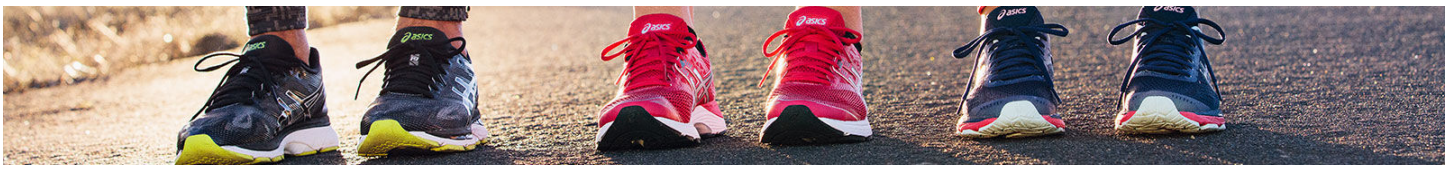
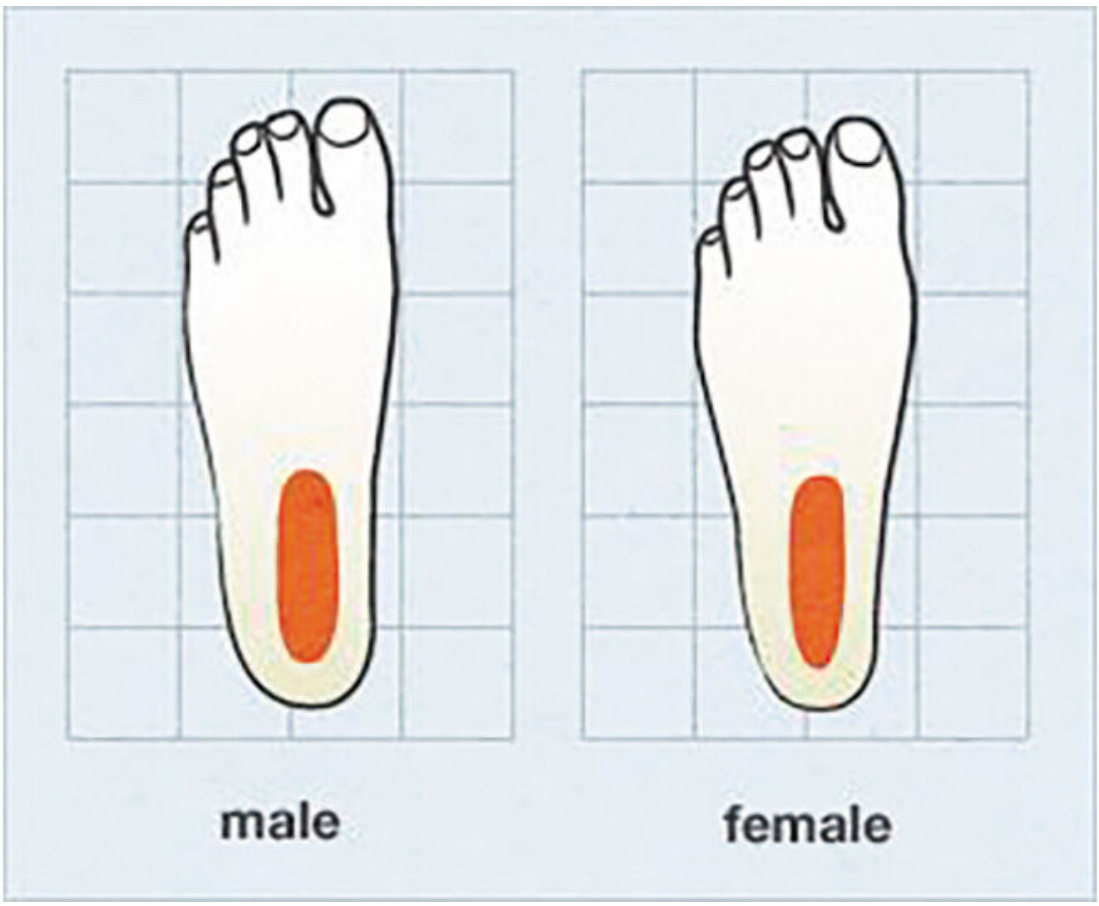


HOW WE REINVENTED WOMEN'S RUNNING SHOES

Until recently, most running shoes for women were just smaller versions of men's shoes. But as we come to understand the structural and hormonal differences between men and women, running shoes are fast becoming more female-friendly.

Over the past decade, scientific research has shown that women have different gait patterns and lower-limb biomechanics than men. This means that the way women run is significantly different, and it also helps explain why female runners have distinct injury patterns. ASICS is taking a gender-specific approach to designing running shoes, with the aim of improving women's performance, comfort and safety.



