

Footwear

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Footwear refers to garments worn on the feet, which originally serves to purpose of protection against adversities of the environment, usually regarding ground textures and temperature. Footwear in the manner of shoes therefore primarily serves the purpose to ease the locomotion and prevent injuries. Secondly footwear can also be used for fashion and adornment as well as to indicate the status or rank of the person within a social structure. Socks and other hosiery are typically worn additionally between the feet and other footwear for further comfort and relief.

Cultures have different customs regarding footwear. These include not using any in some situations, usually bearing a symbolic meaning. This can however also be imposed on specific individuals to place them at a practical disadvantage against shod people, if they are excluded from having footwear available or are prohibited from using any. This usually takes place in situations of captivity, such as imprisonment or slavery, where the groups are among other things distinctly divided by whether or whether not footwear is being worn. In these cases the use of footwear categorically indicates the exercise of power as against being devoid of footwear, evidently indicating inferiority.

Footwear is in use since earliest human history, archeological finds of complete shoes date back to the copper age (ca. 5.000 BCE). Some ancient civilizations, such as Egypt however saw no practical need for footwear due to convenient climatic and landscape situations and used shoes primarily as ornaments and insignia of power.

The Romans saw clothing and footwear as unmistakable signs of power and status in society, and most Romans wore footwear, while slaves and peasants remained barefoot.^[1] The Middle Ages saw the rise of high-heeled shoes, also associated with power, and the desire to look larger than life, and artwork from that period often depicts bare feet as a symbol of poverty. Depictions of captives such as prisoners or slaves from the same period well into the 18th century show the individuals barefooted almost exclusively, at this contrasting the prevailing partakers of the scene. Officials like prosecutors, judges but also slave owners or passive bystanders were usually portrayed wearing shoes.

In some cultures, people remove their shoes before entering a home. Bare feet are also seen as a sign of humility and respect, and adherents of many religions worship or mourn while barefoot. Some religious communities explicitly require people to remove shoes before they enter holy buildings, such as temples.

In several cultures people remove their shoes as a sign of respect towards someone of higher standing. In a similar context deliberately forcing other people to go barefoot while being shod oneself has been used to clearly showcase and convey one's superiority within a setting of power disparity.



Various high-heeled footwear

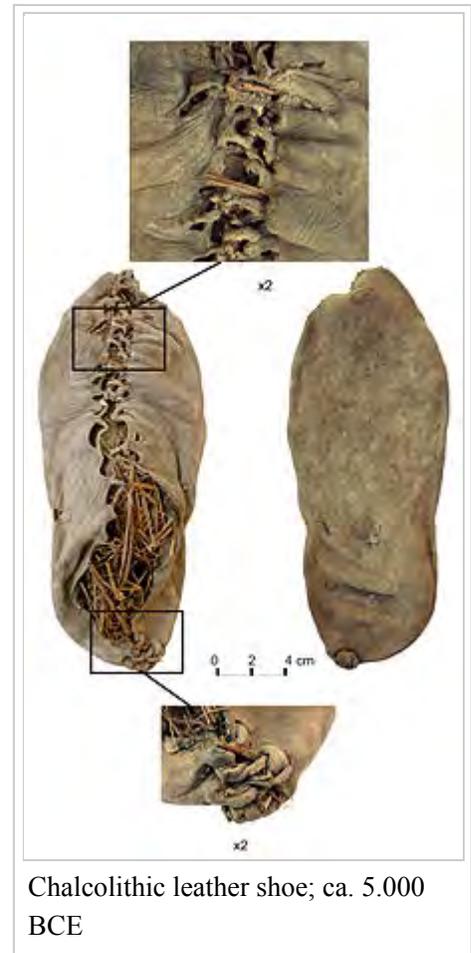


Sneakers are a type of footwear

Practitioners of the craft of shoemaking are called shoemakers, cobblers, or cordwainers.

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History

During the Middle Ages, men and women wore pattens, commonly seen as the predecessor of the modern high-heeled shoe,^[2] while the poor and lower classes in Europe, as well as slaves in the New World, were barefoot.^[3] In the 15th century, chopines were created in Turkey, and were usually 7-8 inches (17.7-20.3 cm) high. These shoes became popular in Venice and throughout Europe, as a status symbol revealing wealth and social standing.

During the 16th century, royalty such as Catherine de Medici and Mary I of England began wearing high-heeled shoes to make them look taller or larger than life. By 1580, men also wore them, and a person with authority or wealth might be described as, *well-heeled*. In modern society, high-heeled shoes are a part of women's fashion and are widespread in certain countries around the world.^[4]

Materials

Modern footwear is usually made up of leather or plastic, and rubber. In fact, leather was one of the original materials used for the first versions of a shoe.^[5] The soles can be made of rubber or plastic, sometimes having a sheet of metal inside. Roman sandals had sheets of metal on their soles so that it would not bend out of shape.

