-day trips. Stiffer mid soles than lighter footwear.



### Hiking Boots

Mid-cut models flex easily and require little break-in time, but lack the ankle support, debris protection, and durability of stouter backpacking boots.



### Walking Shoes

Low-cut models with flexible mid soles are excellent for day hiking or camping. They provide less roll-resistance for ankles are more vulnerable to dirt, sand or mud getting inside.

### A Proper Fit

feels secure, as if hand is holding the foot over the instep where the laces are. The foot should not move around inside the boot while walking.

**Length:** Toes wiggle easily.

Get an accurate shoe size and width measurement!



Wear a liner sock and hiking sock when trying on boots or shoes.

**Width:** Feet don't slide around (too loose) or feel compressed from side to side (too tight).



### Socks

**Liner socks** are thin socks worn next to the skin under other socks. Liners wick sweat away and limit blister-causing abrasion between the outer sock and foot.

**Hiking socks** are available in a number of weights for different conditions.



Stiffer soled boots and shoes lend stability and comfort to long hikes on rocky, uneven terrain. When testing boots stand on an uneven surface. If you feel each bump the boot is probably not stiff enough to protect your feet.

Squat while testing boots to see if the boot digs into your foot or ankle while it is fully flexed.



### Keeping Feet Dry

Wet feet are more prone to blisters. During rest breaks and in camp remove your boots and air out your feet. In warm weather waterproof boots may make feet hot and sweaty because they are not as breathable. Synthetic or wool socks dry quickly and hold moisture away from the skin.



### Sandals

Sandals and slippers are supplemental footwear, rarely a replacement for boots or shoes.



Open-toed sandals or flip-flops can lead to stubbed toes and cuts to feet.



In warm weather sandals with toe protection are a reasonable alternative.



Slippers or other lightweight footwear are great after a long day of hiking or.