

## **Trendy Comfortable Shoes**

*Tips for picking shoes that won't crimp your toes or your style.*

In cities where walking is a part of life, women's feet can take a real beating. Finding a shoe that is both comfortable and trendy can be tricky. More often than not, women settle for either comfort or fashion because they don't know what to look for in a shoe. Follow along as New York fashion stylist, Leigh Byrne, shares her insider tips to keep your feet looking chic and feeling cozy whether you're running errands or heading out for a fancy dinner.

### **Width matters**

"It's really important that your toes are not squished," says Byrne. "You want to make sure the width of your foot fits properly into the width of the shoe." Squeezing toes into a narrow shoe box can create foot complications like hammertoes and neuroma, an inflammation that affects the nerves between your toes. Go wide and never worry again about pinch nerves again.

### **Size is just a number**

"Each designer uses a different model when making their shoes for production. Just because a shoe says it's an eight doesn't mean it will match your foot size," warns Byrne. So the next time you're out shopping don't worry so much about the number. It's more important to try a half size up or down to ensure a proper fit.

### **Save the shoe shopping for the end of the day**

Byrne advises, "It's best to try your shoes on when you've been walking around all day. Your feet will be swollen and a little sweaty, and you will feel any discomfort more—which is the point." She also suggests taking your time and walking around the store a lot before making a purchase. The more your foot gets acquainted with the shoes, the sooner you'll discover whether the pair you have on is comfy or not.

### **To heel or not to heel**

High heels make us feel sexy but most aren't very comfortable. Byrne disagrees that a women looking for comfortable footwear should avoid heels all together. "Any woman can rock a high heel and feel comfortable, but she needs to make sure she's wearing the right heel for her foot." She suggests playing with different heel heights until finding

one with a solid underfoot. Stacked heels and wedges disperse weight and offer stability, while a well-centered heel under three inches will guarantee you'll be zipping around for hours looking chic and pain free.

### **Ballet flats and what to watch out for**

Outside of sneakers, ballet flats are a girl's best friend for foot comfort. But flats tend to lack proper arch support leaving some women with a lot of foot pain. Byrne solves this problem by adding insoles which creates arch support and also gives the shoe bed extra cushion. She also recommends women look for flats with leather soles which allow the foot to breathe. "Unless you're walking a lot on cobblestones, where rubber soles are more preferable, women should look for a leather sole. Leather might be more expensive but it will be worth it in the long run because you can always have a leather sole repaired and it extends the life of your shoe."

Bottom line is you needn't sacrifice comfort for fashion. Follow any of these practical tips and not only will you be able to keep up with the latest fashion trends but your feet will be happy too.