



Tips for Choosing Boots

We asked Sam Coalson, avid outdoorsman and footwear extraordinaire for Rocky Brands, to provide some tips on how to choose boots – especially for spring and cool summer days and nights. Sam says that he spends many days each year in the woods, where a good pair of boots is necessary. “During the spring and summer months the boots I use are based around turkey hunting, searching for morel mushrooms, and hiking, trail running and backpacking.”



Men's Rocky TrailStalker Boot Featuring 200 grams of Thinsulate™ Insulation.

To choose the right boot, Sam recommends making a decision based on the features offered and the intended usage. As an example, Sam says, “If you are turkey hunting, the features you want in a boot depends upon if you are in snake country or if you are still hunting in cold weather. For hiking you will want low insulation if you are in cooler climates or high elevations.”

Here are a few of Sam's tips to help you choose the right boot when you're out and about this spring and summer:

Tip 1: Fit.

The boot should conform to your foot, and should be snug without being tight. The perfect fit will feel very much like a broken in pair of sneakers.

Tip 2: Allow Room to Move.

You should be able to wiggle your toes freely and give two gentle kicks to the ground or wall before your toes touch the end of the boot. Be sure to bring the socks you will most often wear in the field with you when trying on boots or allow for extra thickness.

Tip 3: Comfort vs. Support.

Depending on your activity judge for yourself which feels better. Comfort/cushioning should be the biggest concern if you plan to move short distances or are planning on taking it slow. Support should be the largest deciding factor when you are you planning to

be very active, traveling long distances or speed hiking.

Tip 4: Lacing.

Be sure you can lace the boots loosely and tightly all the way down.

Tip 5: Traction.

Choose the traction needed for your activity. Too much traction when not needed can trough off your balance and make walking awkward while not enough can cause falls.

Tip 6: Boot Height.

This depends largely on the activity and personal comfort level. Backpacking usually requires a 6"-8" boot to provide ankle support, while hunting working or even light hiking in areas of high snake activities you would be well advised to wear a 16-18" boot with snake protection.

Tip 7: Waterproof.

It's nice to have a pair of waterproof boots handy if the weather turns, but it's not always the ideal boot for the conditions. If you are traveling in areas that receive very little rainfall each year and the odds of crossing a stream are unlikely or in areas that are very hot or have deep water that might go over the waterproof level of the boot than it is better to not have a waterproof boot. Dry areas will only make the boot too warm for comfort. Severely hot or wet conditions it is better to let the boot get wet, it will drain on its own and cool the body. When you are in areas that have a mid level of rainfall each year or are in areas where the temperature falls below 50 degrees it is strongly advised to have a waterproof boot. If the foot gets wet in that low a temp it will make the wearer very uncomfortable or could lead to hypothermia. At the most optimistic level it will take much longer for the inside of the boot to dry.

Tip 8: Insulation.

You should choose the gram weight of Thinsulate™ Insulation in a boot based on the climate and elevation where you'll be using the boot. Choose a lower gram weight of Thinsulate insulation, such as 200 grams, for cool weather or high activity levels.

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