

POINTE SHOE FITTERS REFERENCE

Fitting Gaynor Minden pointe shoes is logical and easy to learn.

As in fitting conventional pointe shoes:

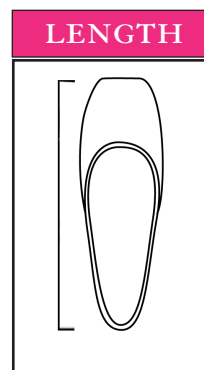
- You never fit with “room to grow.”
- The toe box must be snug. (Reason: a shoe that is too big cannot provide proper support.)

Unlike fitting conventional paste shoes:

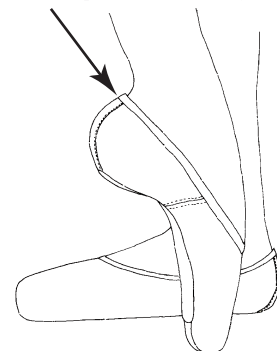
- You allow 1/8” to 1/4” pinch (at the top of the heel by the drawstring casing) when on pointe. (Reason: our satin does not stretch as much as conventional satin does.)
- You select a shoe stiffness that will never change; there is no “breaking in” or softening. (Reason: our shanks and boxes are elastomeric; they never weaken.)
- A Gaynor Minden “size” consists of six variables; length is just one of them. You specify all six.

1. Determine length.

- Start with a length one size longer than the dancer’s U.S. street shoe size.
- Demi-plié, deeply on one leg. The big toe should just touch the end of the shoe. Pressure on the big toe indicates a length too short or a box too wide.
- Stand on pointe. You should be able to pinch 1/8” to 1/4” of material at the top of the heel by the drawstring casing. If you can pinch more, try a half size shorter. If you cannot pinch any material at all try a half size longer.

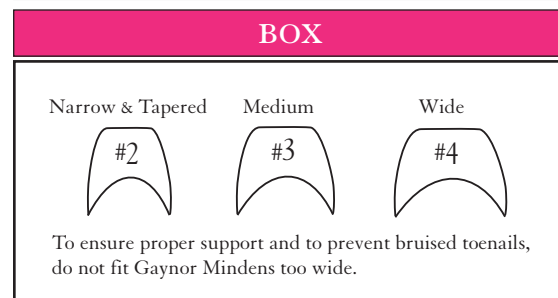
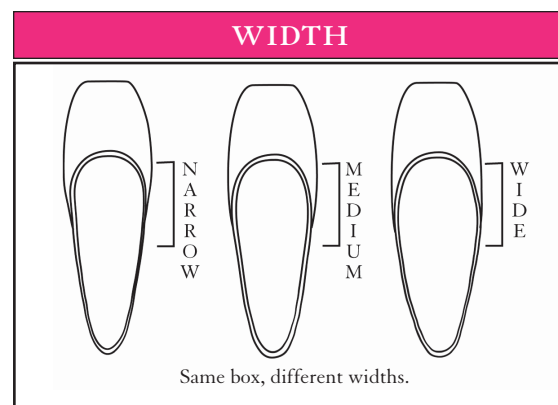


