

HIKING FOOTWEAR

1. ask yourself why before you buy

- consider all of the factors of your upcoming trip and why you need (purpose for) hiking boots in the first place:
 - match your boots to your hiking ambitions and keep your itinerary in mind when choosing your boots
 - the back and weight that you will be carrying
 - your personal level of activity - avid hikers can get away with day hiking in trail runners
 - weather and temperature of the hiking area

2. fit matters

- don't pay a great amount of attention to the sizes on the hiking boots, size is not as important as fit
- a good fit correctly addresses the 3 dimensions of your foot:
 - length: toes should wiggle easily inside the footwear.
 - width: feet should not slide around inside footwear; nor should they be compressed from side to side.
 - volume: the "bulk" of your foot should fit securely inside a boot's interior.
- pay attention to how your foot feels - does your heel stay in place if you walk uphill? does it get better if you adjust the tension of your laces atop the instep? do your feet slide forward as you walk downhill? do your toes feel cramped as you walk down a decline?
- wear the socks that you will be wearing on your hiking trip during the fitting
- you will know you have the right pair when you walk and the heel of your foot and the heel of the boot move in perfect harmony, with the boot not feeling too snug or too loose

3. material and construction

- there are four general categories of hiking boots to choose from: light hiking shoes, hiking boots, backpacking boots and mountaineering boots
- there are three types of boot cut: low-cut shoes, mid-cut boots, and high-cut boots
- boot materials and construction
 - materials impact a boot's weight, breathability, durability and water resistance
 - different types of leather: full-grain leather, split-grain leather, nubuck leather and synthetics
 - waterproof linings
- a sturdy sole is an essential quality of a good hiking boot - when hiking, you don't want to feel every last branch or rock you step onto, and a thick, sturdy sole should leave you comfortable throughout your trip

Dan Richter, wisconsinoutdoorfun.com:

“Not much is required for hiking – a day pack, maybe a walking stick, and of course, a good pair of hiking boots. Hiking boots are essential because, obviously, you’re feet are doing all the work and thus should provide you with comfortable support and traction that will hold up on even the most rugged terrain. Picking out the right pair of hiking boots is essential to your outdoor adventure. What may look (or feel) good in the store can leave you miserable by the second day of your trip.”

Lauren Himiak, About.com:

“Making sure you’re wearing the right footwear will give you the support you need and comfort along the way. “

The House website:

“One of the trickier aspects of hiking is choosing the right boots. With so many styles and types available, it can be difficult to figure out which boots will be best for you. Rather than solely relying on online reviews, it’s best to first break down hiking boots as a whole and decide what exactly you are looking for in a hiking boot, how often you’ll be hiking, where you’ll be hiking and dialing in your foot print (wide, narrow, high arch, etc.).”

NorsemanSki.com website:

“A good pair of hiking boots are probably the most important outdoor purchase that you will make. It is entirely possible to make do with just about any other gear, but a problem with your boots will send you home – or have you wishing you could be there. The job of your boots is to protect your feet, reduce fatigue, and reduce the chance (and severity of) injuries whilst hiking, mountaineering, running, or just walking down the street – and thereby increase your enjoyment of your outdoor activities.”

Dan Richter, wisconsinoutdoorfun.com, How to choose hiking boots:

<http://www.wisconsinoutdoorfun.com/article/99999999/WOF06/399980133/How-choose-hiking-boots>

Lauren Himiak, How to Choose the Right Hiking Boots:

<http://usparks.about.com/od/backcountry/a/How-To-Choose-The-Right-Hiking-Boots.htm>

Choosing the Right Hiking Boots, posted in Buying Guide, Hiking Shoes & Boots, How To <http://www.the-house.com/portal/choosing-hiking-boots/>

Jane Carswell , Perfect Fit: A guide to purchasing hiking boots, posted on Thu, Apr 07, 2011:

<http://blog.canadianmountainholidays.com/the-adventure/bid/61505/Perfect-Fit-A-guide-to-purchasing-hiking-boots#ixzz2StCvIXH5><http://>

The Hiking Club, Vancouver BC, <http://www.hikingclub.ca/equipment/footwear/footwear.html>

http://www.norsemanski.com/sites/norsemanski.com/files/Hike_Boots.pdf

Choosing hiking boots, British Columbia magazine, <http://bcmag.ca/things-to-do/choosing-hiking-boots>