

# HOW TO CHOOSE A HIKING BOOT

### **Types:** You have a dizzying array of choices, from ultralight trail shoes to mountaineering boots.

Type, Features & Fit

Components: Understanding a little more about what goes into uppers, lowers, midsoles, outsoles and other

parts of a boot can help you refine your selection. Fit: No one ever loved a pair of ill-fitting boots. The difference between blisters and bliss is taking the time to get a great fit.

Types of Hiking Boots

#### Low-cut models with flexible midsoles are excellent HIKING **SHOES** for day hiking. Some ultralight backpackers may even choose trail-running shoes for long-distance journeys.

DAY

HIKING

**BOOTS** 

These range from mid- to high-cut models and are intended for day hikes or short backpacking trips with light loads. They often flex easily and require

**BACK-PACKING** 

BOOTS

durability of stout backpacking boots. These are designed to carry heavier loads on multiday trips deep into the backcountry. Most have a high cut that wraps above the ankles for excellent support. Durable and supportive, with stiffer

midsoles than lighter footwear, they are suitable for

little break-in time, but they lack the support and

on- or off-trail travel.

#### Materials impact a boot's HIKING **BOOT** weight, breathability, durability

Components

**UPPERS** 

FULL-GRAIN LEATHER Full-grain leather offers excellent durability and

and water resistance.

abrasion resistance and very

lightweight boot that offers

good water resistance.

### **SPLIT-GRAIN LEATHER**

excellent breathability. **SYNTHETICS NUBUCK LEATHER** Nubuck leather is full-grain Polyester, nylon and so-called "synthetic leather"

Split-grain leather is usually paired

with nylon or nylon mesh to create a

#### leather that has been buffed to resemble suede. It is very durable and resists water

and abrasion.

**WATERPROOF** Boots and shoes billed as "waterproof" feature uppers constructed with waterproof/breathable

> membranes (such as Gore-Tex® or eVent®) to keep feet dry in wet conditions.

**EVA:** is a bit cushier, lighter and less EVA to provide firmer support where needed.

**MIDSOLES** 

### and usually cost less. **VEGAN**

Vegan-friendly hiking boots and shoes are made without any animal ingredients or byproducts.

are all commonly found in

lighter than leather, break

in more quickly, dry faster

modern boots. They are

# expensive. Midsoles use varying densities of

Polyurethane: is generally firmer and more durable, so it's usually found in extended backpacking and mountaineering boots.

**Plates:** These thin, semiflexible inserts are positioned between the midsole and the outsole, and below the shank

**Heel brake:** This refers to the clearly defined heel zone that is distinct from the forefoot and arch. It

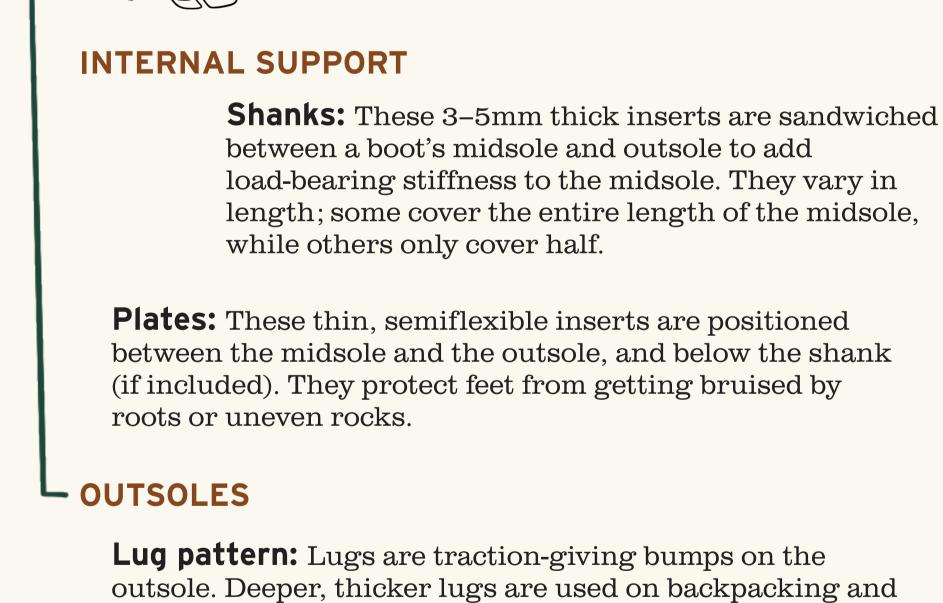
## Fit Tips Know your size. Try on boots at the end of the day.

When shopping online, consider a brand you've worn before. Consider aftermarket insoles.

Spend some time in the boots.

# **INSULATION**

Synthetic insulation is added to some mountaineering boots for warmth when hiking on snow and glaciers.



**Lug pattern:** Lugs are traction-giving bumps on the outsole. Deeper, thicker lugs are used on backpacking and mountaineering boots to improve grip. Widely spaced lugs offer good traction and shed mud more easily.

reduces your chance of sliding during steep descents.

If you wear orthotics, bring them along. Wear appropriate socks.



Break your boots in before your first trip.



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