FOOTWEAR CARE GUIDE

SELECTING YOUR FOOTWEAR

When selecting shoes make sure that the type, size and width match your size. The length of the inside of your shoe should be longer than your foot and your toes should not (under any circumstances) touch the inside tip of the shoe, the so-called leeway. Try your shoes on again in the comfort of your home. Please keep in mind that not every shoe will fit your foot at the first time. Improperly selected type of shoe, size, width or shape cannot be used as reasons for later claims.

When selecting your shoes, please consider the purpose, design, material structure and required care. Only properly selected footwear in terms of purpose, functionality and size can fulfill your expectations and give you the added value you are looking for. While using your shoes, please pay attention to all instructions of use. It is very important to eliminate all factors negatively influencing the functionality and life of your footwear, such as: high intensity of use (we do not recommend using the same shoes every day), using your shoes for inadequate purposes, washing, etc.

Regular maintenance is a necessary prerequisite to maintain the functionality and good conditions of your footwear. Use only products designed for footwear to care for your shoes. Incorrect or insufficient care significantly reduces functionality and the lifetime of your shoes.

PURPOSE OF YOUR FOOTWEAR

Different types of shoes are designed for different uses. The purpose is based on the use of suitable materials, design and structure and required maintenance. Therefore, when selecting your footwear keep in mind what purpose you are buying your shoes for.

Walking shoes - shoes designed to be worn indoors or outdoors. These type of shoes represent classic design, without any fancy fashion elements. These types of shoes usually offer comfort rather than fashionable style. Typically, these shoes come in many varieties and colours. Enclosed walking shoes may be used outdoors in temperatures not exceeding -5 degrees Celsius. Flexible walking footwear is designed for dry environments (do not use in wet or humid environments).

KINDS OF FOOTWEAR

Winter footwear - shoes designed to be worn in extreme winter conditions. This type of footwear provides better thermal insulation achieved with thermal linings and thicker soles, usually with nonslip patterns. Flexible winter footwear is designed for dry environments (do not use in wet or humid environments)

Social footwear - shoes designed to be worn indoors and for relatively short periods during various social occasions. These shoes are usually designed as classic cut and made entirely of leather (regular shoes or dress shoes) and fitted with a leather sole. These shoes are very sensitive to moisture and to uneven surface, therefore not suitable for outdoor use.

Fashion footwear - shoes designed for short-term use. Thanks to the structure and used materials this type of footwear is designed for less demanding conditions. The most important property of these shoes is fashion and trendiness, not lifetime. This type of footwear is usually fitted with trendy elements, which also determine its relatively short lifetime. This footwear is not designed for everyday use. If you decide to use this type of shoes regularly you must pay a lot of attention to everyday care of your shoes.

Highly fashionable footwear - shoes designed for short-term or occasional use in less demanding environments. All materials and designs are manufactured to meet the latest styles and everything revolves around trendy design and aesthetic value (for example, extremely long tips, elevated soles, upper coating extends all the way to the bottom of the shoe). The use of nonstandard materials and special design increases the wear and tear of this type of footwear. The lifetime of this type of footwear is limited and may be significantly shorter than the provided warranty period. This type of shoes is designed to be worn in dry conditions. Make sure to protect this type of shoes from dirt and other negative influences.

Structure and materials used to manufacture this type of footwear offer only minimum resistance to wear and tear. This type of footwear cannot be worn every day.

Recreational footwear - designed to be worn during leisure times or while enjoying various recreational activities. The design and structure is tailored for indoor use or for undemanding and mild outdoor conditions. This type of footwear is not designed for sporting activities.

Sport footwear - shoes designed to be used during various sporting activities. The design and structure of these types of shoes correspond with the particular sporting activity for which the footwear was designed and therefore these shoes should be used for a certain sporting activity only.

Household shoes - light textile and simple structure shoes designed to be worn inside your house. Household or home shoes with textile soles are designed to keep your feet warm and not to be worn on regular occasions. During regular and everyday use bottom sections may wear out quickly.

