



Exclusive Canadian Distributors of Dr. Comfort®

Proper Shoe Fitting: Using the Brannock

Proper fit is essential for long-term foot health. Remember to never assume that a person's everyday shoes are the correct size. Many people wear shoes that are the wrong length or width. Here are some guidelines to help you determine your patient's correct shoe size.

- 1) Use the **Brannock** Device to measure the patient's feet. SIMS Medical offers a Brannock Device customized to Dr. Comfort footwear. It includes both men's (in blue) and women's (in yellow) sizes, however any standard Brannock will also suffice. Patients should wear socks while measurements are being taken.

- 2) Take 3 separate measurements.
 - a. **Heel-to-Toe Length:** The heel should sit right against the back piece of the device. Press the toes flat against the base of the Brannock Device and look straight down over the longest toe (not necessarily the first toe) to read toe length. Make sure the patient's socks are snug against the toes (without drawing the toes back) to get an accurate measurement.
 - b. **Heel-to-Ball Length (Arch):** Place your thumb on the ball joint of the foot. Slide the pointer forward so the inside curve of the pointer fits the ball joint of the foot and the two high ribs come in contact with your thumb. When the pointer is properly located, the lower middle rib will be against the center of the ball joint on the side of the foot. This yields the arch measurement.
 - c. **Width:** Slide the width bar to the edge of the foot. On the sliding width bar, locate the length. To determine length use the midpoint between the heel-to-toe length and the heel-to-ball length. Find the width measurement that lines up to the shoe length on the width bar. If the shoe size falls between the widths, choose the wider width. If the foot is extremely fleshy or has a high instep, it may be necessary to fit an extra width wider.

- 3) Reverse the Brannock Device end to end and measure the other foot. It is common for people to have feet of different sizes. Always fit shoes to the larger foot.

- 4) Have the patient try on the Dr. Comfort shoe or shoes which is/are nearest the size you have determined to be correct. Make sure you pull the tongue up before lacing to assure proper fit.

- 5) **Determine if fit is correct.**
 - a) Check to see that the ball of the foot is at the widest part of the shoe. If ball is forward (toward toes), shoe is too short. If ball is back (towards ankle), shoe is too long. The area from the ball of the foot to the toes should NEVER be tight.
 - b) Check toe location. There should be 1/4- to 3/8-inch room at the toe for proper fit. Shoe can feel snug around the instep as leather will shape and form, but the shoe should not feel excessively tight at instep. If it does, patient may need a half size longer or one size wider.
 - c) Note: As a general rule, longer is usually better. Never fit short.

- 6) Help patient select an appropriate style and color. It might help to indicate a first and second choice on the order form, to ensure that there is no delay in your patient receiving his/her shoe.
- 7) Order shoes and (if applicable) number of additional inserts.

Examples of Proper Shoe Fitting

- Q:** Both of a male patient's feet measure 9 ½ in heel-to-toe length and heel-to-ball length and the width is C. How do you fit the patient?
- A:** Try fitting patient with a 9½ M. If you do not have a 9½ M, try a 10M. If the 10M is too roomy in the toe box, try a 9M. If the 9M is short in the toe box, then you may assume that a 9½ M is the correct size to order.
- Q:** A patient with the same size feet as above has a very high instep. What size shoe would the patient wear?
- A:** A very high instep should be fitted with a ½ size longer shoe. So in this case, the patient would wear a 10M.
- Q:** Another patient with the same size feet as above has a fleshy or thick instep. What size would he wear?
- A:** A swollen or fleshy foot should be fitted one size wider or ½ size longer, whichever fits best. In this case, try a 9½ W or 10M. Always remember, the best fit will have the ball at the widest part of the shoe.
- Q:** Your patient's feet measure 7½ heel-to-toe and 8½ heel-to-ball. What is the patient's correct shoe size?
- A:** Start by splitting the difference and try an 8. The shoe size usually is equal to or greater than the heel-to-toe measurement. In general, do not go more than one full size larger than the heel-to-toe measurement (e.g. heel-to-toe is 7 and heel-to-ball is 10, try an 8). When you split the difference to get the shoe length, always use this shoe length to determine the width. In other words, use size 8 on the Brannock to determine shoe width.

Always Remember

- 1) Determine shoe size based on the patient's largest foot. However, if the right and left foot vary by more than 1 ½ sizes, consider ordering two different size shoes. SIMS Medical offers split pair orders on Dr. Comfort footwear (50% surcharge applies)
- 2) If the instep of the shoe feels slightly snug when trying on a shoe, that should not pose a problem as the leather will shape to the foot. However, if the shoe feels extremely tight, patient should wear the same length shoe, but one size wider.
- 3) Patients frequently wear shoes that are too short and wide. Do not be influenced by a patient's stated shoe size!!
- 4) If the heel counter feels stiff or digs into the patient's heel than remove the shoe and flex the counter of the shoe with your palm by pushing it forward towards the toe of the shoe.
- 5) If the patient's shoe is slightly too large you can snug it up by adding a Dr. Comfort flat insert to the shoe. We supply these blue EVA build up inserts at no charge (found in each shoebox).

