

# HIKING BOOTS

Quick Guide



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Hiking is a great way to explore the natural beauty of hills and mountains of Ireland, but it is also a challenging and potentially dangerous activity. When embarking on a hike, it is important to wear proper foot wear. Hiking boots are an essential piece of equipment that provide support, stability, and protection while on the hills.

## Safety

One of the primary reasons for wearing hiking boots is safety. Hiking can be on uneven and rocky ground, and a misstep or ankle twist can result in injury. Good hiking boots are designed with sturdy soles that provide traction and stability, reducing the risk of slipping or falling. The thick rubber soles also protect your feet from sharp rocks, uneven ground and slippery conditions encountered while hiking.

In addition to safety, hiking boots provide important ankle support. Ankle injuries are the most common injuries among hikers, and the rugged terrain of the Irish hills and mountains increases the risk of sprains and twists. Proper boots provide added support around the ankle, reducing the risk of injury and allowing hikers to tackle more challenging terrain with confidence.

## Waterproofing

Another key benefit of hiking boots is their waterproofing capabilities. Hills and mountains, especially in the Irish climate are often damp and wet, and hikers are likely to encounter puddles, streams, and rain. The boots are designed with waterproof materials such as Gore-Tex or other waterproof membranes, keeping your feet dry and comfortable. Wet feet can lead to blisters, discomfort, and even hypothermia in colder conditions, so investing in waterproof hiking boots is crucial for any serious hiker.



## Comfort

It is important to note that not all footwear is suitable for hiking in hills and mountains. While trail shoes may be sufficient for short walks on easy terrain, they lack the necessary support, traction, and waterproofing for more challenging hikes. The rugged and unpredictable terrain of hills and mountains requires the added protection and support that only hiking boots provide.

## “No boots, no hike”

In Ireland, hiking is a popular pastime, with many beautiful trails and mountains to explore. The Cork Hillwalkers club, requires all members to wear hiking boots on their hikes. Their motto is “**no boots, no hike**”, highlighting the importance of proper footwear for a safe and enjoyable hike.



Furthermore, mountain rescue teams in Ireland recommend wearing hiking boots while hiking on hills and mountains. According to the Mountain Rescue Association, improper footwear is a common factor in search and rescue incidents. By wearing proper hiking boots, hikers can reduce the risk of injury and decrease the likelihood of needing rescue.

## Buying hiking boots

It is also important to note that not all hiking boots are created equal. When shopping for hiking boots, look for a pair with a sturdy, non-slip sole and good ankle support. The boots should fit snugly but comfortably, with enough room for thick socks. Be sure to break them in before embarking on a long hike to avoid blisters and discomfort.

**The boots must go above the ankle.**



**Though hiking is a wonderful way to connect with other people, nature and challenge oneself, it is important to take safety precautions. Wearing proper footwear, such as hiking boots, is essential for reducing the risk of injury and enjoying a comfortable hike.**