

# active feet

if the shoe fits...

## What is best? A Cross trainer or Running Shoe?

This is a question that podiatrists are asked a lot. These day's children take part in a huge range of sports and activities. Each sport and activity uses different skills and movements. Is there one shoe, such as a cross trainer, that can be used for all these sports?

The design of the cross trainer shoe is to keep the foot stable in all directions. This is achieved by the heel sitting lower in the shoe which means the midsole 'hugs' the foot in position. Court sports where movements such as side to side, pivoting or sharp turns take place are perfect for a cross trainer shoe. Due to the lower profile, the shoe tends to have lesser shock absorption and limited options in the dual density make up.

Dual density refers to the two different types/hardness of foam in the midsole of a shoe. The majority of a shoes midsole is made up of white, softer density foam that absorbs the shock of impact. The grey/speckled, denser foam, that often appears on the inside edge of the shoes midsole allows us to modify or support the foot's posture during activity.

Unlike the cross trainer, the running shoe is designed to elevate the heel, incorporates greater shock absorbing materials and offers dual density for support in its midsole structure. Running is generally a straight line activity; moving forward in the one direction. This makes running very repetitive in its mechanical action and has the risk of repeated strain being transferred to the soft tissue.

Minimizing this impact is essential to reduce the risks of injury.

Whilst it is costly to require different shoes for different sports it is essential to offer the foot and lower limbs the best support. Having your child's foot type assessed and fitted in to the correct shoe for their chosen sport or activity will help reduce fatigue and injury risks. If Triathlons are your child's interest, their running mileage will increase as they train through the season. Selecting a dedicated running shoe provides greater shock attenuation, elevation at the heel and support in its midsole.

May your child's training continue safely and injury free.

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