

# Footwear puts one foot in front of the other

## Article

Plagued with supply chain issues and climbing operating costs, the first half 2022 has put footwear on its heels.

**Let's take stock of where the category is now and where it may be headed:**

- Footwear was one of the top categories adults cut back on due to inflation with **about a quarter** indicating they reduced spending on both athletic and seasonal shoes, per a May First Insight survey. Similarly, Bizrate Insights found **7.3%** of US consumers switched from purchasing brand name footwear to a [private label brand](#).

- However, an [increased focus on health and wellness](#) has lifted sales of active footwear, per NPD Group. Sales of running and hiking shoes grew **20%** in the first third of 2022 versus three years ago, while sales of walking shoes grew **30%** in the same time frame.
- Earnings from the first half were mixed. While [Skechers](#) and [Puma](#) reported higher sales (thanks, in part, to growing wholesale sales), [Nike](#) and [adidas](#) struggled. A decline in sales in China offset Nike's gains in the West, while adidas felt supply chain constraints.
- It doesn't seem to be getting better. A **large majority** of US footwear retailers and brands expect [sales to weaken](#) in the next six months, per a survey from Footwear Distributors and Retailers of America. Most respondents said operating costs were higher in Q2 than six months ago and were likely to keep rising.
- Maybe there's hope. [Back-to-school footwear sales](#) are expected to remain below 2019 levels but still similar to last year, per NPD Group. Sneakers traditionally drive about **80%** of back-to-school footwear sales. Sneakers will remain the top seller this year, but other styles, such as clubs and slippers, will also be popular.

**Why we care:** Retailers' outlook on footwear sales is gloomy, but the back-to-school season could give the category the lift it needs to carry it into the holidays.

*This was originally featured in in the Retail By the Numbers newsletter. For more retail insights, statistics, and trends, [subscribe here](#).*