



Tried & tested *garden shoes*

Geoff Hodge puts his best foot forward and tests lightweight garden shoes

I DON'T use wellies that often when gardening, preferring to wear shoes. I do use wellies for digging and other 'heavy duty' gardening jobs, especially in very wet conditions, but I prefer the flexibility and light weight of shoes for all other general jobs.

I always used to have a pair of trainers

on the back step, ready and waiting, so I could put them on whenever I needed to go into the garden. But I've recently moved on to clog-style shoes, as they are much quicker and easier to slip on and off. This makes them far more versatile for quick trips outside, especially when I need to harvest a few vegetables from

the veg garden or go out for a light bit of weeding or other jobs.

The test

I tested each pair for around two hours. I was looking at how easy they were to put on and take off for quick ventures into the garden, how well they stayed on and

how comfortable they were to wear when harvesting crops, scarifying the lawn and kneeling down to weed my borders. I also tested their grip on some slippery paving slabs.

Like many people, my feet are slightly different lengths and my shoe sizes are right UK 7.5 (Euro 41) and left UK 8 (Euro

42), so I tested size 8s. We're all different and as well as shoe size have different feet widths, but I found most fitted well, although one pair was too narrow and another was too wide. They are all waterproof and were easy to wipe clean. • I'll be testing Wellington boots in the November 6 issue of Garden News.

Backdoorshoes from £18

Fun, colourful shoes available in a wide range of gardening and plant designs. Made from injection-moulded plastic with a removable and washable textile insole.

Available in men's Shedshoes: sizes 6-11 (40-47) and five designs; **ladies' Backdoorshoes:** sizes 4-8 (37-41) and 15 designs.

Comfort ★★★★★

Excellent fit with a wide and roomy foot-bed that was the perfect size for my feet.

Wearability ★★★★★

Easy to slip on and off. Great to wear while carrying out all the gardening jobs.

Grip ★★★

Limited tread, so only average non-slip grip.

Value ★★★★★

Price guide

Backdoorshoes £18, Shedshoes £20



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www.backdoorshoes.co.uk

WIN OUR 'BEST BUY' GARDEN SHOES

We have 10 pairs of the BEST BUY Backdoorshoes to give away! Send your name and address, your preferred UK shoe size and if you need male or female shoes to Garden News Garden Shoes Giveaway, PO Box 57, Coates, Peterborough PE7 2FE or enter online at www.greatcompetitions.co.uk. Closing date is October 23. Write 'do not contact' if you don't want to be contacted by us or by carefully selected partner organisations.

Gardman Original Gardener's Shoe £11.99

Made from injection-moulded plastic with a removable and washable clip-on fleece lining, which provided good warmth insulation.

Available in sizes 4-10 (37-44).

Comfort ★★★

A slightly tight fit and the loose liner tended to ruck up under my feet.

Wearability ★★★★★

Due to the tight fit, I needed to push my feet in. The liner did make them difficult to work in after a while.

Grip ★★★

Reasonable tread, but only average non-slip grip.

Value ★★★★★

Price guide £11.99



14/20



17/20

Aigle Limpo Clog £40

The heaviest shoes on test, mainly due to the deep, heavyweight sole and tread. Made from flexible, soft rubber and with a warm cork insole. A good shoe for more general gardening.

Available in sizes 3.5-11 (36-46).

Comfort ★★★★★

Quite narrow, but a good, comfortable fit, although the heel was a bit sloppy.

Wearability ★★★★★

Fairly easy to get on and off, although I did need to push my feet in. They gripped my feet well.

Grip ★★★★★

Excellent, deep tread.

Value ★★★★★

Price guide £40; supplied by webury.com



17/20

Muck Boot Eden Shoe £45

The second heaviest shoe on test. They are made from flex-foam and stretch nylon which provides good warmth insulation. Because of their high backs, they're an excellent shoe for more 'serious' gardening. On the recommendation of the supplier I tested size 41, as they suggested a tighter fit is better.

Available in sizes 4-12 (37-47).

Comfort ★★★★★

A good, firm fit and very comfortable to wear, even during prolonged periods.

Wearability ★★★★★

The high back means you need both hands to put them on. They provide good overall protection.

Grip ★★★★★

Good, reliable ribbed grip.

Value ★★★★★

Price guide £45; supplied by JC Country

Briers Garden Clogs £11.99

Made from injection-moulded plastic with a removable and washable foam insole.

Available in sizes 4-12 (37-47) and three colours.

Comfort ★★★★★

Very wide foot-bed, so very suitable for those with broad feet, but a bit too loose for me.

Wearability ★★★★★

Easy to slip on and off. My feet did tend to move around while carrying out the gardening jobs.

Grip ★★★

Limited tread, so only average non-slip grip.

Value ★★★★★

Price guide £11.99



16/20

Town & Country EVA Cloggies £12.99

Made from injection-moulded plastic with a removable and washable foam insole.

Available in sizes 4-11 (37-45) and six colours.

Comfort ★★★

Small, narrow shoes with uncomfortable tight fit.

Wearability ★★★★★

Due to the tight fit they were difficult to slide on and take off. It also made them difficult to work in after a reasonably short time.

Grip ★★★

Limited tread, so only average non-slip grip.

Value ★★★★★

Price guide

£12.99



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SUPPLIERS: Some suppliers only sell to gardening stores, but you can also buy their products online. **Backdoorshoes** 0871 231 1781, www.backdoorshoes.co.uk **Briers** 01666 511457, www.briersltd.co.uk **Gardman** 01406 372237, www.gardman.co.uk **JC Country** 01524 791362, www.jccountry.co.uk **Town & Country** 01530 830990, www.townandco.com **webury.com** 0800 083 6418, www.webury.com