

Men's and Women's Dress Shoes

Canadian Footwear carries a great selection of men's and women's dress shoes for the individual looking for **fit** and **comfort** as well as good looks. We focus on brands offering multiple width fittings that provide our customers with the perfect fit. Quality brand names including Dunham, Bostonian, Clarks, Florsheim, Munro, Trotters and Aravon are just some of the brands we are proud to carry that offer great looking footwear for people of all foot sizes and widths. Always consider function as well as fashion when making your dress shoe choice.

What to look for...

There are several important points to consider when selecting your new dress shoes:

- ***Leather vs. Rubber Outsoles*** – This is probably the first decision you want to make.
Leather outsoles are thinner and definitely compliment more formal attire. Leather will breathe better than rubber, making them more desirable for those who tend to perspire excessively. Another benefit to leather soled footwear is that they can more often be re-soled after an extended period of wear. For those who enjoy dancing, leather soles are definitely the way to go as they easily glide across a dance floor. They are however much more slippery for daily wear when walking on tiled floors, carpeting or in winter conditions. (rubber overshoes are a must for winter) Once the leather soles have become scuffed they will provide a little more slip resistance. If you prefer the appearances of leather soles but want better traction, look for styles that offer leather soles with a thin layer of rubber added to the ball of foot for increased grip. In general, those who are a bit unstable on their feet may want to avoid shoes with leather soles to reduce the risk of falling.
Rubber outsoles can be appropriate for both business and casual wear providing better all around traction and cushioning than thinner, leather soles. For those who spend most of the day on their feet, thicker rubber soles offer more cushioning. Rubber soled dress shoes may also offer more versatility as some styles can be worn with casual pants or even blue jeans in addition to dress pants.
- ***Laces vs. Slip-on*** – Slip on shoes definitely have a cleaner look and can be easier to put on and take off. Making this decision however should not all be about appearance. Lace-up footwear has many advantages. Laces allow you the ability to adjust the fit of each shoe to each foot to accommodate for any subtle size/width differences between them. Being able to properly open up the shoe when putting them on makes entry into the shoe much easier for someone with a high instep and generally puts less wear and tear on the heel counter at the back of the shoe. Lace-up footwear provides much more support around the arch holding the foot more securely in place within the shoe. Lace-up shoes are generally recommended for anyone with a foot problem. *If you do choose to wear a slip-on shoe, look for styles that feature elastic going that allows for some fit adjustability across the top of the foot..*

What to look for... (continued)

- **Removable Footbeds (insoles)** – Similar to most of our athletic and casual footwear, many dress shoes we carry feature removable footbeds. This is a particularly important feature for anyone experiencing a foot problem. A removable insole allows you the ability to adjust the support inside the shoe by modifying the existing insole, or if necessary, replacing the insole entirely with a more supportive over the counter device or custom made orthotic.

Replacement of removable insoles is recommended on a regular basis for basic hygienic reasons and to improve the overall comfort of your footwear after it has been worn for a significant period of time.

- **Upper Materials** – Dress shoes feature many different upper materials. Leather, the most common, provides natural comfort and breathability. It can be easily stretched if necessary and is easy to take care of. Different types of leather like suede, nubuc and patent require their own special care. Some styles are available in manmade ‘stretch-fabrics’ that offer very lightweight comfort and increased stretch ability for better fit.

Many inexpensive manmade leathers may crack or peel prematurely and offer poor fitting and comfort qualities. Be aware of purchasing bargain “department” store type footwear that uses these types of materials.

Fitting Tips for Dress Shoes

- Wear the appropriate socks when trying on new dress shoes. The fit of your dress shoe with a sport sock in comparison to a thinner dress sock or nylon will be much different.
- As most people's left and right feet are of different sizes, footwear should always be fit to the larger foot with fitting adjustments made to the shoe for the smaller foot where necessary.
- If you have two feet of significantly different size or width, or perhaps a single foot with a bunion, select lace-up footwear that can be more easily adjusted to fit both feet.
- Select a heel height and width that makes sense. Higher, narrower heels provide a more unstable base to walk on and put more stress on the forefoot. Persons with any kind of toe or forefoot problem should avoid shoes with higher heels. Wider, lower heels can still provide a dressier look without compromising as much stability.
- Dress shoes often fit bigger than athletic and casual footwear. Most people often take a size smaller in their dress shoe than they do in their runners.
- Be aware of the difference between North American and European sizing...Many of the brands of casual/dress footwear we carry come in European sizing. Our fitting specialists can help you determine what the correct size is for you no matter where it was made.

Remember...each brand and style may fit different from the next.

Fitting Tips for Dress Shoes (continued)

- The shape and depth of the toe box matters. Look for dress shoes that most closely match the shape of your foot. While dress shoes in general are often more tapered, some styles offering square or oblique toes provide additional toe room for those with a broader foot. Persons with any type forefoot problem (bunions, ingrown toenails etc...) must be aware of and avoid shoes with a shallow or pointy toe boxes.
- Proper use of a shoe horn in addition to properly unlacing and opening up the shoes before putting them on and taking them off will help maintain the integrity and support of the heel counter and extend the life of your shoes.
- Heel Slippage is common...Due to the general lack of padding around the collar of the shoe (as compared to casual/athletic footwear) heel slippage can sometimes be an issue in a new dress shoe. Some slippage is normal and often disappears as the sole becomes more flexible after some wear and the shoe more freely moves with the foot. Additional slippage can be reduced by the use of “cheaters” which are a thin foam or cork pad placed in the front of the shoe under the forefoot and / or “tongue pads” which are a thin piece of self adhesive felt placed under the tongue. Both of these fitting aids hold the foot back into the heel pocket of the shoe, reducing the amount of heel slippage.
- Heel pads or lifts can be used inside the shoes when the collar of the shoe digs into the ankle bones. The pads are placed under the heel (beneath the insole if possible) to gently raise the heel allowing the collar to comfortably clear the ankle bones. Again, this is more often a problem with dress shoes because of the lack of padding around the collar.
- Be aware of where the seams are. While most dress shoes are leather and will usually stretch to some degree, seams / stitching reduce the amount of give the upper will have at a particular point. Be careful not to purchase shoes where the placement of stitching (seams) may cause irritation to a particular part of your foot (bunion etc...)
- Purchase footwear that fits now! Don't buy footwear that you hoping they will “break in” later.