

How to Walk in High Heels

Three Methods: [Improving Your Technique](#) [Choosing the Right Heels](#) [Keeping Your Feet Fresh](#)

High heels can be a girl's best friend—helping you to stand up taller, look slimmer, and feel more confident. However, walking in sky-high heels can be a little tricky, especially if you're not used to it. Don't worry though, learning to walk fearlessly in high heels just takes a little practice. Follow these helpful tips and you'll be strutting like a catwalk model in 5-inch stilettos in no time!

Method 1 of 3: Improving Your Technique

1 Take smaller steps. Walking in the highest heels isn't like the walking you learned to do when you were a child, so you have to do a few things that might feel counterintuitive: Take small, slow steps, making sure not to bend your knees any more than you normally would. You'll notice that high heels tend to shorten your stride a bit. The taller the heel, the shorter the stride ends up being. Don't try to fight this by taking bigger steps—stick with small, dainty steps which will make your walk look more natural and help you to feel more comfortable.

2 Walk from heel to toe. The aim is to walk as normally as possible in your high heels. When walking in flats, you don't walk on the balls of your feet or put your whole foot down at once, do you? So don't do either of these things in heels. Put your heel to the ground first, followed smoothly by your toes. Then, once your weight is on the balls of your feet, shift your weight forward as if you're walking on your tip toes, and push forward for the next step.

3 Improve your posture. Walking well in heels is very dependent on maintaining good posture. If you're slouching and shuffling as you walk, it kind of defeats the purpose of wearing high heels in the first place—the aim is to look comfortable and confident! To get the perfect posture:

- Imagine there is a piece of invisible string holding your head upright—your head should be in line with your spine and your chin should be parallel with the floor. Avoid looking down when walking in high heels!^[1]
- Put your shoulders back and down and keep your arms relaxed at your sides. Swing your arms slightly as you walk for balance.^[2]
- Keep your abdominal muscles engaged, sucking your belly button towards your spine. This will help you stand up straighter while also making you look thinner.^[1]
- Bend your knees slightly, they should never be locked when walking in heels. Keep your legs close together as you walk and point your toes directly ahead.^[2]

4 Imagine walking along an invisible line. [Catwalk models](#) will often cross one foot slightly in front of the other to give their hips more sway. A lot of women wear high heels to look sexy, so adding a little shimmy to your walk is a good thing. The best way to achieve a sway while walking in high heels is to pretend that you're walking down an imaginary straight line, or tight rope.

- One foot should come down directly in front of the other, with your toes pointing straight ahead. This walk will take a little extra practice to master, but the results will be worth it.^[3]
- Have a look at some videos of catwalk models to see how the professionals do it, then try to emulate what you see. Be aware that catwalk models tend to over-exaggerate their walk, so you may want to tone it down a little for real life!

5 Practice wearing your heels around the house. Wear your heels for a day around the house *before* you wear them out. This will not only allow you to get used to wearing them, but it will also create scuffs on the bottom so that they're less slippery. Make sure you practice doing all the things you would normally do while walking, such as: walking, stopping, pivoting, and turning around.

6 Break in your heels. If you fail to break in your heels before your first time wearing them, you'll be destined for blisters. Breaking in your heels is important as it removes stiffness from the shoes and helps mold them to the shape of your feet. Just wearing your shoes around at home should be enough to break them in, but you can also try:

- Exposing your heels to different surfaces: You will likely need to walk on tiled floors, [carpets](#) and slippery, wooden floors at some point in your high heel wearing, so try to master them all.
- Dancing: If you're planning on wearing your heels to a nightclub or a party where you know you're going to want to boogie down, then [dance to the beat of your own drummer](#) in the privacy of your home until you're comfortable shaking things up in your heels.
- Walking down the stairs. This is one skill you'll definitely want to master, as stairs are the site of most high-heeled mishaps. Place your entire foot on each step as you come down the steps, but only place the ball of your foot on each step as you go up. Hold onto that railing gracefully, just in case.

7 Wear your heels outdoors. Walking in heels indoors is very different to walking in them outdoors. Without the soft cushioning of carpet, or the flat, even indoor surface of linoleum or wood, walking in heels can be ten times more difficult.