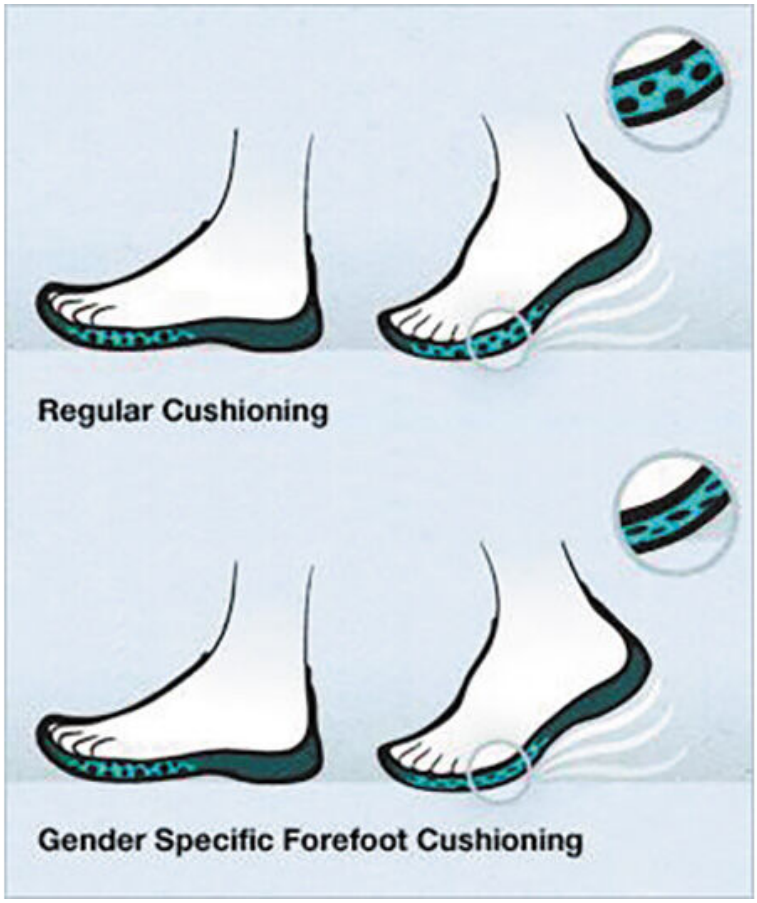
FOOT SHAPE

Women's feet are shaped differently. It's not just that women tend to have smaller feet than men, they also have a different heel to forefoot ratio. In other words, women have a narrower heel in

relation to their forefoot. When wearing men's running shoes, this often causes the heel to slip inside the shoe, leading to instability and chafing.

- Gender difference in heel to forefoot ratio: women have a narrower heel in relation to their forefoot.
- What we're doing: developing a gender-specific fit

ASICS women's shoes are shaped differently and feature a narrower last.
A gender-specific last dramatically improves fit for female runners and prevents problems like heel slippage.

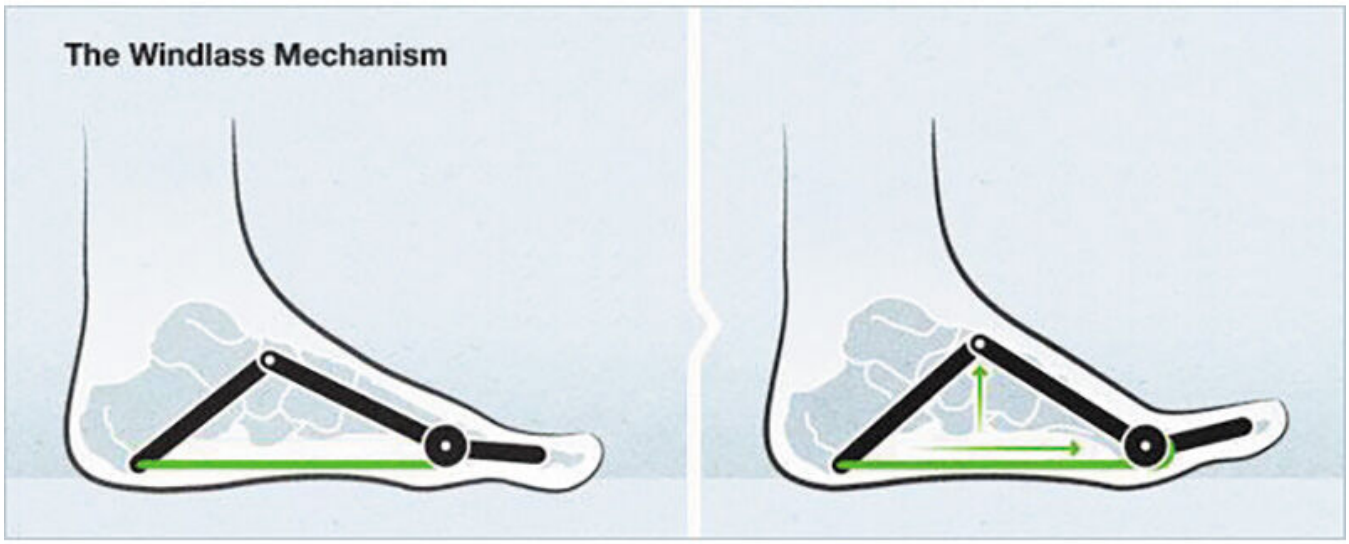


BOUNCE-BACK

Women tend to be lighter than men. Since cushioning in running shoes has always been designed with men's weight in mind, the cushioning material would often be too dense for women.

- Gender Specific Forefoot Cushioning: women gain more bounce-back.
- What we're doing: developing Gender Specific Forefoot Cushioning

We use a cushioning material called Solyte, but in a less dense form than its male counterpart. Located under the ball of the foot and extending across the width of the shoe, this material offers female runners greater impact absorption and more bounce.



GENDER AND GAIT

Studies have shown that a woman's foot architecture changes as their oestrogen levels fluctuate during the month. Oestrogen is known to be a soft tissue relaxant, and one of the effects this has is to lower women's arch height. With each step, it means that the plantar fascia tightens and stretches in what is known as the windlass mechanism.

- The windlass mechanism: when the toes point upward (dorsiflex), the arch raises and the plantar fascia is extended and tensed.
- What we're doing: developing a gender-specific Space Trusstic System

For women the Space Trusstic was altered to accommodate for a lowered arch height, and give the plantar fascia sufficient space to develop tension and assist windlass mechanics. The Gender Specific Space Trusstic provides the female foot with the right levels of support and flexibility as it moves through the gait cycle.

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