



SOCCER FOOTWEAR

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Checker	I. Toellner
Approver:	C. Craig
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If you're buying a new pair of soccer cleats for your youth player, it's easy to be overwhelmed with the number of options on the market. Of course, at the end of the day, a wealth of options is a good problem to have.

We often field questions from parents about what cleats are best for youth players. Like with adult cleats, the design that's ultimately best for each individual player will depend on their playing style and tastes, but there are a few things that everyone should keep in mind when purchasing youth soccer boots. Here's a rundown of points to consider:

Field Type

First and foremost, it's imperative to select the right soccer cleat for the playing surface. Firm ground or "FG" cleats are designed for max traction on natural grass fields. Artificial field turf and "carpet-style" turf that you often find in indoor playing areas each warrant their own design. Make sure you narrow your search by field type right off the bat, or you could end up with cleats that are unusable come game time. Examples of the type of field types are:





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Cleats by Position

If your player primarily plays one position, you'll want to select cleats that are designed for the task. Goalkeepers need maximum traction and a large striking area for launching the ball upfield. Defenders might want boots with a little more protection, and midfielders need comfortable, lightweight cleats that can support the amount of running they do in a game. For attackers, generally, an ultra-lightweight cleat designed for speed is preferred. Versatile midfielder's boots are probably best for kids who play all over the field.

Find the Right Fit

As a rule, you want soccer cleats to fit snugly. This gives the athlete a better touch response and prevents heel-slippage. Of course, parents generally want to avoid spending money on sporting equipment that their youth player is going to outgrow in a matter of months. Finding the right balance between snugness and growing room is the hardest part of buying cleats.

Find the size that allows for zero space between their big toe and the tip of the boot. Your best bet is probably a half-size bigger than this super-snug fit. Using the width of the thumb from the tip of the player's big toe to the tip of the soccer cleat gives the room necessary to the youth player without the soccer footwear causing a risk to the player. If the footwear is too large, there is a risk of serious foot injuries as well as the youth player's ability with the ball will be hindered with improper footwear. The main parts of the footwear are as follows:





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Play Like a Pro

A lot of youth players grow up trying to emulate their favorite soccer superstars on the pitch. Chances are, if your player has a player they're obsessed with, you probably know about it, but it can't hurt to ask. There's nothing like the confidence that comes from taking the field in the same cleats as your hero so long as the footwear is properly fitted to the player's foot.

Give Your Kid Plenty of Options

With soccer cleats for youth players available from premium manufacturers like Nike®, adidas®, and PUMA®, you have a lot of styles to choose from. Order a pair that catches their eye and have your youth player wear them around the house. If they don't feel incredible, swap them out for another design.

References

FIFA- Law 4- The Player's Equipment

Canada Soccer Association

Alberta Soccer Association

Big Country Soccer Association Parent Guidelines (Ref: BCSA-GUI-004)

Big Country Soccer Association Coaching Guidelines (Ref: BCSA-GUI-006)