- Even minor surface flaws in tarmac or cracks in the pavement will present difficulties, so try walking up and down outside your house a few times, taking great care to avoid uneven surfaces.
- A good place to practice after you've gotten the hang of it in your house is to wear your heels to the supermarket. Use your cart for balance!^[4]

8 Practice standing in heels. Not only do you need to learn how to walk in heels, but you should also be aware of how to *stand* in heels. It may sound simple, but many women just don't know what to do with their feet when posing for pictures or standing around chatting at an event. This is where having comfortable shoes becomes very important, as you don't want to spend your evening shifting uncomfortably from foot to foot.

- To stand correctly in heels, stand with with the heel of one foot touching the middle of the other foot, while cocked at an angle from it.
- Put your weight on the toe of the foot in back, and as soon as that foot gets tired, switch feet so that your weight is on the other foot.

Method 2 of 3: Choosing the Right Heels

1 Shop wisely. Not all high heels are created equal and the ability to walk well in high heels relies heavily on choosing the right ones. Always go shoe shopping at the end of the day, when your feet are slightly swollen from walking and at their biggest. Pick shoes that are suited to the shape of your foot—making sure the shoe is wider than your bare foot. Always try both shoes on in the store and take a walk around—if you don't find them comfortable immediately, then you probably never will.

2 Start small and work your way up. It's probably not a good idea to choose a pair of 4 inch (10.2 cm) stilettos if you're not used to walking in heels—it's better to work your way up, increasing the height as you get used to how they feel. There are many different types of heels to choose from, varying in height, thickness, and shape. Training your feet by starting out with small heels will allow your ankles to develop the strength they need to walk safely and gracefully in high heels.

- Begin with a shoe that has a low heel of about 2–3 inches (5.1–7.6 cm). Try to go for wider heels (rather than skinny spikes) as these will provide more balance. Closed in shoes can also be easier to walk in than strappy sandals as they provide plenty of support over your foot and around the heel and ankle.
- High heeled wedges are the easiest high shoes to walk in, as the heel is fully attached to the sole of the shoe, giving you increased balance and comfort. These are a great option if you want the height of a high heel, but don't feel ready for a stiletto. They are best worn in spring and summer - to wear to work, on holidays or to a summer wedding!
- Wear the mother of all heels. Stiletto heels are also referred to as "spike heels" and include anything with a heel above 3–4 inches (7.6–10.2 cm). These are the final step in your high heel training—once you've mastered walking in these, you'll be ready to take on the world!

3 Get the right size. Choosing the right size shoe is absolutely essential when buying high heels. Be aware that different brands of shoes may be sized quite differently, so you might be a 7 in one brand, but an 8 in another. As a result, you should always, *always* try your shoes on before buying.

- When in doubt, always go for shoes that are slightly too big rather than slightly too small. You can always make big shoes smaller by adding insoles and cushions, but you can't make small shoes bigger. Shoes that are too small will be terribly uncomfortable and you'll probably regret buying them.
- Remember to have your feet sized regularly, as your shoe size can change over time, especially as you get older. Your feet tend to get longer and wider as your arches begin to fall.^[5]

Method 3 of 3: Keeping Your Feet Fresh

1 Use cushions and insoles. Add cushioning wherever there's a lot of pressure and/or friction. There are cushions made in various shapes and from different materials that you can stick on the inside of your shoe for more comfortable walking, thus preventing bunions and blisters. If your shoes are slightly too big and you find them

slipping off your heel, get some insoles which can make the shoes smaller by half a size, while also adding comfort value. Use these these innovative items generously - there's really no need for discomfort!

2 Give your feet a break. When wearing high heels, the best advice you can take to prevent pain is just to sit down whenever possible! This will give your feet a break and will stop any pain or discomfort from building, keeping your feet fresh.

- Remember to cross your legs, sitting up straight and stretching out your legs from the waist down. This is also a great opportunity to show off your fabulous shoes!^[4]
- Try not to take your heels off, if at all possible, your feet will swell up and you'll find the shoes harder and more painful to put on again.

3 Wear strappy, platformed shoes. Shoes with straps that fasten securely around your foot and ankle are more comfortable to wear as they prevent your foot from slipping around too much inside the shoe, reducing friction and pain. Platform shoes give you all the benefits of extra height, without the discomfort of feeling like you're standing on your tip toes. Your foot is more parallel to the ground in a platform shoe - making them a great option for nights on the dance floor!

