

Factsheet 4

Feet Factsheet – making shoes

A Cordwainer is a leather worker or shoe maker and is a person who only works with new leather.

A cobbler is a shoe repairer and only works with old leather.

It wasn't until the 1920s that shoe makers realised the need to make shoes especially for children, allowing the need for foot growth.



The fit of a shoe depends on the design, shape and volume of the shoe last.

Many styles of shoes can be made on the same shoe last, but the toe shape and heel height will be the same for each pair made on that shoe last. If you want to have shoes with different toe shapes, then it is necessary to create more than one pair of shoe lasts.

Traditionally, shoe lasts were made of hardwoods, such as Maple or Beech.

Modern day shoe lasts are made of high density plastics that are 100% recyclable.

The shoe last must represent the anatomical information of the foot. A different last has to be made to accommodate different feet and shoe shapes.

Children's shoes can now be made that grow a whole shoe size. The flexibility of the shoes comes from an extending concertina panel between the toe and heel. With one push of a silver button, the panel lengthens to accommodate growing feet. So far they are only available in sports shoes.