

Get Walking Boots that Fit!

In my years of guiding, I have seen too many people suffering from poorly fitting boots. This, coupled with boots that undo, spoil the enjoyment of walking and create blisters.

How to get boots that fit you

Quality walking boots have an insole plate that you can remove. It is

shaped to support your foot, making walking more enjoyable. It is important that you can remove it to let the boots dry thoroughly and to replace when it loses its shape.

At the shop initially find a boot you like. Remove the walking boot insole. Wearing two pairs of socks, as in the picture (a wicking pair and a walking pair with no seams) put your foot on the insole on the floor. Your foot should be the same width as the sole along its length. These insoles are shaped so put your heel so it fits snugly into the back of the insole. The insole plate should extend past your big toe by the width of your thumb placed across the front of your foot (see picture). This ensures there is room for your toes to move.

If the insole plate is the same width as your foot and is the length of your foot plus the width of your thumb, then replace the insole into the boot and put it on. Do up the laces firmly particularly over the bridge of your foot and walk. Stand on tip-toe and your toes should not touch the end of the boot.

Get all that right and those walking boots will not give you blisters through rubbing. Make sure you do the laces up using my locking bow (pdf download from website) for trouble-free walking.

Still getting tired or aching feet?

The insoles fitted to walking boots vary considerably, from quality ones that really support your foot, to ones that are flimsy and almost flat. It is worth spending out and getting quality insoles which give your foot full support and shock absorption.

I visited a podiatrist, or foot doctor, as I have high arches. He was able to sell me insoles that gave extra support under the middle of my foot. They are very firm with gel so they form themselves to my foot and shock absorb as well. I can now do a 9 mile walk with no foot discomfort. My feet are cool and a normal pink at the end of a walk.

There are many makes of insoles for walking boots. A good outdoor shop should carry a selection. You don't have to simply take the ones the boots come with if they don't hold your foot well. It is worth the £30 or so extra for the guaranteed comfort and pleasure it adds to walking.

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