

Step Forward Orthotics

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INSTRUCTIONS

BREAK-IN INSTRUCTIONS

When you first stand on the orthotic it feels like you are standing on a golf ball. You must **not** wear your orthotics all day the first day, or the muscles will become sore and bruised. Your feet & body need time to adjust to the arch supports gradually during a break-in period of several weeks. This is **very** important. It may take 2 weeks, 1 month or even 3 months for them to feel comfortable. If you are having problems, stop wearing them and contact us for advice. Very few people have problems, but we can help most of those who do **if** they contact us.

	Day:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	10	14	17	21	28	35	42
Slow	AM	0:05	0:10	0:15	0:20	0:30	0:45	1:00	1:30	2:00	2:30	3:00	3:30	4:00	All Day
	PM	0:05	0:10	0:15	0:20	0:30	0:45	1:00	1:30	2:00	2:30	3:00	3:30	4:00	All Day
Medium	AM	0:15	0:30	0:45	1:00	1:15	1:30	1:45	2:30	3:30	4:30	All Day			
	PM	0:15	0:30	0:45	1:00	1:15	1:30	1:45	2:30	3:30	4:30	All Day			
Fast	AM	0:30	1:00	1:30	2:00	2:30	3:00	3:30	4:00	All Day					
	PM	0:30	1:00	1:30	2:00	2:30	3:00	3:30	4:00	All Day					

Slow: For old feet and/or very high arches, or with any history of heel pain. It will take from 6 weeks to 3 months to be wearing them all day.

Medium: For most people, try this schedule. It will take about 3 weeks to be wearing them all day.

Fast: For feet that are very young and very flat. It will take 1 to 2 weeks to be wearing them all day.

- In the first week, please leave at least 3 hours between the AM and the PM sessions.
- These times are based on normal walking. Around the house, to the bus, down to the shops. Not exercising.
- Once you can walk on them all day, **then** you can start light exercise, then heavy exercise & sports, then eventually run a marathon in them.
- During the break-in period you will feel some changes, maybe even discomfort, nausea and pain, in different parts of the body, as realignment is achieved. If this occurs, just back off and don't increase the wearing time until it passes. Contact us if concerned.
- For the break-in, a comfortable pair of shoes with laces is best. We strongly suggest that, until your feet are comfortably wearing these orthotics all day, you do **not** buy or alter any shoes. Once your feet are well adjusted then it is time to re-assess your shoe collection.
- If you are already wearing other orthotics, then we recommend you continue to use them while not in ours (ie phase the old orthotics out and phase Step Forward in). You will **not** adjust to Step Forward Orthotics faster just because you have been wearing other orthotics.
- The correct size usually feels too long or short at first. Give the foot's arch time to adjust to the orthotic.
- Feel free to call our office with any questions. **PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS AGAIN LATER.**

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

1. Most people find they have **more** room inside the shoe while wearing our orthotics. We have made the front of your foot narrower by raising the transverse arch. So your foot now moves further forward making it loose at the heel. This will not be a problem with well-fitted new shoes. Overcome the problem by tying your laces firmer, adding an extra flat insole inside the shoe and/or by attaching heel grips to your shoes.
2. Shoes must **always** have flat lining under the orthotics to minimise abrasion. If you remove the original insole for any reason, you **must** replace it with other flat insoles. These are inexpensive and can be bought at supermarkets, pharmacies and cobblers. Extra layers of lining can be useful if your shoes are now too loose, for example if you had oversized shoes to accommodate your previous bulky orthotics.
3. A flat foundation for the orthotics is essential. If your shoes have significant inbuilt arch support (most don't) replace the lining with a flat insole (see above) or cut away the lump from the shoe's insole.
4. Step Forward arch supports are excellent for nearly all sports, BUT you must first go through the gradual break-in period as outlined above and DO NOT wear the orthotics during activities strenuous to the feet until your feet are ready. Our orthotics are used enthusiastically by runners, golfers, dancers, football players, weight lifters and other sports people.
5. When buying new shoes always try them **with** the orthotics. Do not buy new shoes until your feet have adapted to the orthotics.
6. Our orthotics will not cause the feet to sweat or become irritated and they will not retain any odour. The orthotics can be washed, if you wish, in warm water, using liquid soap or mild dishwashing detergent. Wipe or air dry them. Do **not** dry them with heat (see below). Progressive discolouration of the orthotics is normal and cannot be avoided.
7. The orthotics will be damaged by excessive heat. Do not expose them to temperatures above 50°C. Do not boil or microwave them. Do not expose them to a radiator, oven or hairdryer. Abrasion (wearing away) is not covered by the warranty. This will happen faster with dirty shoes or by rough stitching and linings within the shoes. Dogs love to chew on them, and this is NOT covered by any warranty!
8. These orthotics will normally maintain their full arch over many years, but some may seem to flatten. In such cases restore the arch by pushing down at the front and back, while pushing up (from underneath) in the middle of the waffle section (about 1/3 of the way back from the front). Bend the orthotic around, folding it back on itself, several times. A video demonstration is on our website. Repeat this daily, weekly, monthly or as required. Don't be afraid of breaking them ... they are guaranteed!

