Do you remember the days when everyone’s shoes were polished on a weekly basis? At my house, they were always polished on Saturday so we were presentable for Sunday church. Most of us don’t go to that trouble anymore, but a little shoe care will make your shoes last longer. Here are 8 tips that will make your shoes last longer.

1. **Buy quality.** Always buy the best quality shoes you can afford. Leather shoes are better than man-made materials. Leather is more breathable, which keeps your feet from sweating. Leather is also stronger and is not likely to tear easily.

2. **When you invest in shoes, think about the cost per wearing, not the cost of the shoes.** If it is something that will be worn often, spend more on it. If it is something to be worn for one occasion, look for a bargain. It makes more sense to spend $100 on snow boots that will be worn daily for several years, than to spend $100 on the purple shoes you wore with a prom dress.

3. **Protect your shoes from the beginning.** Rub some protection onto your leather shoes to help make them water proof. Saddle soap or waterproof sprays are available to help your shoes last longer. When we purchased new shoes for my children, they were always thoroughly waterproofed and allowed to completely dry before that first wearing. Even though my children were hard on their shoes, I found this practice made them last several months longer.

4. **Keep your shoes clean.** Make sure mud and dirt are cleaned off as soon as possible and a shoe cleaner is rubbed in to reapply some protection and make them shiny and bright again. Polishing shoes on a regular basis will prolong their life. If you don’t have shoe polish, make your own by mixing one part lemon juice and two parts olive oil. Rub into shoes with a clean cloth and allow the liquid to soak in for a few minutes before buffing it off. With this polish, there’s no need to worry about having the correct color of polish.

5. **Keep shoes dry.** If you get shoes wet in one of our spring mud puddles, make sure you dry them before wearing them again. Stuff newspaper inside to absorb internal water and to keep the shoe’s shape.
6. Rotate your shoes. If you wear the same shoes every day, they will wear out more quickly. Rotate your shoes so each pair has time to breathe and to air thoroughly between wearings.

7. Keep them fresh. After wearing, sprinkle some baking soda inside the shoe to absorb moisture and odor. But remember to shake out the powder before the next wearing.

8. Practice shoe care. Always store shoes neatly over night. Shoes that are not properly stored won’t dry out properly or keep their shape.

Shoe care is often overlooked and can end up costing you a lot of money in the long run.

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