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The better-than-barefoot running (and walking) sandal



How To Make Huaraches Running Sandals

These instructions will help you whether you're making your own huaraches from scratch, using our [Invisible Shoe Kit](#), or just making the tracing of your foot for our Custom Invisible Shoes.

And, at the end of the instructions you'll learn how to tie huaraches.

Ultimately this is a relatively simple project, but if it seems like too much, you can [order our Custom-made Invisible Shoe huaraches](#) and we'll do the tricky parts for you.

Things you'll need to make huaraches:

- Some sort of sole material. Again we use the 4mm Vibram Cherry, because it's so close to barefoot, while still offering protection.
- Something to lace the sole to your feet — about 60-72" per lace (depending on your size). You can use leather lace, hemp cord, etc. We use 5/32" polypropylene/nylon cord... it's soft, durable, colorful and provides the right amount of support (too thin can hurt, too thick gets unwieldy).
- Piece of paper and a marker (like a Sharpie) — to trace your foot.
- Pencil — to transfer your foot template to the sole material.
- Strong scissors — to cut your tracing and the sole material.
- Leather punch — to make the lacing holes in the sole (NOTE: We do **not** recommend using a nail or knife to make the hole. Holes made that way tend to tear). You want the holes to be the same size, or slightly smaller, than your cord. We use a 1/8" punch for our 5/32" cord (the hole is 1/32" smaller than the cord). Our hole punch is a standard leather tool that looks like a big pliers but with a rotating head of different sized punches on one end.
- Lighter or match — to seal the ends of the lace, if you're using polypropylene/nylon.

Step-by-step instructions for making Huaraches:

Step 1 – Trace your foot

Step on a piece of paper. Lean forward and put a bit of pressure on your foot so it flattens a tiny bit.

Then, using a marker (like a Sharpie) held vertically, trace around your foot.

You don't need to get every tiny nook and cranny, and you're not trying to get an EXACT measurement of the sole of your foot... in fact, by holding the pen vertically, you're making a trace that's slightly bigger than your foot, and that's exactly what you want.

Click this picture to see a video of Steps 1-4



Step 2 – Even out the tracing

You want to smooth out the curves. For example, you want to make the toe area into a curve, rather than bumps for each toe.

Also, I extend the area on the inside of the big toe and the ball of the foot a little bit (sometimes when you run, your foot slips to the inside, so you want to add a bit of extra space here)

Step 3 – Cut out the tracing

Cut **around** the tracing. That is, cut on the outside of the line you've drawn, rather than ON the line. Again, that little extra bit can help. Plus, you can always cut your huaraches and make them smaller, but you can't make them bigger, so err on the side of too big.

Step 4 – Check your other foot

Take your cut out tracing, flip it over, and step on it with your other foot.

If your other foot fits in the cutout, then you'll use just this one template. If your other foot is significantly different (especially if it's bigger), repeat steps 1-3 on your other foot.

Step 5 – Transfer the pattern to the sole material

Place the cutout pattern(s) onto your sole material and trace around it/them with a pencil.

If you only have one cutout pattern, remember to **flip it over** otherwise you'll end up making 2 soles for the same foot!

Click this picture to see a video of Steps 5-13



Step 6 – Cut out the soles

If you're using the 4mm Vibram material that comes with the Invisible Shoe huarache kit, you can use a strong scissors for this.

You'll have to make small cuts with the back of the scissors and work your way around the material.

Step 7 – Mark the toe hole

Step on your soles and, using a marker (I use the Sharpie from Step 1), put a dot between your 1st and 2nd toe, right where the webbing between your toes is, and **slightly** closer to the 2nd toe than right in the middle of the space between the toes.

The reason for this is, as you run, your foot will want to shift toward the inside. By putting the hole closer to the 2nd toe, your foot stays in place better.

NOTE: It's **much** easier to have someone else make this and the next 2 marks while you just stand on the soles.

Step 8 – Mark the inside ankle hole

Still standing on the sole, place the pen vertically, just in front of your ankle bone, and make a mark on the sole at that point.

Step 9 – Mark the outside ankle hole

Still standing on the sole, you'll notice that there's a place where your foot makes less contact with the ground. Make a mark on the outside edge of the sole at that point.

Step 10 – Punch the holes

The size of the hole you make depends on the material you use for the laces. For example, when I use 3/16" polypropelene/nylon for the laces, I make a 1/8" hole.

You'll want to use a leather punch (I have one that looks like a pliers but with a rotating head that contains a number of different sized punches).

NOTE: I do not recommend using a nail or knife to make the holes. Doing so can often leave a whole that's not clean, leading to tearing the sole.

Punch out the toe hole exactly on the mark you made.

For the two ankle holes, punch a hole about 1/4" in from the edge, in line with the marks you made in Step 8 and 9.

Step 11 – Prepare the laces

Depending on your lace material, you may need to prepare the ends in order to get them through the holes.

For example, if you're using leather, you may want to cut the ends of lace into a point. If you're using polypropelene/nylon, heat the ends with a flame and **carefully** (so you don't burn yourself) seal and shape the ends to be as pointy as possible.

Step 12 – Thread and knot the toe hole

Push one end of the lace through the toe hole, from the top to the bottom.

Make a knot in the lace, on the bottom side.

I typically use a "Figure 8 knot", pictured here.

If you're using polypropelene/nylon, you'll want to run the flame from a lighter (or match) under the knot, to melt the nylon **slightly**, then press the knot together to seal it and flatten it a bit.



Step 13 – Thread the ankle holes

Pass the lace through the outside ankle hole first, from top to bottom.

Then pass the lace through the inside ankle hole, also from top to bottom.

Follow the pictures to get it correct... you want the lace to “lock in” around the holes.

Step 14 – Put your foot in and tie the huaraches

There are 2 common ways to tie huaraches running sandals. One is the more traditional “toga-style.” And the other (which I learned from “kicksock” on the Google Barefoot Running group) is more stylish and allows you to slip the huarache on and off without retying.

There’s no easy way to describe the tying methods, so follow the pictures/videos.

Click this picture to see a video of how to tie huaraches



Step 15 – Go out and ENJOY your new huaraches!

Remember, though, to **take it easy at first**. If you’re not used to going barefoot, especially running barefoot, you’ll be putting more stress on your muscles and skin than you’re used to. Work your way into using your huaraches slowly.

The simplest lesson on barefoot running: if it hurts, do something different! (try to be light and easy)

Finally...

Share your experiences, questions, comments, pictures, and more in our [Huaraches and Barefoot/Minimalist Running Forum](#)