More recently, footwear providers like Nike, have begun to source environmentally friendly materials.^[6]

Components

- Adhesives
- Buckle
- Counterfort
- Eyelet
- Heel
- Hook
- Insole
- Laces
- Shank
- Sole
- Tack
- Tread
- Welt
- Outsole

Types

Boots

- Boots
 - Chukka boots
 - Combat boots
 - Cowboy boots
 - Fashion boots
 - Go-go boots
 - Hiking boots
 - Kinky boots
 - Motorcycle boots
 - Mukluk
 - Platform boots
 - Riding boots
 - Russian boots
 - Derby boots
 - Thigh-length boots
 - Tabi boot
 - Ugg boots
 - Valenki
 - Veldskoen
 - Waders
 - Wellington boots



Shoes made from crocodile skin, in a conservation exhibit at Bristol Zoo, England

- Winklepickers

Shoes

- Shoes
 - Athletic shoes (also known as trainers or sneakers)
 - Brothel creepers
 - Court shoes (known in the US as pumps)
 - Diabetic shoes
 - Espadrilles
 - Galoshes
 - Kitten heels
 - Lace-up shoes
 - Derby shoes
 - Oxford shoes
 - Brogues
 - High-tops
 - Loafers
 - Mary Janes
 - Moccasins
 - Monks
 - Mules
 - Platform shoes
 - School shoes
 - Skate shoes
 - Sneakers
 - Tap shoes
 - Toe shoes



Bowling shoes are a type of athletic shoe

Sandals

- Sandals
 - Kolhapuri Chappals
 - Peshawari chappal
 - Flip-flops (thongs)
 - Slide
 - Wörishofer
 - Avarca, from Balearic Islands

Indoor footwear

- Slippers
- Socks



Vibram FiveFingers toe shoes

Specific footwear

- Ballet shoes
- High-heeled footwear
- Climbing shoes
- Clogs
- Football boots
- Sabaton
- Safety footwear
- Ski boots
- Snowshoes
- Surgical shoe
- Pointe shoes
- Swimfins (flippers)

Traditional footwear

- Abarka, of leather, from Pyrenees
- Areni-1 shoe, 5,500-year-old leather shoe found in Armenia
- Bast shoe, of bast, from Northern Europe
- Crakow, shoes from Poland with long toes popular in the 15th century
- Galesh, of textile, from Iran
- Geta, of wood, from Japan
- Opanci, of leather, from Balkans
- Pampooties, of hide, from Ireland

Socks

- Socks
 - Trainer/Sneaker/Ankle socks
 - Diabetic sock
 - Footwraps
 - Toe socks
 - Tabi

Footwear industry

In Europe, the footwear industry has declined in the last years. Whereas in 2005, there were about 27,000 firms, in 2008 there were only 24,000. As well as the number of firms, the direct employment has decreased. The only factors that remained almost steady was the value added at factor cost and production value.



A pair of Sandals



Socks.



A climbing shoe

In the U.S., the annual footwear industry revenue was \$48 billion in 2012. There are about 29,000 shoe stores in the U.S. and the shoe industry employs about 189,000 people.^[7] Due to rising imports, these numbers are also declining. The only way of staying afloat in the shoe market is to establish a presence in niche markets.^{[8][9]}

Safety of footwear products

To ensure high quality and safety of **footwear**, manufacturers have to make sure all products comply to existing and relevant standards. By producing footwear in accordance with national and international regulations, potential risks can be minimized and the interest of both textile manufacturers and consumers can be protected. The following standards/regulations apply to footwear products:

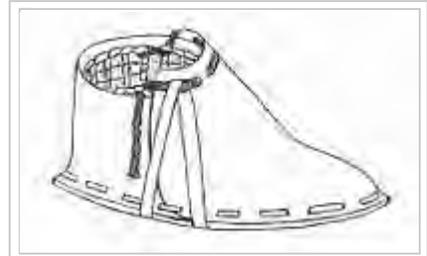
- CPSIA
- GB Standards such as
 - GB20400—2006 Leather and fur-limit of harmful matter
 - QB/T1002-2005 Leather shoes
 - GB/T 15107 Athletic footwear
- EN Standards for Footwear
- ASTM Standards^[10]
- ISO standards^[11]
- AAFA Restricted Substance List
- India : IS 15298-I: 2011 test methods, IS 15298 –II for safety footwear, IS 15298-III Protective footwear, IS 15298-IV Occupational Footwear

See also

- American Apparel and Footwear Association
- American Podiatric Medical Association
- List of shoe styles
- List of current and defunct clothing & footwear stores in the United Kingdom
- Orthopaedic footwear
- Shoes
- Shoe size
- Walking boot
- Shoe fetishism
- Boot fetishism

References

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An artist's impression of Ötzi's right shoe. Ötzi is a male mummy found in the Austrian Alps in September 1991 in remarkably well-preserved condition.



Footwraps used by the Finnish Army until the 1990s



Toe socks.



Tabi.

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Further reading

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- Wilcox, R.T. (2008). *The Mode in Footwear: A Historical Survey with 53 Plates*. Dover Fashion and Costumes Series. Dover Publications. ISBN 978-0-486-46761-0. 190 pages.
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External links

- The history of footwear (<http://www.footwearhistory.com/>)
- ShoeGuide.Org - A footwear encyclopedia (<http://www.shoeguide.org>)
- Britannica: clothing and footwear industry (<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9108380/clothing-and-footwear-industry>)
- Footwear Advisor - Choose Footwear with Experts (<http://footwearadvisor.com/>)



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