

PERSONAL TRAINER /Pradeep Paul

Go the distance with the shoe type that is best suited for your running style

IT'S A SHOE-IN

If you are one of the "lucky" 21,000 who signed up for this year's Standard Chartered Singapore Marathon, there's one piece of equipment you will find crucial: Running shoes.

If you've taken on the full 42km, then what you wear on your feet are even more important.

First, and most basic of all: The shoe should fit well. Too many runners end up with painful blisters and ugly blackened toenails because they wear shoes that are too small for their feet.

Second: The shoe should suit your feet and running style. Otherwise, you could end up damaging your legs and feet severely if you're going such long distances.

Running shoes have three basic

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functions: cushioning, stability and motion control.

But first, you need to know your feet.

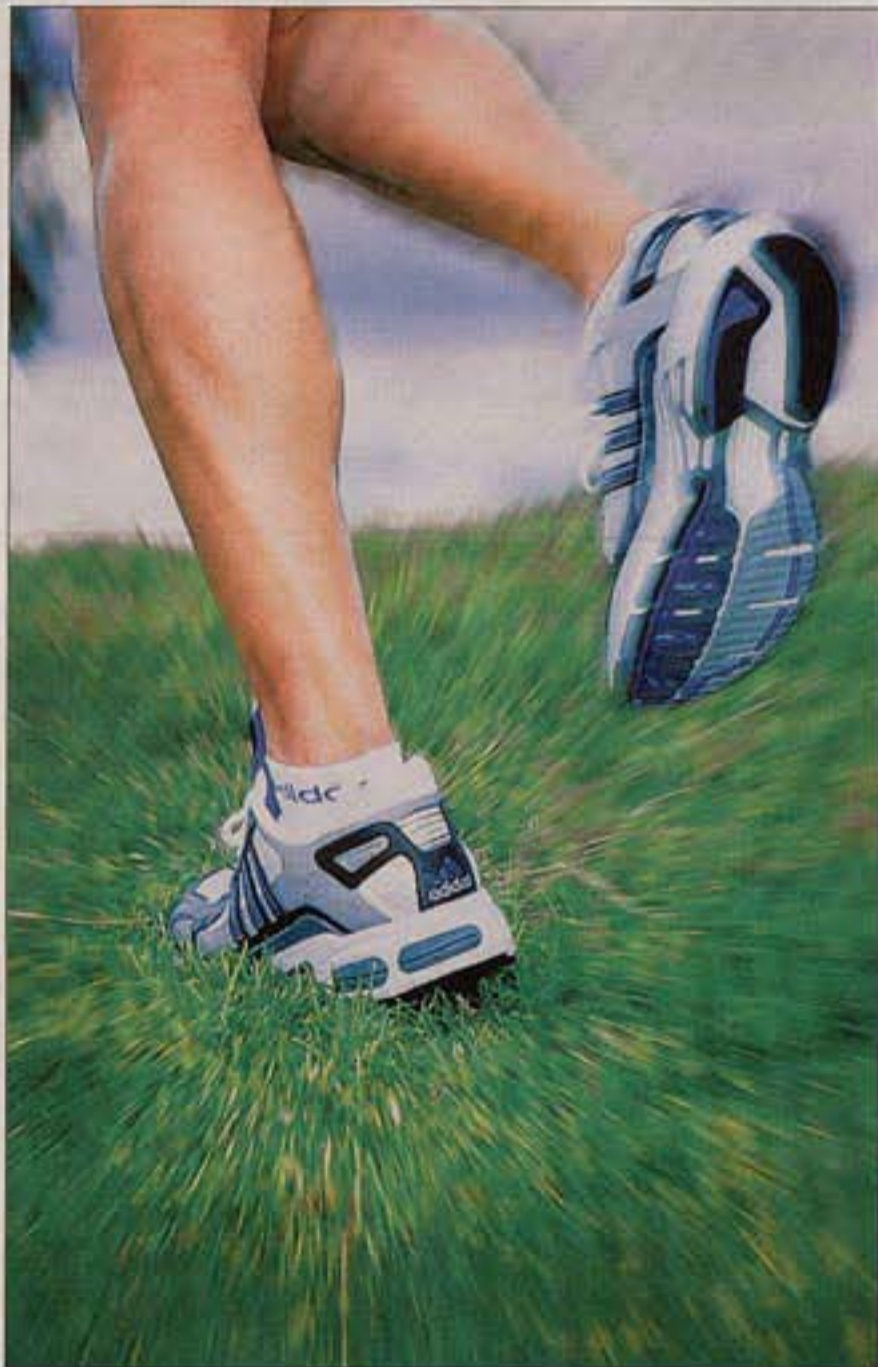
A visit to a podiatrist, physiotherapist or sports physician will allow them to analyse your feet and how they behave when you are standing barefoot or running in shoes.

