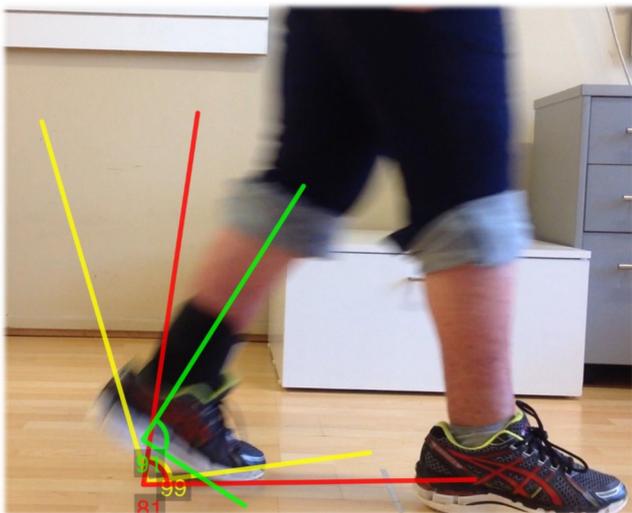


# Footwear / Pedorthics

- **Pedorthics can assist with a range of issues related to your lower limbs**
- **Therapeutic footwear, orthoses and bracing can improve mobility, balance and increase comfort and endurance**
- **Therapeutic footwear and bracing contributes to the prevention of falls**

Pedorthics focuses on the assessment and management of conditions affecting the lower limb, primarily the foot and ankle. Pedorthists are an 'Allied Health' profession in Australia. Pedorthists conduct assessments to see how your lower limbs move and function. They then treat you to improve foot function, comfort and mobility. Treatment may include:

- orthotics
- prefabricated footwear
- bracing
- custom footwear



*An example of the testing that a Pedorthist may perform*



## How Are The Feet Affected By The Late Effects Of Polio?

Polio survivors are often left with changes to their feet and legs. These changes impact on their mobility and comfort. Common foot problems include:

- a high arch
- a rigid or stiff foot that has limited shock absorption
- walking on the outside of the heel
- toe deformities (e.g. bent, or "hammer toes")
- the heel does not fully touch the ground (e.g. leg length differences)
- foot drop
- variation in the size and width of both feet
- trouble with balance including an increased risk of falls

## Management Strategies: How Can Pedorthists Help Polio Survivors?

- 1. Custom orthoses** provide support and control under the foot and to the sides of the foot. Orthoses are made from materials to provide cushioning and shock absorption. They can offload any areas of high pressure. Lower leg bracing, (e.g. an "AFO", or ankle-foot orthosis), further stabilises the ankle and assists in conditions such as foot drop. You can read more about these on Polio Australia's [Orthoses Fact Sheet](#).
- 2. Build-ups** can be manufactured to account for leg length differences. Depending on the measurable difference between the two limbs, the build-up can be added internally into an extra depth or custom shoe, or externally into the midsole. If the heel does not fully touch the ground, the build-up can be added as a wedge heel to even out any leg length difference.
- 3. Footwear modifications** can be added to pre-existing or therapeutic extra depth shoes to improve balance and stability. Flares or buttresses are modifications that increase the base of support and stabilise the foot inside the shoe during walking.
- 4. Custom shoes** can be made for asymmetrical or structurally altered feet. This will accommodate their shape and improve foot function. Rocker soles can be added to assist with propulsion and overall mobility during walking.



### More Information

Visit [Polio Australia's Health Professional Register](#) to find a pedorthist knowledgeable in post-polio, or,

Visit the [Australian Pedorthists Registration Board website](#) to find a pedorthist

Thank you the [Pedorthic Association of Australia](#) for preparing this fact sheet and providing images.

**Disclaimer:** The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of Polio Australia, and any products, services or treatments described are not necessarily endorsed or recommended by Polio Australia.