Flexing Foot Correctors - Made in USA since 1974

1030-201509

Heel Pain, Plantar Fasciitis & Spurs

The plantar fascia is the muscle group that runs along the bottom of the foot from heel to ball of foot. It is our "suspension system". It works really well on sand, grass, gravel and dirt, but it gets insufficient use when we walk on hard floors and in shoes, thus becoming stiff and tight. For some of us, when it is knocked or bumped, it cannot stretch enough so it starts to tear (usually away from the heel) causing a painful inflammation (*plantar fasciitis*) that is most painful for the minute or two when getting out of bed, up from the couch to put on the kettle, or out of the car after a long drive. It often goes back and forth between the two feet as we carry more weight on the good foot. The body will

try to strengthen the tear by depositing calcium at the site. This becomes the heel spur.

To correct the problem, you need to get the muscles strong and stretchy again. **Either** spend the rest of your life on the beach (never come inside again) **or** wear a flexing orthotic (such as Step Forward Orthotics) which will exercise the tendons and muscles. Most other treatments are merely addressing the symptoms, not the cause. Once the fascia heals, then the body will gradually reabsorb the spur.

Bunions

Bunions are **not** from your high-heeled pointy shoes. Bunions come from standing and walking the same as your mother, grandmother or father. Like them, you have pressure on the front outside edge of your big toe. This has pushed your toe towards the other toes, opening the joint, leading to calcification (the bunion lump). Our orthotics take the pressure away from the big toe, so it now wants to come back straight, but the calcium prevents this happening. Break down the calcium with an exercise and it will gradually absorb back into the body, allowing the toe to straighten progressively. After 12 or 18 months you will see a straighter toe with a diminished lump.

The bunion exercise is done every day for 60 seconds, on each foot. Hold the big toe of the left foot with your right hand as you pull the toe away from the 2nd toe, towards straight. At the same time, with the left hand hold the foot firmly just below the big toe joint. You must use pressure OUT on the toe and IN on the joint. Then rotate the big toe around the straight axis, clockwise 30 seconds, then anti-clockwise 30 seconds. This should be a gentle and comfortable exercise. You can do this yourself, with your foot on the other knee, but it works better if you have someone do it for you.

Visit our website to see a video of this exercise.

Hammer Toes

Hammer toes nearly always coincide with dropped 2nd, 3rd or 4th metatarsal heads. Our orthotics reform the transverse arch and your hammer toes will want to straighten out, but the years of tendon imbalance will make this difficult. It can be accelerated slightly by exercising the toes, but you will still have hammer toes years from now, slowly improving rather than slowly worsening.

Reach down while standing and take hold of each toe to straighten them out. Use your fingers to actually stretch the toe muscles and tendons that have shortened. While standing, place the heel of one foot over the hammer toes of the other foot. Push the toes downward. Maintain the pressure for 30 seconds. Repeat several times and on the other foot.

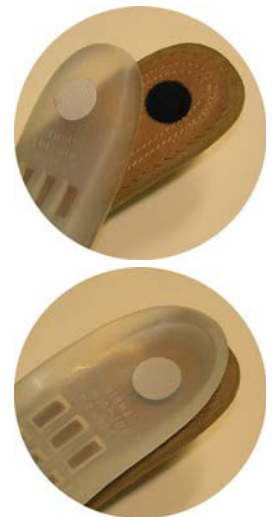
Using Your Step Forward Orthotics with Sandals

The orthotics will slide out from backless shoes as you walk along. Although the Velcro method (detailed below) can help for a few days, we strongly recommend you avoid backless shoes in favour of sandals that include a back, such as those shown here.



Backless shoes are not as good for your feet as the styles shown on the left, but if you really want to wear our orthotics in backless shoes then this is how:

1. Stand in your sandals with the orthotics in place. The back of the orthotic must cup the back of your heel. Look down and note where the back of the orthotic sits relative to the back of the shoe.
2. Before attaching the velcro dots, clean the underside of the orthotic and the inside of the shoe in that area with methylated spirits and let them dry.
3. Peel off the protective film of the scratchy dot and attach it to the underside of the orthotic in the centre of the heel.
4. Now attach the soft side of the furry dot to the scratchy dot that is already on the orthotic. Peel the protective film from the soft dot.
5. Position the orthotic in the shoe with the heel in the correct spot as noted earlier. Press the orthotic (and hence the velcro dots) firmly against the shoe.
6. Velcro recommend leaving the dots in position overnight to achieve maximum bond before wearing the orthotics.
7. The Velcro may slowly drift out of position over a few days. Then you must remove them, clean the area with methylated spirits and apply new dots.
8. To achieve a stronger bond, purchase a **strip** of Velcro to give a larger surface area.



Tips for Success with Orthotics, Shoes & Feet

- The orthotics are a tool, not a crutch. The more you wear them, the better your feet will be.
- Change shoes. Do not wear the same pair two days running. This is best for your feet and for your shoes.
- Purchase shoes that fit well. They must not crowd the toes or

compress across the widest part of the feet.

- For extra cushioning try an inexpensive flat foam insole under or over the orthotics.
- Check our website for useful advice and videos.

Medical Advice

Symptoms can be due to a wide range of causes. Only a qualified medical practitioner can diagnose your condition. This document explains how Step Forward Orthotics can be helpful in many situations, but must not be taken as medical advice. If in doubt, consult your doctor.

The Step Forward Company, based in Seattle USA, has brought relief and benefits to hundreds of thousands of people since it began in 1974. Step Forward has been sold in Australia since 2004. If you have any questions or concerns please contact us - we are here to help. Please tell your friends about your Step Forward Orthotics so they also can benefit from happier feet and better alignment.