

A Step-By-Step Guide to Fitting and Use Soft Tissue Adjustment Phase

Step 1

Start with the Level 1 Inserts (see Changing Levels for information on when to proceed to the next Level).

Exception: Extra sensitive feet: start with the insoles alone for a day or so and insert Level 1 when you no longer notice the dome contour's gentle upward pressure. Resist the temptation to start higher than Level 1. Press each insert into the cavity under each insole, always using one at a time. (You can choose to use the adhesive on each insert or you can leave the adhesive covering on—either way you'll find that the insert Levels fit snugly into each cavity.) You are now ready to wear the insoles in your shoes.

Step 2

Slip your foot in and stand. If the dome contour exerts pressure "forward" of the arch of your foot, you can correct this by tucking the heel of the insole back against the heel pocket of your shoe before slipping your foot in again. Velcro strips with double-sided tape are NOT included with the 3/4 length insoles, but can be used to help hold the insoles in place over slippery liners. Pull off one adhesive cover and attach the sticky side to the insole behind the arch cavity, then press the insole back in the shoe.

If the dome contour has shifted off center to one side of the arch area of your foot, the inside curve of the shoe may have nudged the insole out of place. First, insure that the inside of the shoe is flat to enable the Barefoot Science insole to rest flat, and second, check to see that the heel of the insole fits snugly against the heel pocket of the shoe. When the insole is in the proper position, there will be mild pressure directly under the center of your arch.

If one pair of your shoes is exceptionally narrow through the midsection "from heel to toe", check that the Barefoot Science insoles are narrow enough to sit flat. Trim the midsection "waist" of the insoles very conservatively, NEVER trim around the heel. First, draw trim lines and cut less than you think you'll need. Place the insoles in the shoes to ensure that they sit flat. Any time an insole is trimmed, it becomes customized to a particular pair of shoes. It is good to be aware of this before trimming the waists of the 3/4 length insoles.

The ready-to-wear 3/4 length transfers easily between shoes. Rigid footwear magnifies the sensation of the dome contour, making the lower Levels feel higher than they actually are so save your old Levels so that you can move down a Level or two when moving the insoles to rigid-soled footwear such as golf shoes or protective work boots.

The Barefoot Science System is designed to work best on a flat surface. Do not lay the insole over existing (generic) insoles that feature a contoured arch support. If the generic insoles in your athletic or walking shoes are glued in, make sure that you remove all excess material before replacing them with Barefoot Science. Usually, you'll find generic insoles are easy to remove. As you progress through the Stages, it is very important to loosen your laces to allow adequate blood flow to reach the working muscles of your feet.

Additional Info:

Narrow Footwear:

In shoes that are exceptionally narrow through the middle, you may have to trim the Barefoot Science insoles along the midsection (waist) so they are able to lay flat. Proceed cautiously. Draw trim lines for this area, using the generic insole as your guide, but cut a little less than you think you'll need at first to prevent over-trimming. Once trimmed, the insoles are customized to fit the unique contour of a particular pair of shoes and should not be transferred to another pair of shoes.

Lacing Your Shoes:

Keep your shoes laced as loosely as possible at all times (just enough to keep them on). Otherwise, you may experience foot cramping due to poor bone alignment and/or restricted blood flow.

Changing Levels:

It is recommended that you move up to a higher level once you no longer notice pressure from the dome under the center of your foot (usually within four to seven days). The length of time will depend on the individual and can be influenced by such factors as age, foot type, footwear, type of activity (such as walking or running), duration of activity, etc. And certain Levels may work better or be more comfortable depending on the type of footwear and activity. For example, the lower Levels work best for prolonged standing or in shoes that restrict toe-raising or arch height. The higher Levels work best for activities such as walking or running, and in shoes that are flexible and do not restrict toe raising or arch height. It is very important that you do not skip Levels as you progress through the program.

Tips for Maximum Comfort and Performance

TIP #1—Build Strength with Consistency:

Wear the Barefoot Science Arch Activation Foot Strengthening System in all your enclosed footwear (if possible). Consistent use of the Barefoot Science insoles will provide consistent reflex stimulation that the feet need despite the dampening restrictions imposed by footwear so that your feet can more effectively manage impact forces even when you are periodically barefoot or in footwear that doesn't accommodate the System, such as in open-back shoes or high heels.

TIP #2— Adjusting Levels:

Wait at least 4–7 days before moving up to each new Level, which allows your feet to adjust to the increased stimulus. Always wear the same Level in both insoles at the same time. The 3/4 insoles work well in most dress and casual shoes and boots. Move up to the highest Level you can; if the shoe or boot does not have lacing or some other means of adjustment over the arch area, you may find that you cannot progress to the highest Levels. We recommend that you leave laces looser than you would normally to enable the feet to flex and to facilitate circulation to easily reach working muscles.

TIP #3—Save Your Levels:

Save your insert Levels so that if you stop using the Barefoot Science System for an extended period of time, particularly in the higher Levels, you can move down a Level or two to allow your feet to adjust to the lower intensity.

TIP #4—Refresh and Renew:

As needed, clean your insoles by soaking them in warm, soapy water for five to ten minutes and give the top sheets a gentle brushing. An old toothbrush makes an ideal top sheet brush! Air dry for best results. Never wash and dry the Barefoot Science System in a machine or place the insoles or the insert Levels directly over a heat source. When the insoles show obvious signs of wear and tear, including extreme compacting of the heel and toe areas, it is time to replace them.

TIP #5—Choose Your Shoes with Care:

For optimum results from your Barefoot Science Arch Activation Foot Strengthening System, choose shoes that have the following characteristics:

- plenty of toe room (the higher you can raise your toes the better)
- adjustment over the arches (i.e., laces or straps)
- heels lower than 3.5 cm or 1.5 inches
- pliable rather than rigid soles

Your shoes should provide a roomy fit for adequate circulation and movement. The right shoes will allow your feet to move with less restriction so that Barefoot Science can provide the highest degree of immediate, as well as long-term, benefit. Supportive or motion control footwear is not necessary when using Barefoot Science and, therefore, is not recommended.