

## Ask An Expert

### Shoe Lover

Perfect Summer Shoes

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It's always a difficult task finding the perfect balance between comfort and style (especially when it comes to our kids). Here to help us find the right summer shoes is Katherine Chapman, co-founder of OLLY Shoes...

**What should I look for when buying summer shoes for my kids? Should I be spending a ton of cash on a good shoe, or can I save a few bucks by buying flip-flops or Croc-style shoes?**

The footwear you choose should match your child's activity. During the summer, most children are playing outdoors so you want footwear that is comfortable and safe. Make sure the shoe has a good rubber outsole that is flexible and has grip so children won't slip. The shoe should have proper support and fit, to avoid blisters. If worn without socks, run your hand inside the shoes to make sure there are no raised seams that may rub and irritate the foot. For best results in fitting your child for shoes, your sales associate should watch the children walk around the store and get them to move around in them to determine best fit.

For camp, where children's feet may be getting wet, an option is to look for shoes that use new high tech microfibers that dry quickly, some of which are washable. For extra protection, look for a closed toe athletic sandal. If you are looking for sandals, look for styles which offer Velcro closure both around the ankle and over the toes.

Beware of imposters – only the Crocs™ brand is designed with built-in arch support, circulation nubs, and an orthotic heel cup to support and protect the heel. In addition, Crocs shoes are ventilated for cooling and filtering purposes and are slip and marking resistant.

Flip flops are fun but do not offer any support, so I would only recommend wearing them for limited periods of time.

You should always look to purchase a quality product. If on a budget, call the store and ask about sales or if they have a clearance area, and get on the store e-mail list for regular updates.



*Katherine Chapman is the co-founder and chairman of OLLY Shoes, a one-stop destination for high quality children's footwear with a unique, proprietary computerized fitting system.*