

## PLATFORM SHOES, THE TRENDY AND COMFORTABLE FOOTWEAR

Women love shoes and most of us believe there's no such thing as too many shoes. True, they protect your feet from sharp objects and dirt, but shoes go beyond mere function. Shoes can be regarded as fashion accessories as well. What's a great outfit without great shoes?

If shoes have a down side, it's lack of comfort. Women traditionally squeeze their feet into the most painful of shoes for the sake of looking good. Well! Believe it or not, there is a genre of shoes that not only make your legs look great, but complement almost any outfit and - ta-da - are comfortable. This paragon of shoe virtues is the platform shoe.

Platform shoes first showed up as a fashion statement in the mid-1970s. They became instant hits, at first because they were an absolutely cool look, previously unknown in fashionisto memory. The shoes were featured in every top fashion magazine and found everywhere, from Paris runways to the very smallest rural town shoe shop. A shoe shop that did not carry platform shoes was a shoe shop destined for failure.

Now, most avant garde shoe styles don't last long - here today, out next season, or at least by next year. Platform shoes were the rage for several years before shoe designers tired of them, longing for a change in styling. How did the love of platforms last so long?

The reason is simple: platform shoes are unbelievably comfortable. You can literally walk in comfort for miles in such a shoe, with nary a peep of a complaint from your tootsies. The soles have a delicately but sturdily etched pattern with the traction of a snow tire. With your foot and stockings several inches above a rainy street, you sprint along through puddles with dry feet. No slipping or squishing.

The last of the platform shoe curves gently upward, from 2-3 inches above ground at the toe, to several inches at the heel. Therefore, the shoe, rather than your foot, does most of the work in creating the long-legged look so attractive to the opposite sex. Rubbery one-piece plastic was a typical heel material, so these shoes last for years without repair.

The uppers are made of every material and style found in conventional shoes. Styling runs the gamut, from beachwear sandals to a night at the theatre. You can wear them with jeans or with a fabulous beaded designer dress. Unlike any other genre of shoes, platform shoes are universally adaptable to any fashion requirement.

Like any classic, platform shoes are, thankfully, currently enjoying a resurgence of popularity with today's women. If you weren't around in the 70s, you simply must try a pair. You'll soon own dozens of pairs!