

## Running Shoes

*Above all else, report to OCS with proper fitting RUNNING shoes, preferably fitted by your local running shoe shop that watches you run. DO NOT report to OCS with running shoes older than 3 months or 300 miles. Bring orthotics if you wear them.*

A substantial number of candidate injuries are the result of the candidate wearing improper running shoes. Wearing the wrong shoe whether it be the wrong type, fit, or a shoe that is too worn can result in stress fractures, knee problems, etc. The candidate should report to OCS with a running shoe that is of proper fit and broken in / not broken down (3 to 4 runs normally will break in a good running shoe). A general rule is to replace your running shoes every 300-350 miles or approximately every 3 months.

*The following information is provided to assist you in selecting the proper shoe for your running style and foot type.*

It's important to understand that you need to buy a shoe specific to running. Not a sneaker, tennis shoe, cross-trainer, aerobic, basketball or walking shoe, but a running shoe made for running and only running.

The best way to get a high quality running shoe that fits you properly is to go to a running store. There are plenty of sporting goods chain stores that carry running shoes, but only running shops carry a wide selection of brands and models and have running experts who can put you in the best shoe for you and your running style. Once you've found a running store, commit to spending at least 30 to 45 minutes there. Don't rush your shoe selection process. It is imperative that you find a store that watches you run, not walk, to evaluate your needs. Your individual running versus walking form can be different.

All candidates are issued two pairs of medium weight all white socks when they arrive at OCS. Candidates are allowed to use any similar white socks. Bring socks like these to try on shoes, as socks too thick or thin can alter the fit of the shoe. Also bring your current running shoes to the store - this will help the salesperson better determine the specific pair you need. Bring orthotics if you wear those, too.

Have both feet measured for width and length, even if you think you know your size. Your feet tend to spread and lengthen from running and aging so don't be surprised that your running shoes may be a half or full size larger than what your accustomed to wearing. Feet can change by 1/2 size throughout the day. It is best to buy shoes in the afternoon after being on your feet during the day.

Discuss with the salesperson your plans to attend Officer Candidates School and that you will be running approximately 15 miles per week in running shoes, the majority of which will be conducted on graveled trails. Mention that additional running will be conducted in combat boots. Discussing these training plans with your salesperson will help them fit you in the best shoe.

Your primary need is for a pair of shoes that fit well and feel comfortable. Fit and feel are certainly an individual decision, but look for running shoes that fit snugly without being tight with about a half inch (or slightly less) room between the longest toe and the end of the shoe. Your toes should not feel cramped or compressed. Your heel should not slip in the rear when walking or running. If one aspect of the fit is not right, don't buy the shoe. If you like a certain shoe but don't feel it's wide or narrow enough, ask the salesperson if it's available in more than one width. Many models do.

Try on a wide variety of styles and brands. One brand isn't necessarily better than any other. Take your time, wear your running socks and insert your orthotics if you wear them. Walk around the store and jog outside. If it doesn't feel or fit right in the store, it won't feel better when you run.

Make certain the salesperson watches you run. Running and walking gait can be different. There are some shoes that could be wrong for you. For example - some shoes do not have enough support for a big runner. Even though you may not be able to tell, a salesperson at a specialty store has been trained to recognize problems in any shoe.

The following is a detailed explanation of different types of running shoes available:

*Cushioned Shoes.* You should wear cushioned shoes if you are a runner who needs maximum midsole cushioning and minimum medial (arch-side) support. These shoes are best suited for biomechanically efficient runners (you don't over pronate), and mid-foot or forefoot strikers. Runners who do best in cushioned shoes often have moderate to high arches.

*Motion-Control Shoes.* You should wear motion-control shoes if you are a runner who overpronates moderately to severely. Motion-control shoes will give you maximum rear foot control and extra support on the medial (arch) side of the foot. Motion-control shoes are also best suited for big or heavy runners who need plenty of support and durability. These runners often have low arches (flat feet).

*Stability Shoes.* You should wear stability shoes if you are a runner who needs medial (arch-side) support and good midsole cushioning. These shoes are best suited for runners who are mild to moderate overpronators, and/or need added support and durability.

*Pronation Explained.* When you run or walk, you land on the outside edge of your foot and roll inward. This entirely normal inward rolling is called pronation. For most runners, the pronation stops at a healthy point. However, some runners roll inward too much. This excessive inward rolling is called overpronation. Runners who overpronate should wear motion-control shoes, which contain special foams and devices that are designed to limit overpronation.