Cricket Shoes

Cricket shoes are an essential piece of equipment for any player and not a decision to be made lightly. There are different types of shoe available for different playing positions, as well as shoes made specifically for junior players, so it's important to weigh everything up before making a buying decision.

- **Batting shoes – these are typically lightweight and low profile allowing the player to be quick on his feet in between the wickets.**
- **Bowling shoes (boots) – these look like shoes but are typically referred to as boots due to the slightly higher ankle of some models to give additional support to the bowler during a fast bowling action**
- **Fielding shoes – Generally known as "all-rounders", these shoes are made with fielders' in mind, but can also be used by other players as they tend to be lighter than shoes made for a specific purpose.**

Cricket Spikes

Cricket shoes are available with and without spikes; these add additional grip potential, so most players do prefer to play with spiked shoes.

The configuration and number of spikes depends largely on the manufacturer, as does whether the spikes are removable or not. Removable spikes are the more practical option, as they can be replaced when necessary or with plastic studs for drier conditions. Players can then also choose their own spike layout

How to Check the Quality of a Cricket Shoe?

Finding the perfect pair of cricket shoes can be an arduous process. It usually requires a lot of research. To make your work easy we have accumulated a few points that you need to keep in mind while buying cricket shoes.

Upper Material

Always buy a cricket shoe with high-quality upper material. Polyethene, microfiber and high-quality synthetic material are some of the good quality upper materials for shoes.

Cushioning

Cricket shoes must have good cushion. Since cricketers stand a lot, good cushioning takes a lot of pressure from the legs and provides comfort to players. The perfect places for cushioning in cricket shoes are the heel and midsole.

Stability

Another factor which should be considered while buying is stability. Shoes with good stability help reduce pronation during bowling.

Ventilation

It is crucial that your cricket shoes have ventilation otherwise it can lead to smell in your shoes and foot. So always buy cricket shoes with proper ventilation and passage for air.

Spikes

The spikes of shoes should be decided by whether you are a bowler or a batsman. For batsmen, half spikes will be perfect and for bowlers, full spikes should be used as they provide better grip to them.

Sizing

Cricket shoes follow the same sizing standards as normal shoes, so you will able to easily buy the right junior or senior size based on your normal shoe size. That said, a lot of cricketers play with two pairs of socks (or one thick pair) for added comfort; if you prefer to do this, it's best to add a half size if available.

Different brands do offer different sizing in terms of what is available; the smallest junior shoe is a UK infant 13 and the largest is a UK adult 14. Half sizes are also catered for from 7.5-11.5.

Materials

Cricket shoes are made up of a number of different elements, and different manufacturers will use their respective technologies within these elements for comfort, durability, breathability, performance etc.

Upper – The 'upper' is designed to offer support in core areas and makes up a large proportion of the sides and top of the shoe. Uppers need to be made from material that offers maximum ventilation to prevent excess sweating or overheating whilst on the field, and in cricket shoes this is crucial for long games.

Different manufacturers opt for different materials and technologies to ensure their shoe uppers meet these core requirements; some will also add extras such as anti-scuff coatings or additional fastenings for protection.

Common materials used for uppers are:

- **PU/TPU - Polyurethane (PU) or Thermoplastic Polyurethane (TPU) is often combined with PVC based synthetic leathers for use in cricket shoe uppers. PU is also used across other parts of the shoe including the heels are torsion systems.**

Midsole – the midsole is found between the outsole and insole; this makes up the core majority of the sole. The material this is made from will depend largely on the specific wearer the shoe has been designed for; the midsole on a bowling boot will offer great impact protection than that of a shoe made for a fielder, for example.

Midsoles can be made from different materials; often a combination of materials is used to provide the best shock absorption and support required.

Common materials used for midsoles are:

- **Ethylene-Vinyl Acetate (EVA)/Phylon – expanded foam/rubber than offers good shock absorption**

properties, this is commonly used across a range of cricket shoes in the midsoles. It is a lightweight material that is also waterproof, low cost, and offers UV protection.