Having done that, they will be able to advise you whether you need a cushioning shoe (if you underpronate), a stability shoe (if you have neutral to mild overpronation) or a motion control shoe (if you have moderate to severe overpronation).

Pronation is the movement of the foot commonly described as "rolling in" or "collapsing in" when the foot lands. It is a natural, and also necessary movement, because that's how your foot absorbs shock.

But there are cases in which there is too much or too little pronation. Or the pronation may occur too fast, or at the wrong time.

While a running shoe can't fix



your problem, it can help control it somewhat.

To assist runners with shoe selection, the Singapore Sports Council has just put together a very informative page on its website.

Not only does it explain the basics of shoe functions, it also contains recommendations from three experts - physiotherapist Gino Ng, sports physician Patrick Goh and podiatrist Tye Lee Tze. The trio road-tested several pairs of shoes and rated them on the various functional characteristics that matter to runners.

The three experts have also made



Cushioning

Selection by Gino Ng, physiotherapist with the SSC physiotherapy department since 1999. A national triathlete, he represents Singapore at the upcoming SEA Games: "Make sure your running shoes are comfortable, fit well and provide the right amount of cushioning."

Asics Gel Landreth (top left): Recommended retail price (RRP) \$179. Available at Asics stores, Royal Sporting House stores and some stores in Queensway Shopping Centre.

Adidas Adistar Cushion (above): RRP \$199. Available at adidas stores (Suntec City, CityLink Mall, Bugis Junction, Centrepoint, The Heeren, Ngee Ann City, Parkway Parade and Tampines Mall).



Stability

Selection by Tye Lee Tze, Singapore's first podiatrist who is in private practice and also the visiting podiatrist for the SSC: "A good marathon stability shoe should have a good blend of cushioning and stability features."

Adidas Adistar Control (top right): RRP \$199. Available at adidas stores (Suntec City, CityLink Mall, Bugis Junction, Centrepoint, The Heeren, Ngee Ann City, Parkway Parade, Tampines Mall).

New Balance 766 (above): RRP \$149. Available at all major sporting goods stores.



Motion control

Selection by Dr Patrick Goh, consultant sports physician at SportsMed Central in Gleneagles Hospital: "Don't be tempted by the look of the shoe. Function is much more crucial than fashion."

New Balance 1050 (above): RRP \$219. Available at all major sporting goods stores.

Asics Gel Evolution (right): RRP \$219. Available at Asics stores, Royal Sporting House stores and some stores in Queensway Shopping Centre.



their recommendations here for Urban readers who are running the marathon.

Hopefully you'll find a shoe that takes you to the finish line on Dec 4 without your feet throbbing as if they were on fire.

♦ For the SSC shoe listing, log on to www.ssc.gov.sg/shoereviews

♦ You can get more information about running shoes at the Sports and Fitness Expo held in conjunction with the Marathon Expo from Dec 1 to 4. Log on to www.sportsfitnessexpo.com.sg for more details.