Footwear Glossary

Types of Footwear

A

All Terrain Sandal: Any sandal that is meant for use in rafting, hiking, and is often waterproofed and with an all terrain outsole.

Athletic Shoe: Athletic footwear meant for performance of a specific sport (Basketball, Golf, Tennis, etc.)

B

Ballerina Flat: A ballet-style flat meant for everyday wear.

Balmoral Shoe: A shoe construction featuring a laced 'V'-shaped panel across the foot.

Blucher: A shoe construction featuring two side flaps of material that are joined across the foot with lacing.

Boat Shoe: A type of shoe originally meant to be worn aboard a boat, usually with a non-slip outsole, often with side lacing details, almost always a casual shoe you can wear with or without socks.

Boot: Any footwear that rises to the ankle or higher, can be casual or dressy, practical or fashionable.

Bootie: A shoe that has the styling of a boot without the height, also called a shoe-boot or 'shootie'

Brogue: A heavy, oxford-style shoe featuring pinked and perforated detailing.

C

Casual After-Sport: A type of casual shoe that's ideal for use after athletic activity, with sporty styling and comfort, but lacking an athletic shoe's technical features.

Cheerleading Shoe: A type of athletic shoe meant for competitive, high-impact cheerleading activity, often with switchable color accents to match team colors, and finger notches in the soles for use in acrobatics.

Chelsea Boot: A type of boot, usually ankle height, in a pull on style with elastic side panels. Popularized in England.

Chukka Boot: a boot style with laces, usually with a plain toe, and is the height of the ankle.

Circumference: The measurement around the shaft of a boot is taken at the widest part near the top of the boot shaft.

Clog: A type of shoe, usually casual and comfortable, with an open or closed heel and a slip on style.

Collar: A strip of material stitched to the opening of a shoe or the topline. The collar can be padded for extra comfort.

Cowboy Boot: A type of Western boot characterized by a decorative stitched upper, flared top, and medium pointed toe

D

Demi Boot: A style of boot whose shaft is generally no taller than the anklebone.

Driving Moc: A type of casual moccasin or slip on ideal for driving, with a flexible outsole, pedal-gripping sole, and a wraparound protected heel

D'Orsay: A style of pump featuring one or both sides cut-out.

Duty Shoe: A Health Care Professional or service shoe

E

Engineer Boot: Originally worn by the Army Corps of Engineers, it is a work style pull on boot characterized by instep and top straps

Espadrille: Any shoe that has woven rope or rope-look trim, usually in the sole area

F

Fisherman Sandal: Type of sandal with woven or stitched vertical and horizontal straps, often with a closed toe

Fitness: Athletic shoes ideally suited for gym-style workouts

Flip-Flop: A type of sandal, usually a thong, with a lightweight foam outsole that makes a 'flip-flop' sound when you walk.

G

Galosh: A waterproof (typically rubber) overshoe or boot meant to protect the foot and footwear from inclement weather.

Gardening Clog: A type of footwear that is usually backless, rubber, and waterproof, ideal for gardening

Ghillie: A style of footwear in which the laces pass through fabric or leather rings or loops attached to the front opening of the shoe, rather than eyelets.

H

Harness Boot: A type of boot characterized by straps across the instep and heel, usually joined by a ring detail

Heel: "Heel" can refer to both the rear, padded area of the underside of the foot, as well as the solid part of a shoe that supports the heel cup. The standard measure for heel heights is as follows: an 8/8 (low heel) is 1" high; a 16/8 (medium heel) is 2" high; and a 24/8 (high heel) is 3" high.

Types of shoe heels include:

Louis or French - Features a curved back; ranges in height from 16/8 to 24/8.

Baby Louis - The same shape as a Louis heel, but a 12/8 or shorter.

Built Heel - Created from layers of leather or fiber with contrasting tones.

Continental - A higher heel with a slightly curved back and flat front.

Cuban - A thick, stacked heel with little or no curvature and tapered at the bottom; usually medium in height.

Stacked - Similar to the built heel, but typically can be created from synthetic and leather materials. Often found on spectator shoes.

Wedge - A heel that is as wide as the shoe itself and follows the shoes contour from toe to heel. May be of any height.

Huarache: A type of woven sandal-like casual shoe, originating in Mexico and Central America

J

Jodhpur Boot: Also called a Chelsea Boot, an ankle height slip on boot with elastic side panels

L

Light Hiking: Athletic shoes that are ideal for day hikes or 'approach' hiking but are not ideal for long backpacking hikes or climbing.

Loafer: A slip-on shoe, completely w/out laces, ties or buckles.

M

Mary Jane: A type of women's shoe characterized by a strap across the instep

Mersey Boot: Also known as 'Beatle Boots,' dress boots with a zippered side and a slightly raised heel

Moc Toe: A type of toe design with a seam and stitching details, originally seen in moccasins

Moccasin: Possibly the earliest type of shoe, a slip on style with visible stitching, often with a soft leather bottom

Monk Strap: A type of shoe designed like an oxford, but with a strap closure across the instep rather than a lace up front closure

Motorcycle Boot: Boots ideal for riding a motorcycle, often with thick, durable soles

Mule: A closed toe shoe with no back

O

Oxford: A low shoe, laced or tied over the instep

P

Peek-a-boo Toe: A type of closed toe with a small open panel allowing a glimpse of toe

Penny-Loafer: A slip-on style shoe with a slit over the instep where a penny traditionally was placed for good luck

Platform Shoe: A style of shoe where there is a thicker sole at the front and heel

Pumps: Women's dress shoe, usually slip on, often with enclosed toe and sides

R

Riding Boot: A boot designed for riding horses. Typically knee-high with a low heel and goring.

Running / Trail: Running shoes designed for running both on and off road, with increased stability and traction for irregular terrain

S

Saddle Shoes: Shoes with a contrast colored instep overlay or 'saddle,' usually found on golf shoes, oxfords or retro styles

Safety Shoe: A shoe or boot designed specifically for wear in an industrial setting. This style of shoe often includes protective features such as steel-toe reinforcement and waterproof and oil-resistant materials.

Sandal: A simple form of footwear where the shoe is held to the foot by strips of leather or fabric.

Skimmer: A flat shoe that slips on easily. It has generally does not have straps or shoe laces.

Slide: Shoe with an open toe and back, with a band across the toe.

Slingback: Shoe that is backless with a rear strap that goes around the upper heel, usually with a buckle or elastic panel.

Slip-On: Footwear that slips on the foot with no other adjustments.

Slipper: A flat shoe that is easily slipped on, usually meant for indoor wear and lined for comfort and warmth.

Slouched: Shoes with a baggy, gathered design that 'slouches' down, usually found in boots

Sneaker: An athletic shoe, typically made of canvas with a rubber sole.

Stiletto: A high, tapered, narrow heel, also called a 'spike' heel, named for a type of slim knife

Strappy Sandal: A sandal characterized by a multiple strap design

T

Thong Sandal: Any sandal that has material that fits between the toes, especially the big and second toes

Tru-Moc: A shoe in which the bottom is a single piece of leather, stitched around a last. The vamp is usually attached by whip stitching to the bottom of the shoe so it encloses the foot. Also known as a moccasin.

T-Strap: A type of shoe with a single vertical strap linking the toe and ankle/heel areas

W

Water Sports: Any sports such as rafting, kayaking, surfing, etc. that require footwear that is waterproof, quick drying, with all terrain traction

Wellington: A style of pull-on boots with no trim and often made of rubber.

Western Roper: A type of Western boot characterized by a lower shaft, flared top, and medium round toe

Wing Tip: A type of shoe with overlays and stitched, perforated trim, usually a dress style