



Standard Terminology Relating to Athletic Shoes and Biomechanics¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This terminology defines biomechanical and shoe-related terms for use in the development of standard test methods and specifications for athletic footwear.

1.2 The terms defined in this terminology are appropriate for use by the athletic footwear manufacturers and by biomechanicists in matters concerning athletic shoe technology, test methods, and specifications.

2. Terminology

2.1 Definitions:

abduction—the movement of a body part from the longitudinal (midline) of the body or in reference to fingers and toes, movement away from the midline of hand or foot.

abrasion tester—a machine for determining the quantity of material lost by friction wear under specified conditions.

accelerated aging—the deterioration of a material faster than normal by subjecting the material to conditions specified by the test method being followed.

accelerated life test—method designed to approximate, in a short time, the deteriorating effect of normal, long-term service conditions. (D1566, D-11)

aging—(1) the effect on materials of exposure to an environment for an interval of time. (2) the process of exposing materials to an environment for an interval of time. (D883, D-20)

anteroposterior—extending from the front to the rear.

anthropometry—the science of the measurement of the human body and its parts.

arch-footwear—the bottom curve of a shoe last from heel to ball.

arch support—a device of leather, metal, or other material shaped to the contour of the longitudinal arch of the foot and inserted or built in a shoe.

backpart molding—a preparatory shaping operation to heel seat prior to lasting, usually performed on the thermoplastic counters where backpart components are heated on a metal heel form and molded into the backpart heel shape combining counter, upper and lining before the actual lasting operation is performed on the backpart of the shoe.

ball measurement—the line running completely around the foot or last coplanar to the joints of large and small toes.

bench test—a modified service test in which the service conditions are approximated, but the equipment is laboratory equipment and not necessarily identical with that in which the product will be employed.

bottoms—the underface of the shoe sole which extends from the toe to the heel breast. The heel is not a part of the bottom.

california process—this process requires the accurate drafting of patterns, cutting, and stitching of the upper, sock lining, and platform cover. The upper and sock lining are stitched together. The platform cover is stitched to the other two parts in a separate operation. The last is then inserted into the upper. After the last is inserted, the platform is accurately pressed into place.

cast—an impression or mold taken from a person or thing.

cellular plastic—a plastic containing numerous cells, intentionally introduced, interconnecting or not, distributed throughout the mass. (D883, D-20)

cement construction—a process in which the outsole is attached to the upper by cementing instead of sewing or by other methods. Also known as the compo process, after Compo Industries, Inc., which introduced this method commercially into the U.S. about 1930; also known as cement process and as cemented process.

cinematography—an instrumentation system for filming, measuring, and analyzing movements of the athlete, usually including a computerized digitizer for data analysis.

circumduction—the movement of a body part about an axis so as to describe a cone or the conical movement of a body part about an axis.

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combination last (or shoe)—designed to provide a proper fit for the individual with thinner than normal instep or heel. Length and width will be of standard measurements, but narrower fitting qualities will prevail through instep, waist, and heel.

composition—materials composed of granulated fillers, such as cork, leather, fibers, minerals, in a resinous matrix, usually an elastomer. Compressed and molded into sheet materials, compositions are used for insoles, heel bases, etc.

compound—a mixture of a polymer with other ingredients such as fillers, stabilizers, catalysts, processing aids, lubricants, modifiers, pigments, or curing agents. (F412, F-17)

compression deflection—the amount of deformation of material when being compressed.

compression mold—a mold which is open when the material is introduced and which shapes the material by heat and by the pressure of closing.

counter—a piece of stiffening material inserted between the lining and the outside of a shoe upper at the back of the shoe. The purpose of the counter is to strengthen the back part and to prevent it from sagging and losing its shape. There are two types of counter: flat and molded.

counter pocket—a piece of lining material attached to inside quarters of unlined shoes to conceal counter.

crepe rubber—originally unvulcanized natural rubber with light color and knobby surface for soles and heels. Most crepe rubber for shoes is now of synthetic elastomers.

durometer—an instrument for measuring hardness, that is, the resistance to the penetration (without puncturing) of the indenter into the surface of rubber or other shoe material.

durometer hardness—an arbitrary numerical value which measures the resistance to indentation of the blunt indenter point of the durometer. The value may be taken immediately or after a very short specified time.

dutchman—a thin wedge of leather or fiberboard inserted between the insole and outsole of a shoe, or between the lifts of a built-up heel, to throw the foot inward or outward and to correct foot posture.

dynamography—the instrumentation method for recording forces.

elastomer—a macromolecular material that at room temperature returns rapidly to approximately its initial dimensions and shape after substantial deformation by a weak stress and release of the stress. (D883, D-20)

electrogoniometry—an instrumentation system for recording angular displacement at a joint continuously during movement.

elongation—extension produced by a tensile stress. (D1566, D11)

energy absorption—the dissipation or transfer of energy due to motion into heat energy.

epicondyles—the bony prominence above the condyles where the ligaments attach.

ethylene-vinyl acetate (EVA)—copolymers from these two monomers form a class of plastic materials.

eversion—a turning outward, eversion of the foot; turning the sole away from the mid-line of the body.

extension—movement by which the angle at the joint is increased in the sagittal plane; the opposite of flexion.

fitting stool—a low stool, generally having a forward projection, the top of which recedes at an approximate angle of 30° and is utilized for the fitting of shoes.

flexion—the condition of decreasing the angle between two body segments; opposite of extension.

flex life—the number of cycles required to produce a specified state of failure in a specimen that is flexed in a prescribed method. (D1566, D-11)

flex life test—a laboratory method used to determine the life of a product when subjected to dynamic bending stresses.

foxing—a shoe component that reinforces or covers the shoe at a point of particular wear or stress, such as the heel area of the joint between sole and upper.

girth—distance around; circumference.

(a) *joint*—around *metatarso*—phalangeal joint,

(b) *waist*—smallest girth behind joint,

(c) *instep*—smallest girth passing over prominence on middle cuneiform,

(d) *long heel*—seat to instep to give “pass line” in riding boot,

(e) *short heel*—seat to lowest crease in front of ankle,

(f) *ankle*—around and above ankle bones,

(g) calf, thigh as necessary. (manual of shoemaking: c. & k. clark ltd. 1976, p. 44)

gmax—the maximum value of acceleration experienced during impact expressed in units of g’s.

ground reaction forces—the forces, both shearing and normal, acting on the foot during contact with the ground.

indentation—1) the extent of deformation by the indenter point of any one of a number of standard hardness testing instruments; 2) a recess in any surface of a rubber article.

inferior—lower, also toward the foot.

inseam—the hidden seam of a welted shoe holding together the welt, upper, lining, and insole.

insole—a sole of leather or other material cut to the size and shape of the bottom of the last. In some shoe constructions, the insole surface forms the inside of the bottom of the shoe;