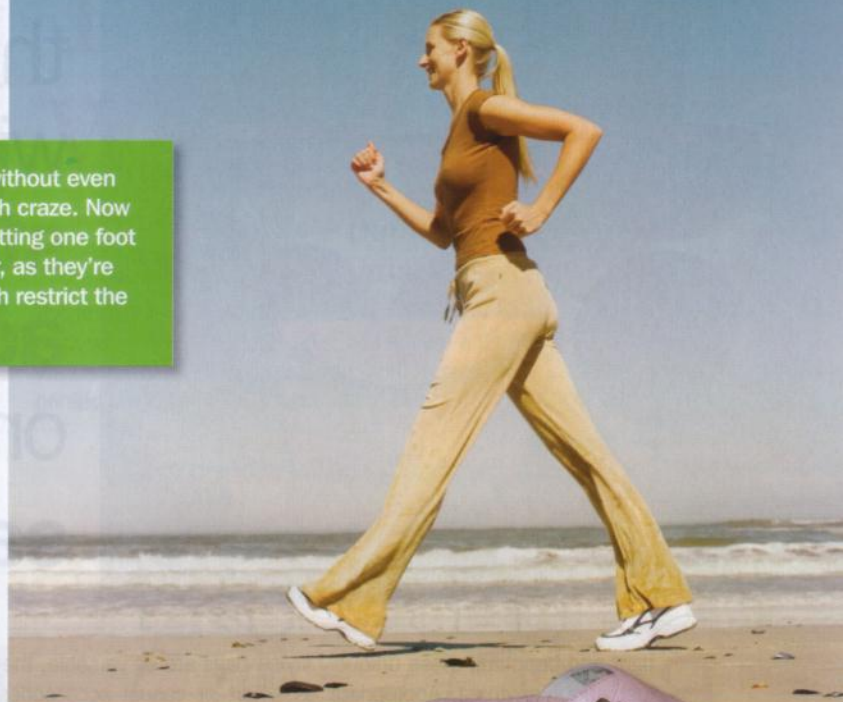


Shoes to make you slim

They can give you supermodel legs, banish cellulite and improve your posture. Sound too good to be true?

We asked five readers to see if exercise sandals really work...

What would you think if someone said you could get fit without even working up a sweat? Fitness shoes are the latest health craze. Now you can supposedly keep in tip-top shape by simply putting one foot in front of the other. 'Exercise sandals are great for the summer, as they're much more foot-friendly than pointy stilettos, for example, which restrict the muscles in the legs,' says podiatrist Emma Supple.



SCHOLL EXERCISE SANDAL, £29.99

3/5

From Scholl stores

Claim: The classic Scholl exercise sandal has been around for more than 40 years. An orthopaedically designed

beechwood footbed supports your arch and tones calf muscles by gently stretching and contracting them.

Verdict: 'My first outing wasn't pleasant – the hard leather left me with a blister. I gave them another try and was pleased to find they fulfilled their claim – the action of gripping the sole really strengthened the muscles in my shin, and I could definitely see an improvement in the muscle definition. But I was disappointed to find that this didn't extend to my calves.'

Beth Saunders, 36, Derby, Derbyshire

From www.supplefeet.com (020 8367 9292)

Claim: The contoured sole helps work your leg muscles and improve posture. Toes are kept in alignment by the dividers, meaning your feet don't slip or slide.

Verdict: 'The sandals felt strange at first but I quickly forgot I was wearing them, and the shaped sole supports the foot better than a regular flip-flop. Although the toe dividers were handy to wear while painting my toes, I didn't really notice any visible improvement in terms of toning my legs.'

Cara Richards, 45, London



SMART SANDAL, £20

1/5

WINNER

From www.mbt-uk.com (020 7684 4633)

Claim: Devotees have dubbed this the Rolls Royce of exercise sandals. The curved, layered sole simulates the action of walking barefoot. Leg, stomach and buttock muscles are toned, extra calories are burnt and cellulite is reduced.

Verdict: 'Not the most stylish of sandals, I put them on with trepidation. Initially, I felt a bit unsteady due to the curved sole. Within minutes, my posture improved and I noticed a pull in the muscles in my calf, leg and thigh muscles. After two weeks of wearing them, my legs definitely felt much more toned.'

Lucy Warry, 40, Brighton, East Sussex



MBT SANDAL, £119

5/5



MOON MIST SANDAL, £69

4/5

From www.lovethehoseshoes.com

Claim: Negative Heel Technology, developed in the 1950s by Danish yoga instructor Anne Kalso, positions your heel lower than the toe. This corrects posture, helps reduce cellulite and tones leg, buttock and tummy muscles.

Verdict: 'Within ten minutes of putting the sandals on, I could feel the backs of my calves working. The negative heel felt strange at first but after wearing them to walk to work every day for a couple of weeks, I noticed that my lower legs looked slightly more defined. The best thing is that they don't look like exercise sandals – I could wear them on a night out without feeling too embarrassed!'

Jessica Clovelly, 33, Canterbury, Kent



BIRKENSTOCK MADRID EXERCISE SANDAL, £29.95

3/5

From www.birkenstock.co.uk

Claim: When your heel is lifted from the footbed, the pressure moves over the balls of your feet, causing your toes to make a gripping movement, a process that tones your calf muscles. Circulation is boosted.

Verdict: 'The shoes were very comfortable and the shaped foot bed really supported my foot – especially the in-step. After walking in them for five minutes, I felt my calf muscles working harder than normal. I usually wear heels, so the effect could be because I'm not used to flats. I'd recommend the sandals because they work your legs, they're good for your feet and they look great.'

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