

Breaking in your custom molded orthotics

Upon receiving your pair of custom molded orthotics, there are a few things you should know about breaking them in.

1. **The break-in period** Your orthotics will require a break-in period which will last from one day to one month. When you first start wearing your orthotics, be aware that there may be some discomfort in your feet, low back or anywhere in-between. This especially includes your knees. If you have this, you should take out the orthotics and wait a couple of hours or until the next day before putting them back in. Your goal should be to wear them more and more each day until you can wear them full time. This process may take up to a month. If this break-in process is not going well, you should call our office. If it does go well, we would like to see you back for an orthotic check in 2 to 4 weeks.
2. **Orthotic adjustments** Most of the time, very few orthotic adjustments are needed, but there are many alterations that can be done to improve the comfort and function of these devices. This may include alteration in arch height, addition of cushioned layers and progressive posting to alter the tilt of the device. The decision on whether or not to alter the orthotic is made at the time of your 1st orthotic check.
3. **Save your cast molds!** Please save your wooden cast molds forever! It is best to put them in the closet where your shoes are... forever. You will need them for additional orthotics, custom sandals, or major adjustments.
4. **Fitting them into shoes** Orthotics will fit into some, but not all shoes. The stylish, female high heel shoe is the hardest to fit an orthotic into: the athletic shoe is the easiest. If you have difficulty fitting the orthotic into a shoe, bring that pair with you to the first orthotic check.
5. **Insoles** Your orthotics may go directly on top of the insoles you currently have in your shoes. Occasionally, you will want to remove the insoles and put the orthotics in their place. The best alternative is to cut the insole in half and put in just the front half into the shoe. The orthotic is then placed in the shoe so that it overlaps the insole by 1/2" or so.
6. **Squeaking** If your orthotic squeaks in the shoe, we recommend using a foot powder. This can be talcum powder or Desenex or virtually any powder applied generously underneath and on top of the orthotic.
7. **Cleaning** Your orthotics are best washed by hand with soap and water. The glues used in the device should withstand this, but not soaking or solvents.
8. **New shoes** Please bring your orthotics with you when you try on new shoes. It is sometimes helpful to buy shoes with easily removeable insoles.
9. **Slip on shoes** Dress shoes without laces can be difficult to fit with orthotics. Your heel may want to slip up and down in the shoe. If this is the case, there are 'heel gripper' additions you can purchase at the shoe repair store to prevent this. This will be less of a problem when the shoe breaks in to the orthotic. Be aware that the inside edge of the orthotic can crease the 'upper' of a dress shoe. This may or may not be a noticeable problem with your dress shoe appearance.
10. **Expectations** Your expectations should be high regarding your orthotics. They should decrease your foot/lower extremity pain, fit nicely in your shoes, and not cause any pain of their own. They should last for years with the need for once-a-year or once-every-other-year refurbishings. We expect to see you only once a year for orthotic checks. *You should be very happy with your orthotics, and if not, we want to help adjust them to optimize their effects on your feet!*

Thanks,

Doctors Wilson and Ichikawa