4 Don't wear high heels too often. High heels look fabulous, but they will have more of an effect and give you extra "oomph!" when you save them for special occasions. If you wear them too often, blisters, and bunions are more likely to form and you will also put pressure on your lower back. Your feet (and the rest of your body) need some time to recover.

- If you need to wear heels everyday for work, at least try wearing different shoes, with varying heights. This prevent too much pressure or friction from concentrating on one particular spot and keep your feet feeling fresh.^[6]

We could really use your help!

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

No

Tips

- Always make sure you are confident in your heels. If you are not, you are more likely to fall over.
- Focus on one step at a time.

- Boots with heels may be easier to start with. They give your ankles more support.
- The bigger your feet, the higher a heel you'll be able to wear comfortably. So don't assume you need to wear the same heels that models do; many of them have large feet to match their tall stature!^[3]
- If you have open toe shoes try to put cushions around the area where your toe meets your foot. This will keep them from sliding out the open toe and your feet will not slide out. This helps if you have small or thin feet/toes.
- Buy a quality pair of shoes. Shoes in the \$150 and up range will last longer and be better for your feet, but you'd do well to pay more—buy the best heels you can afford, and remember an old-school rule: the higher the heel the more you should pay as the heel will be stronger—scrimp on your flats if needs be, but never on your heels as it's just asking for trouble. If you can only have one high-end piece in your wardrobe, make it your heels, for there more than anywhere else, quality really matters, and makes a huge difference... and remember, **quality** is not necessarily 'designer brand'—you want to source your heels from expert *shoemakers*, not clothiers and/or cosmetics companies! The better brands make their heels with a sturdier spike, better quality leathers, a more padded insole and they are simply more well-made all round.
- If you are looking for shoes to dance in, check with your local dance instruction school for recommendations on stylish shoes that are designed for dancing.
- Wear your heels as often as you can. This will help your feet and ankles get accustomed to the feel of your heels, and will help with your balance. The more hours you put into it, the better your feet will feel.
- Best tip is: walk with confidence
- If you have sandal heels be sure not to wear them too much because the band around the back of your heel will wear out or break!

Warnings

- Driving in high heels is generally not a good idea, especially with a standard transmission. Wear flats or tennis shoes for driving. Avoid flip-flops, as these shoes can get caught in the pedals.
- **Walk carefully.** Grass, cobblestones, and grates or drains are your enemy. Even a crack on the sidewalk can bring you down if it swallows the tip of your heel. Watch your step and **don't** even *think* about power walking or jogging with those heels on.
- No matter how nice your heels are, don't wear them all the time. Wearing heels too often can lead to chronic foot and back pain.^[7]

Sources and Citations

1. ↑ ^{1.01.1}<http://www.sfgate.com/style/article/Guide-to-walking-in-high->

heels-without-pain-3179730.php

- 2. ↑ ^{2.02.1}<http://www.howcast.com/videos/500314-How-to-Maintain-Proper-Posture-High-Heel-Walking>
- 3. ↑ ^{3.03.1}<http://www.highheelshoemuseum.com/html/WalkingInHeels.html>
- 4. ↑ ^{4.04.1}<http://www.glamour.com/fashion/2009/02/8-high-heel-tips-from-fashion-week-pros#slide=1>
- 5. ↑ <http://www.uthct.edu/fitnessoverforty/episodes/hazardsofhighheels/>
- 6. ↑ <http://www.highheelshoemuseum.com/html/WalkingInHeels.html>
- 7. ↑ <http://www.uthct.edu/fitnessoverforty/episodes/hazardsofhighheels/>

Article Info

Categories: Featured Articles | High Heeled Footwear

In other languages:

Featured Article

Français: Comment marcher avec des talons hauts, Italiano: Come Camminare sui Tacchi Alti, Español: Cómo caminar con tacones altos, Deutsch: In High Heels laufen, Português: Como Andar de Salto Alto, Русский: ходить на высоких каблуках, 中文: 穿高跟鞋走路, Nederlands: Op hoge hakken lopen, Čeština: Jak chodit na vysokých podpatcích, Bahasa Indonesia: Berjalan dengan Sepatu Hak Tinggi, 日本語: ハイヒールで美しく歩く（する）方法

Thanks to all authors for creating a page that has been read 1,604,160 times.