- **SpEVA – developed by Asics, this has 'bounce back' characteristics and is designed to prevent against midsole breakdown when running. There are 3 different densities; 45, 55 and 65 – these offer varying levels of stiffness and cushioning.**
- **Solyte – also developed by Asics, this is a lighter material than SpEVA and offers increased cushioning, durability and responsiveness. It is also available in 45,55 and 65-degree densities and can be used to replace the board in board-lasting/combination lasting.**
- **Zoom Air – Zoom Air is Nike's premium air shock absorption technology and is often used in the midsoles of Nike cricket shoes. It absorbs the shock to this part of the shoe and refracts it into the shoe, helping to retain the shape and buoyancy.**

Outsole – the outsole is the layer in direct contact with the ground, and as such needs to be very robust to withstand constant impact. This is typically made from Polyurethane (PU).

Outsoles typically have a spike plate fitted but this can also take shape in the form of a rubber dimple or a cleat design for added grip instead of spikes. The exception to this can be seen on bowling boots, which tend to have flatter outsoles.

Common materials used for outsoles are:

- **Pebax – properly known as Polyether Block Amide (PEBA), this is a high performance thermoplastic elastomer that is often used in outsoles and damping system components. It is very flexible and is a low density material.**

Heel – the heel of a cricket shoe needs to offer great support and impact protection to this vulnerable part of the foot, and as such is usually made from stiff materials for the heel counter that is built into the shoe (although some manufacturers use external heel counters instead) and shock absorbing foam in the heel section of the sole unit.

Common materials used for heels are:

- **adiPrene / adiPrene+ - developed by Adidas, this is a family of Polyurethanes that are often used in the heels of Adidas cricket shoes, particularly bowling boots. adiPrene is said to offer enhanced shock absorption; adiPrene+ offers great bounceback and can also be used in the forefoot.**

Trusstic System – also known as a 'torsion bar', the Trusstic system of a cricket shoe connects the midsole and outsole by way of a plastic arch to support the arches in the foot. This has been built into various manufacturers' shoe designs to reduce injuries during gameplay and minimise torsional flex.

Lasting – there are 3 types of Lasting:

- **Slip lasting – the upper is stitched or glued directly to the midsole**
- **Board lasting – the upper is attached to the bottom of a flexible board, which is then fixed atop the midsole**
- **Partial/combination lasting – this is where slip and board Lasting are both used within the shoe.**

Slip lasting makes for a lighter shoe, but provides less support than Board lasting. Using both in one shoe design gives the best of both worlds.

Sockliner – Sockliners give the shoe an added hygiene and comfort level. Some are removable which is good if you need to replace with a medical orthotic. These also give

added support and structure to the shoe and help to keep it in shape during and after use.

Cricket Shoe & Spike Maintenance

Cricket shoes need to be kept in good condition, so they continue to offer maximum support and protection to your feet, as well as aiding your performance on the pitch. It is essential to check your shoes regularly for any damage or wear as well as keeping them clean between games.

- **If you use your shoes in wet conditions, be sure to let them air and dry in a cool, dry place. Do not leave them contained within a bag as this can cause mould to grow, and keep them damp for longer which in turn can damage the materials.**
- **Do not place your shoes in direct sunlight other than when unavoidable during play – this can damage the materials over time, as well as cause discolouration.**
- **Do not take your shoes off without untying and loosening the laces first, as forcing your foot out can cause damage to the heel.**
- **Do not wash your shoes in temps over 30°C as this can warp the materials.**

Purchasing factors

Playing position, comfort, performance and durability will be the key factors when deciding which cricket shoes to buy, as well as size availability. Those will bigger sized feet may be more limited by manufacturer as to what is available within their price range.

We would always recommend buying shoes designed specifically for your playing position and from there, buying the shoes that fit your budget whilst offering the maximum in shock absorption and comfort. Whilst colour and style will always be an influencing factor, this should take second place to how well the shoes will protect your feet and enhance your performance!