Children's footwear - shoes with special design and complying with special requirements. These demands are based on the special needs of children as their feet develop and grow over time:

- select shoes with proper width and length and do not forget a leeway between 10 to 15 mm.
- children's shoes should have a spatial and round front section and a rigid heel section.

- shoes reaching above the ankles and fitted with laces or with Velcro zippers are preferable
- do not forget that children's feet are growing and children's bones are still soft. Failure to observe these basic principles may damage children's feet and may even negatively affect the entire life of the child.
- Children's feet grow very quickly. Inspect the size of the child's foot and shoes regularly. This also means that the lifetime of children's footwear should not be longer than 6 months.
- Due to the use of children's footwear (the typical way in which children walk) this type of footwear is exposed to higher wear and tear (abrasion, chipping, etc.). This type of mechanical damage cannot be claimed as a defect.

All children's footwear sold in the e-shop www.belenka.com has been medically approved.

MANUFACTURING METHOD

Another factor significantly affecting functionality and shoe care is the manufacturing method, i.e. the method used to attach the bottom section of the shoe to the upper section.

Glued shoes – the most common technique when the bottom and the top of the shoe are glued together. The strength of the glue joint may be negatively affected by wet conditions (sweat or rain) or by using insufficiently dried shoes repeatedly. Glued joints may lose their strength while walking and may open up.

Flexible shoes – shoes manufactured in this way are very comfortable, light and flexible, fitted with popular sewn edges. The increased flexibility is achieved thanks to the fact that the top of the shoe is sewn to the bottom of the shoe without using any tensioning linings. The disadvantage of this type of shoe is the low resistance to water due to the fact that sewn joints perforate upper material. Use this type of footwear in dry conditions only. If used in wet environments your shoes may get soaked. Regular maintenance may improve the water resistance of this type of footwear. Use plenty of shoe care lotion to impregnate and protect your shoes. Pay special attention to the sewn edges and cut joints. Thoroughly impregnate and apply shoe cream to these joints. If your shoes are made of polished leather use a lot of shoe cream (Collonil Nilfett is recommended).

Shoes fitted with moulded sole – the bottom section of the shoe is attached to the upper part by pressing, injection or by direct moulding. The quality of the joint depends on the material of the sole and on the technique used.

USED MATERIALS, MAINTENANCE AND CARE

At present many different types of materials are used, including various types of leather, synthetic and textile materials. Basic knowledge about materials used in your shoes together with proper care and maintenance extend the life of your shoes.

Leather – the most common and natural material offering ideal properties for shoe manufacturing. Leather is porous, soft, absorbent and, to some extent, can adapt to the individual shape of your foot. Leather is typical for its variable face pattern, which only enhances its natural characteristics and distinguishes it from synthetic materials. Leather is not entirely water resistant neither on the face surface (climatic conditions) nor inside (perspiration). Therefore, you must take proper care of leather shoes.

We distinguish between several basic types of leather:

- **Polished leather** – fine surface structure with small pores. Remove dirt from your shoes using a suitable brush or damp cloth and wipe dry. Use suitable impregnating lotion or cream of desired colour and polish. For casual care (for example at work or when travelling) you may use self- polishing sponges; however, these only polish the leather and cannot replace proper care lotion.
- **Lacquered/painted leather** – leather with a polished and shiny surface, which is the result of lacquer or paint coating. This type of surface is very susceptible to mechanical and chemical damages as well as to moisture or freezing temperatures. Remove dirt from the leather surface using a damp cloth and apply a proper leather-care product designed for polished and painted leather.
- **Coated/layered leather** – leather fitted with a foil or plastic layer on its face surface. It has similar properties as painted or lacquered leather. Use a damp cloth to clean this type of surface and wipe dry or use cleaning products designed for synthetic materials.
- **Nubuk, velur** (suede) – is a leather grinded on its face or back surface. Use a rubber brush to clean this type of surface and products designed for suede materials. These products come in certain colour shades or may be colourless and will brighten the colour of your shoes. It is necessary to apply suitable impregnating lotion to this type of leather in order to increase water resistance. Never use cream for suede materials!
- **Other leathers** – there are many types of leathers which come in various colours and with different surface finishes. A typical property of this type of leather is that its surface changes over time. Leathers with scraped surfaces have an additional, usually different colour underneath. The top coating wears out in sections exposed to stress and the original colour comes out. Another type of material is a leather with mechanically disturbed face surface through which a different colour and leather structure is visible. This disturbed surface keeps cracking during use in sections exposed to stress and the top layer peels out,

