



INSTRUCTIONS

BREAK-IN INSTRUCTIONS

Your feet must adjust to the arch supports, and this is done gradually during a break-in period of several weeks. When you first stand on the orthotic it may feel like you are standing on a golf ball. This is a normal feeling. We therefore recommend that you **DO NOT** try to wear them too long the first time. If you do, the muscles may become bruised and sore. The longer you have been walking on imbalanced feet the more pressure you may feel, and in new areas. Follow these simple instructions. It may take 2 weeks, 1 month or 3 months for them to feel comfortable. **BE PATIENT!**

	Day:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	10	14	17	21	28	35	42
Slow	AM	5min	10min	15min	20min	30min	45min	1hr	1hr30	2hr	2hr30	3hr	3hr30	4hr	All Day
	PM	5min	10min	15min	20min	30min	45min	1hr	1hr30	2hr	2hr30	3hr	3hr30	4hr	All Day
Medium	AM	15min	30min	45min	1 hr	1¼ hr	1½ hr	1hr45	2hr30	3hr30	4hr30	All Day			
	PM	15min	30min	45min	1 hr	1¼ hr	1½ hr	1hr45	2hr30	3hr30	4hr30				
Fast	AM	30min	1hr	1hr30	2hr	2hr30	3hr	3hr30	4 hr	All Day					
	PM	30min	1hr	1hr30	2hr	2hr30	3hr	3hr30	4 hr						

- In the first week, please leave at least 3 hours between the AM and the PM sessions.
- Use common sense: If your feet start to hurt, take out the orthotics. You have done enough for that session.
- 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.

- The best type of shoes to break in the orthotic is a comfortable pair of shoes with laces. 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.
- During the break-in period you may feel some changes, sometimes even discomfort, pain or nausea, 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.
- 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).
- 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. This is good for your feet, but your foot may have a tendency to rise out of the back of the shoe. To prevent this, buy heel grips for your shoes. Your old shoes were stretched into this shape by your feet. This will not be a problem with well-fitted new shoes.
2. In open-heeled shoes and sandals, the back of the orthotic may tend to move about or even work out from under the foot. To prevent this, apply Velcro to the heel (the soft loops to the shoe and the 'hooks' to the bottom of the orthotic). As an alternative, wear the orthotics inside your socks or stockings.
3. Step Forward orthotics will go straight into most shoes with no modification. However, some (eg sports) shoes may already have a large medial arch support. In such a case, you must REMOVE the shoe's arch (by tearing or cutting it out) or remove the entire shoe liner and replace it with a flat insert from the supermarket. The orthotic MUST sit flat in the shoes without any sideways tilt. Most shoes have only a minor soft arch, and this can be left in place.
4. Step Forward arch supports are excellent for nearly all sports, BUT go through the gradual break-in period as outlined above and DO NOT rush into activities strenuous to the feet until your feet are ready. Our orthotics are used enthusiastically by runners, golfers, football players, weight lifters and other sports people.
5. When buying new shoes try them with the orthotics to make sure they are comfortable and that the shoes are large enough to allow proper circulation. We suggest you 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 should be washed occasionally in warm water, using mild dish washing detergent.
7. The orthotics will be damaged by excessive heat, so do not boil or microwave them, and do not expose them to temperatures above 50°C. 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. For some people (usually with heavy and/or hot feet) the arch may seem to flatten. In such cases, each month or so simply bend the orthotic backwards (heel to toe) several times. This will raise the arch and restore the natural spring. Don't be afraid of breaking them ... they are guaranteed!

Product Warranty

Step Forward orthotics are guaranteed against defects in materials and workmanship. If they break, crack or split with normal use, within 10 years of purchase, contact our office to arrange an assessment. If we determine the problem is a break, crack or split and due to a fault in materials or workmanship, we will provide a new pair free of charge.

If they flatten, contact our office for instructions on how to restore the arch. The warranty does NOT cover damage by heat (above 50°C), abrasion (wearing out), modification, negligence or other misuse. The original receipt must be presented for all warranty claims.

Heel Pain, Plantar Fasciitis & Bone Spurs

- The plantar fascia is the muscle group that runs across the bottom of the foot from heel to ball of foot. It is designed as our "suspension system". It works really well on sand, grass, gravel and dirt. It gets insufficient use when we walk on hard floors and in shoes, thus becoming stiff and tight.
- When a stiff & tight tendon 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, or out of the car after a long drive.

- The body will try to strengthen the tear by depositing calcium at the site. This becomes the heel spur.
- You need to get the muscles strong and stretchy again. The best solution is either spending the rest of your life on the beach (never come inside again) or wearing a flexible orthotic (such as Step Forward orthotics) which will exercise the tendons and muscles.

Bunions

- Wearing shoes with adequate room for the toes is essential. Even the straps on sandals (if the straps are in front of the joint) will pull the big toe inward. Do not wear any shoes that are tight and crowd the toes!
- The best exercise for this condition is to grab the big toe of the left foot with your right hand as you pull the toe away from the 2nd toe

slowly and gently. At the same time, with the left hand hold the joint in with your thumb. You must use pressure OUT on the toe and IN on the joint. Then rotate the big toe clockwise 30 seconds, then anti-clockwise 30 seconds. Then swap feet. Repeat every other day for 12 to 18 months.

Hammer Toes

- Take hold of the toes and slowly bend them forward stretching the muscles and tendons. Massage the tendons, work the toes downward, trying to get them under the ball of the foot. The best position is thumb on toes and finger under the ball of the foot. Push down the thumb. This will pull muscles and tendons further up in the leg in some people.
- Push each toe IN and twist. Pull each toe OUT and twist. This

exercises the inner muscles and tendons.

- 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.

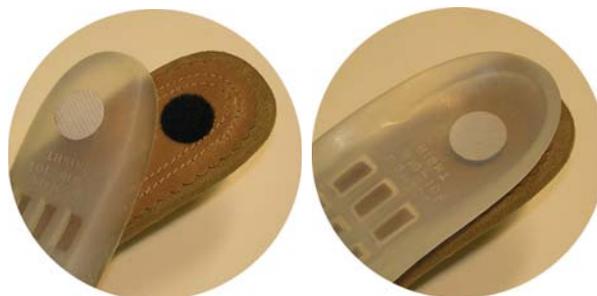
Using Your Step Forward Orthotics with Sandals

To prevent the orthotic slipping out the back of open-heeled shoes, peg the back in place with self-adhesive velcro dots.

1. Stand in your sandals with the orthotics in place. The back of the orthotics should be out of sight but not pressing into the skin. 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 for 24 hours to

achieve maximum bond before wearing the orthotics. Overnight would be beneficial.

7. The Velcro may slowly drift out of position over a few weeks. 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

- If your shoes have significant inbuilt arch support (most don't) replace the lining with a flat insole or cut away the lump from the shoe's insole. A flat foundation for the orthotics is essential.
- Remember 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 under the orthotics, try a flat insole.
- Clean the orthotics monthly. Warm soapy water (dish washing detergent) is all you need.
- Restore the spring to the orthotics each month by bending them backwards heel to toe. This will increase the height of the arch.

Thank you for choosing Step Forward Orthotics. 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 reached Australia in 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.