

The Worth of 'Soles'

A complete mission shoe guide brought to you by Sister MissionaryMall

Why do your shoes matter?

As a missionary, your shoes become the most important physical tool you have. You are walking hours upon hours everyday, performing acts of service for those around you, riding your bike to get to appointments and running to get home on time at the end of the day. Just about everything you do as a missionary is made possible by your feet. Now, imagine that your feet constantly hurt. That would make your days tracting & biking quite miserable. Your feet not only literally support your whole body, but they support your entire mission lifestyle. Here are a couple of essential qualities to look for when shopping for mission shoes:

High Quality Materials: Leathers are really great because they are breathable & flexible around your foot. Also look for water-resistant/waterproof materials. Don't be afraid to take Nubuck or Suede shoes on your mission.

Durable Outsoles: This is so important as this is where your shoes hit the pavement. If you have a thin, flimsy outsole, it won't matter how nice all of it's other features are. Look for shoes with a Polyurethane or Rubber outsole- they will last the longest.

Removeable Insoles: Your feet sweat about 7 oz. a day. All of the moisture usually ends up somewhere in-between your insoles and the actual shoe. Being able to take your insoles out and let them dry out, will keep your shoes from molding and create a longer life for your shoes.

Arch Support: Wearing shoes with the proper support will not only make your feet hurt less, but they will also keep your ankles, knees, hips & back aligned--creating less pain throughout your body.

Mary-Jane Strap: While cute flats might be more attractive, having a sturdy shoe with a strap across the top is going to serve you better out in the field. The strap holds your foot in your shoe, which allows you to relax your toes in your shoes and still hold them on. It also makes it easier to ride a bike and walk quickly/run.

Tips for making your shoes last your whole mission:

1. Rotate Your Shoes

Often times, missionaries make the mistake of falling in love with one of their pairs of shoes over the others. Rotating between all of our shoes regularly will make every pair last longer!

Why is that?

The soles need a day to relax. Shoes also need to dry out from the moisture of your feet. Leather uppers need a day to relax to maintain elasticity.



4. Be responsible with your shoes & your feet

Be aware of the things that you'll do on your mission. Will you be riding in a car? Walking? Riding a bike? Make sure to buy shoes that work for your feet--this means styles, sizes, & heights that are appropriate for you & your mission.

If something breaks on your shoe, or comes unstitched, take them to a cobbler to get fixed before the problem gets worse. Most minor repairs are reasonably priced and are much cheaper than replacing the entire pair.

Don't share shoes with anyone else. The landscape of their foot is different and they will wear them differently. You could also catch foot diseases from them. (Keep in mind that it is also safer to shower with sandals). The most common foot issues missionaries complain of are: Fungus, Plantar Fasciitis, Ingrown toenails, & Athlete's Foot.



Learn more about the best shoes for you & your mission at missionarymall.org

2. Properly care for the materials of your shoes

Missionaries always feel that they don't have time to condition & polish their shoes, but taking time to do so not only makes them look better--it makes them last longer!

Remember that leather is skin--it needs to be treated just as you would treat your own skin.

Protect your shoes from the elements by weatherproofing them.

Allow your shoes time to dry out if they are wet from the elements. By doing so, it prevents bacteria from getting to your feet.

If serving a mission that is prone to frequent inclement weather--consider taking a pair of rubber shoes just as an option while walking through water.

Take time to untangle straps when putting on your shoes and then taking them off. This small practice prevents wear & tear on the elastic and the straps on your shoes.

Refrain from kicking them off with just your feet. Reaching down and taking them off when your hands eliminates the stress on the heel collar and straps of your shoes and helps them last longer.

When kneeling to pray, flatten out your toes. Bending and resting on your toes causes the leather to crack and peel as well as the outsole to crack on the bottom of the shoe.



3. Use care products for your shoes

Dansko Beeswax Conditioner: Combines moisturizing & waterproofing properties to preserve and protect leather footwear

Dansko Leather Cream: Conditions, weatherproofs, and restores leather footwear. Protects from water, oil & other harmful elements.

Dansko Suede and Nubuck Spray: Apply to your Nubuck, Suede and Leather shoes. Leaves a barrier against water and stains.

Dansko Nubuck Block and Brush: Helps restore and refine the natural look of your nubuck and suede shoes.

Dansko Footbed Cleaner: Prolongs the life of your footwear by removing dirt, oils, perspiration and odors.