releasing the material structure underneath. These changes occur very quickly and keep increasing during use. This type of shoe rapidly gains a patina or the „used" look. These changes are desirable and do not constitute a reason for a claim. Do not, under any circumstances, apply any creams or polishing agents to these leather surfaces. Use colourless impregnating sprays (COLLONIL VARIO, BSS - Combi materials protector), and leave them on the surface until they dry out. Impregnation protects shoes from moisture and dirt; however, make sure to protect your shoes from excessive soiling as dirt cannot be easily removed.

Other synthetic and plastic materials – are very similar to „other leathers". A typical property is continuous development of its appearance during use. The top coating/paint in sections exposed to stress gets worn out quickly, peels off, cracks and the contrast colour underneath comes out. These changes happen rather quickly and are desirable, as they create a trendy „used" look. It is not a defect, it occurs intentionally. The surface is very susceptible to mechanical damages and to dirt. Avoid significant soiling as the dirt cannot be easily removed from the surface and permanent damages may occur.

Bottom leather – type of leather used mostly for dress shoe soles. These types of shoes are usually worn indoors. Not suitable for regular use as it very susceptible to moisture and to uneven surfaces. It is very slippery - a natural property of this leather. Treat leather soles with suitable care products which will restore the necessary smoothness, anti-slip properties and resistance against abrasion. If you decide to use shoes with leather soles regularly and outdoors, it is necessary to fit the sole with suitable reinforcement pads in order to reduce wear and tear or damages. Shoes modified in this way should never be used in wet environments under any circumstances. Some women's and men's shoes are leather coated. Leather coating must be regularly maintained with impregnating lotions and creams in order to avoid the negative influence of moisture and mechanical damages.

Textile – used for light and mostly summer and household footwear. Use a brush to clean dry textile shoes together with suitable textile care products, which will impregnate and brighten colours and will partially protect your shoes from dirt. Do not use textile shoes in wet environments - this type of footwear is not resistant to outside moisture.

Synthetic materials – plastic materials, poromers – these materials often resemble leather, but their properties are inferior to natural leathers. For example, they offer only limited permeability and therefore increase perspiration. This type of footwear requires very low maintenance. Upper plastic materials of your shoes (upper and bottom materials) which are painted on surfaces are very susceptible to mechanical damages caused by abrasion or stress (stumbling over). These mechanical damages do not constitute a reason for a claim. This type of stress will scrape the paint from the surface and the original material colour will come out. Use a damp cloth with detergent to clean your shoes and wipe dry.

Rubber – use a damp cloth with detergent to clean your shoes and wipe dry.

Water-resistant membrane – a special material that offers water resistance while maintaining permeability. First remove heavy dirt from your shoes using lukewarm water and a sponge or a brush. When dry use a suitable impregnating product. Use only products recommended by manufacturers of these type of membranes (for example Collonil).

Additional shoe care and maintenance principles:

