

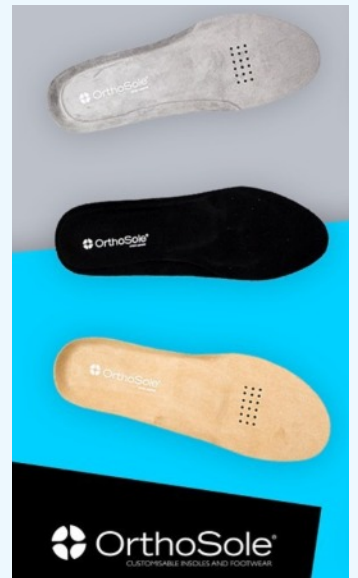
# 10 fascinating things you never knew about your feet

Where would you be without your feet?

We rarely give a second thought to these two vital pieces of our anatomy, but our lives would be pretty different if we didn't have them!

Many of us don't take the time to look after our feet, but in fact, they need a lot more tender loving care than many other parts of our bodies. They're incredibly complex, and they can suffer a great deal of wear and tear over time.

So, in a nod to all the hard work our feet do for us on a daily basis, we've put together a list of our favourite 10 foot-related facts. Prepare to be intrigued!



## We're all born without arches in our feet.

Ever wondered why babies have such chubby little feet? It's because their arches don't actually start developing until they're at least 2 or 3 years old! Until then, they'll just have fat filling in this area.

## One quarter of all of the bones in our body are in our feet.

It's unbelievable, but most of us have got a grand total of 26 bones in each of our feet!

## Your feet can grow up to one and a half times their original size as you get older.

As you age, your feet flatten, which increases their length and width. You may also find that your feet get bigger or smaller when you experience weight changes, undergo surgery or go through pregnancy.

## Your toenails grow a lot slower than your fingernails.

Your toenails grow at a rate of about 1mm per month, whereas your fingernails will be 3mm longer after the same period of time. This means it can take you up to 6 months to grow a completely new toenail!

## Your feet are good at helping you diagnose health problems.

Sometimes, your feet can be painful because you've damaged a part of them. For example, you may have developed plantar fasciitis or Achilles tendonitis, and you're experiencing discomfort as a result. However, seemingly small changes in your feet and toes can actually indicate bigger health problems. For example, if you see red lines under your toenails, you should get tested for endocarditis, a serious heart infection. If you find that your feet are always cold, you could have poor circulation (or you could be diabetic). And if you're experiencing pain in your big toe, osteoarthritis could be rearing its ugly head.

## Webbed feet - more common than you think.

As many as one in 2,000 babies is born with webbed fingers or toes, making this one of the world's most common conditions in new-borns! Webbed feet are normally an inherited trait, but they can occur randomly in some cases.

## Athlete's foot can spread to other parts of your body.

It's a condition that causes itching, stinging, burning, cracking and peeling on your feet – but these sensations can in fact travel elsewhere, and many people often find themselves experiencing these symptoms on their hands, groin and other parts of their body.

## Your feet sweat... all the time.

That's right – even when you're resting, your feet are constantly perspiring in order to help you maintain a healthy body temperature. A little moisture in your socks and shoes is normal, but if you find that your feet are sweating profusely, you may have a condition known as hyperhidrosis.

## Your feet have almost 8,000 nerve endings between them.

This is why your feet are so unbearably ticklish! If you find that your feet aren't as ticklish as they used to be, your nerves could have been damaged. It's best to go and see a doctor to see if there's an underlying cause for the lack of sensitivity.

## In an average lifetime, we can expect our feet to walk a quarter of a million miles.

That's the same distance between the earth and the moon!

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