

Check your boots  
CSM John Fourhman

I am frequently asked about authorized commercial off-the-shelf boots and Army issued boots for wear with the Army Combat Uniform.

With new guidance from the sergeant major of the Army, I would like to answer some of the questions regarding boot wear and clarify any misunderstanding regarding which boots are authorized.

Military Clothing Sales Stores stock items authorized for wear by other services, whose mission requirements are different than ours. Because of these different mission requirements not all boots carried in our MCSSs are authorized for wear by our Soldiers. The individual Soldier is responsible for buying authorized boots. Leaders have the responsibility of ensuring optional footwear meets Army requirements.

According to Army Regulation 670-1 and All Army Action messages, authorized boots must be between eight and 10 inches in height, made of tan, rough side out, cattle hide leather, with a plain toe and a soling system similar in color to the tan upper materials. Other leathers, such as pigskin, are not authorized. Cattle hide leather is more durable, and provides better performance in combat over pigskin. Some companies sell "Warrior Leather" which is a common-use name for pigskin leather.

The soling materials cannot exceed two inches in height when measured from the bottom of the outsole and cannot extend up the back of the heel of the boot or over the top of the toe. Outsoles should be made of rubber or polyether polyurethane. These are the only outsole materials that currently meet the need for durability and traction on surfaces in multiple environments and temperature ranges. Other materials, which may be of a lighter weight, do not meet Soldiers' performance standards.

The exterior of the upper boot cannot contain mesh but must be constructed of all leather or a combination of leather and non-mesh fabric.

Boots with metal or plastic cleats in the bottom of the soles and sewn-in or laced-in zippers or Velcro inserts are not authorized.

The Army develops and issues Soldiers the best equipment available for accomplishment of their mission. Commercial items provide a different aesthetic look compared to the issued footwear and may contain material components that were selected for business reasons and not always aimed at improved performance. Current Army footwear is designed to be durable and provide the functionality needed by Soldiers in current and potential future operational environments.

On a final note, AR 670-1, Appendix E requires all Soldiers to have one pair of each of the Clothing Initial Issue Bag item boots. This requirement includes both the Army Combat Boot (Hot Weather) and the Army Combat Boot (Temperate Weather). Any optional footwear unit commanders authorize does not relieve Soldiers of their requirement to possess one pair of each of the CII boots.

Leaders, make sure our Soldiers are wearing the proper boots.

-Patton's Own