- When putting on your shoes, in particular shoes with an enclosed heel, use a shoehorn.
- When you take your shoes off, insert a tensioning device inside your shoes to maintain proper shape.
- Change shoes frequently, especially when worn in humid environments (using the same shoes everyday is not recommended).
- After each use let the shoes dry thoroughly (remove inserts as well) - even after short usage the inside of the shoe gets wet due to foot perspiration.
- Using wet or only partially dried shoes may result in excessive wear and tear (mostly of linings and insoles).
- Impregnate your shoes before the first use and apply suitable shoe products. Perform shoe care and maintenance as needed.
- Avoid soaking shoes as this will destroy surface finish and deform the shape.
- No shoe is perfectly water resistant when used for an extended period of time. Suitable impregnating products only increase water resistance and resistance against rain or snow.The only footwear which is completely water resistant without suffering any negative damages is footwear made entirely of plastic or rubber.
- Stuff newspaper inside the soaked shoes and let them dry naturally, not too close to heat sources.
- Deicing and aggressive chemicals used in winter have a very negative effect on shoe material structures. These aggressive chemicals damage the structure of materials and cause swelling and the appearance of typical white spots. Try to avoid contact with these types of chemicals. Remove residual snow or wet dirt from your shoes after use. Use shoe care products regularly. Properly treated shoes are more resistant to negative influences. Shoes damaged by these chemicals cannot be returned.

- All stitched and perforated joints (including stitching of the upper edge of the sole) break the integrity of materials and reduce resistance of the shoe against external moisture.
- Rich and dark shades of polished leather (for example red and dark blue) may discolour slightly.
- Materials inside your shoe may slightly leak colours; especially when wearing trousers tucked into boots (this also applies to the upper rims of high boots).
- Children's winter padded "snow shoes" should not be the only winter footwear for your child.
- Shoes should never be washed manually or in a washing machine.
- Do not use paint thinners or similar solvents such as acetone or alcohol to care for your shoes.
- Wear of the heel end depends on its size. Small heel ends (for example high heel shoes) must withstand large pressures so they wear down quicker than a heal with a larger area.
- Proper and regular basic maintenance and replacement of worn heels, soles (or hard soles), insertions or glued linings, laces or loop fasteners (Velcro) will prevent damage to other parts of your shoes. This damage cannot be used as a reason for a claim. This is basic maintenance that the customer must perform.
- The natural property of insoles manufactured from smoked "raw rubber" is the characteristic smell of smoke.
- Make sure your feet are properly fastened with fastening belts or another fastening system. Insufficient fastening of your foot in your shoe may result in excessive wear of insoles and linings.
- Some women's shoes with fastening buckles are fitted with flexible stripes, so-called flexible bands. The shoe is fitted with this flexible band to increase walking comfort. The buckle must be undone every time you put your shoes on or take them off in order to eliminate excessive stress on the flexible band and quick wear and tear.
- Most soles are not resistant against petrol, diesel, oils or similar chemicals. If these chemicals get in contact with the bottom of the shoe they will damage the sole. Soles made from raw rubber are most susceptible to this damage.
- Bright colours on upper surfaces may fade away over time. Using suitable care products will reduce colour fading.
- White materials may turn slightly yellow over time.
- Due to different structures in shoes designed with pointed tips and thin soles, the tip of the shoe is in contact with the surface during walking (floor, sidewalk, road), which results in rather quick and intensive wear of the pointed tip and the sole or possibly of top layers of the shoe. This type of shoes must be inspected regularly and soles must be repaired if necessary. Topy Elysse hardened materials available in Bata stores are suitable for this type of shoe.
- No shoes sold in our stores may be used as work shoes, because our shoes do not comply with strict work shoe requirements.
- Metal decorations may turn black in time. Regular cleaning will prevent product discolorations.
- Decorative accessories, stones and various ornaments are exposed to intensive mechanical stresses during the use of the shoe and may break off. This is normal, as these highly fashionable ornaments cannot be firmly attached to the shoe,
- If you drive a vehicle while wearing fashionable shoes, wear and tear (or even damage) of heels, heel supports or coating of the entire heel support may occur much quicker.
- Summer style open shoes (flip-flops) and fashionable shoes made of textile have limited life expectancy, approximately one season.
- Highly polished (metallized) materials lose their brightness very quickly due to abrasion.
- All synthetic materials age naturally, even if not used.
- Soles designed with a visible foam structure (for example EVAC) wear rather quickly. Very light soles (PUR soles) have significantly shorter life expectancy and tendency to crack than soles made from different materials.

Below you can see pictograms representing basic materials used to manufacture individual shoe parts.
Should you have any questions, ideas or comments you may contact us at:

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We hope you will enjoy your shoes.