



476 N. Main Street Glen Ellyn, IL 60137  
630-547-0080 [www.run-today.com](http://www.run-today.com)

## Understanding your personal pronation type is crucial to choosing the proper running shoes.

If you land on the back outside of your heel, you are considered a pronator. 98% of the running/walking population is considered pronators. The medial (inside) portion of your calf is much stronger than the lateral (outside) portion. As you pick your foot off the ground and extend your leg, the medial portion of the calf takes over. Wearing out the shoe on the heel only means you are a heel striker. It is important to know what happens to your foot when all your weight is applied. Running puts 3-5 times your body weight on impact thru toe off. A 150 lb runner puts between 450-750 lbs of pressure on their feet with every foot strike. That is why we measure your feet sitting and standing. Everyone pronates; it is the degree of pronation that is a concern.



When selecting your shoe size several factors are considered. Originally, there was a standard for sizes and the sizes matched the 'Brannock device'. This is the measuring tool for your foot. Now that shoes are made in factories all over the world; there is no standard! A size 8 foot as measured with the Brannock does not equal all size 8 shoes. We also factor in the swelling of your foot as your running distance increases. Never buy a shoe by size; only buy by fit. A shoe needs to fit with what is called "The Rule of Thumb". That is a half to a full thumb's width from the end of your longest toe to the end of the shoe. You should also be able to pinch material across your toes. The shoe should only be snug (not tight) from your arch to the heel. Having room for your toes to wiggle is good. We can tell you features and benefits of your shoe selection, but not feel. What you feel is your reality.

Fit and feel are much more important than the color of a shoe!

If you have a normal arch, you're likely a normal pronator, meaning you'll do best in a stability shoe that offers moderate pronation control. Runners with flat feet normally overpronate, so they do well in a motion-control shoe that controls pronation. High-arched runners typically underpronate, so they do best in a neutral-cushioned shoe that encourages a more natural foot motion.

### Pronation

The outside part of the heel makes initial contact with the ground. The foot "rolls" inward about five percent, comes in complete contact with the ground, and can support your body weight without any problem. The rolling in of the foot optimally distributes the forces of impact. This movement is called "pronation," and it's critical to proper shock absorption. At the end of the gait cycle, you push off evenly from the front of the foot.



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### **Overpronation**

As with the "normal pronation" sequence, the outside of the heel makes the initial ground contact. However, the foot rolls inward more than the ideal five percent, which is called "overpronation." This means the foot and ankle have problems stabilizing the body, and shock isn't absorbed as efficiently. At the end of the gait cycle, the front of the foot pushes off the ground using mainly the big toe and second toe, which then must do all the work.

### **Underpronation**

Again, the outside of the heel makes initial contact with the ground. But the inward movement of the foot occurs at less than four percent (i.e., there is less rolling in than for those with normal or flat feet). Consequently, forces of impact are concentrated on a smaller area of the foot (the outside part), and are not distributed as efficiently. In the push-off phase, most of the work is done by the smaller toes on the outside of the foot.

### **Testing for Pronation**

Step 1: Pour a thin layer of water into a shallow pan.

Step 2: Wet the sole of your foot.

Step 3: Step onto a flat, paper shopping bag or a blank piece of heavy paper.

Step 4: Step off and look down.

You can go a long way toward discovering what you need in a running shoe by looking at your feet. There are three basic foot types, each based on the height of your arches. The quickest and easiest way to determine your foot type is by taking the "wet test" below. Observe the shape of your foot and match it with one of the foot types. Although other variables (such as your weight, biomechanics, weekly mileage and fit preferences) come into play, knowing your foot type is the first step toward finding the right shoe for you.

### **Normal (medium) Arch**



If you see about half of your arch, you have the most common foot type and are considered a normal pronator. Contrary to the popular belief, pronation is a good thing. When the arch collapses inward, this "pronation" absorbs shock. As a normal pronator, you can wear just about any shoe, but may be best suited to a stability shoe that provides moderate arch support (or medial stability). Lightweight runners with normal arches may prefer neutral-cushioned shoes without any added support, or even a performance-training shoe that offers some support but less heft, for a faster feel.



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### **Flat (low) Arch**

If you see almost your entire footprint, you have a flat foot, which means you're probably an overpronator. That is, a micro-second after footstrike, your arch collapses inward too much, resulting in excessive foot motion and increasing your risk of injuries. You need either stability shoes, which employ devices such as dual-density midsoles and supportive "posts" to reduce pronation and are best for mild to moderate overpronators, or motion-control shoes, which have firmer support devices and are best for severe overpronators, as well as tall, heavy (over 165 pounds), or bow-legged runners.



### **High Arch**



If you see just your heel, the ball of your foot, and a thin line on the outside of your foot, you have a high arch, the least common foot type. This means you're likely an underpronator, or supinator, which can result in too much shock traveling up your legs, since your arch doesn't collapse enough to absorb it. Underpronators are best suited to neutral-cushioned shoes because they need a softer midsole to encourage pronation. It's vital that an underpronator's shoes have no added stability devices to reduce or control pronation, the way a stability or motion-control shoe would.