1/8”-1/4” pinch at drawstring casing



2. Determine width and box.

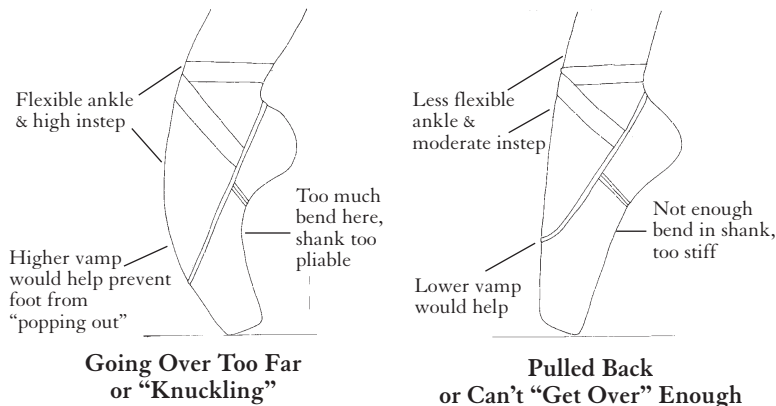
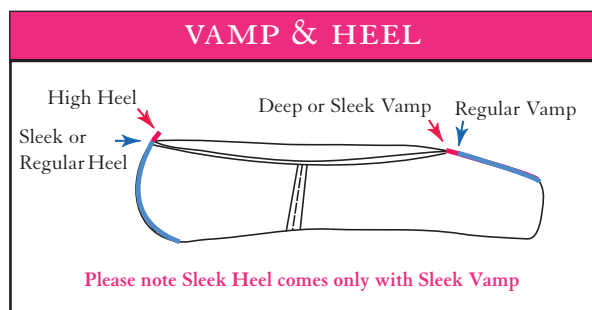
- Width is measured between the edge of the box and the side seam. Minimize bagginess and gaping at the sides of the shoe by using the narrowest width that still allows the foot to slide into the box.
- The box should be snug and its appearance smooth. Its edge should neither dig into the big toe joint nor end abruptly just below it causing the joint to bulge. If necessary, try a larger box or a wider width. If you change to a wider box, try it first with a box liner to ensure a snug fit; remove the liner if the box is still too tight.
- If the dancer’s forefoot is narrow try the #2 box, if average the #3, if wide (and square) the #4. A compressible foot often requires a smaller box.



3. Select stiffness and vamp.

- The shank should be stiff enough to allow the dancer to maintain correct, comfortable placement on pointe, but pliable enough to achieve a high demi-pointe easily. Be sure the shank is sufficiently flexible!
- Longer vamps add support. Vamps should always cover toes completely—no visible cleavage.
- Usually, a highly arched foot requires a longer vamp and/or a stiffer shank.
- If the dancer feels “held back,” try a more pliable shank and/or a lower vamp. If she is “going over too far,” try a stiffer shank and/or a higher vamp.

SHANK STIFFNESS	
CONVENTIONAL	GAYNOR MINDEN
Brand New	= “HARD”
Slightly Worn	= “EXTRAFLEX”
Broken In	= “SUPPLE”
Wearing Out	= “FEATHERFLEX”
Almost “Dead”	= “PIANISSIMO”

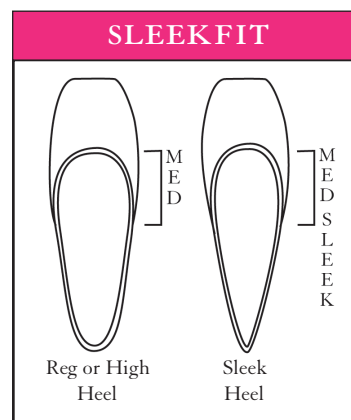


4. Select Heel.

- Higher heels help keep the shoe on the foot. Lower heels make for a smoother, less baggy fit.

5. Consider a Sleekfit.

- If the box fits correctly but the sides and/or heel are baggy, try a Sleekfit. They are available in most sizes but usually require 1/2 size longer length. Sleekfits are ideal for dancers with narrow heels.

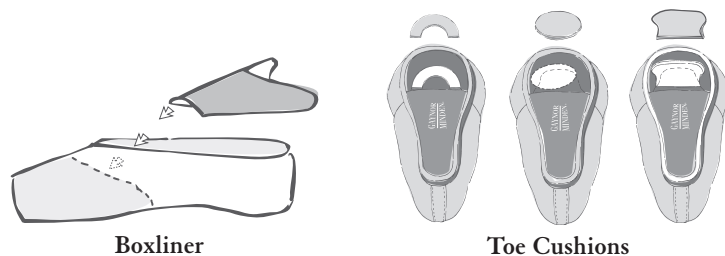
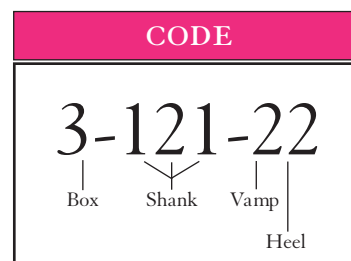


6. Fine tune the fit.

- Add box liners and/or toe cushions to relieve pressure on toes. Add heel grippers to minimize bagginess at heels and to help keep the shoe on the foot.

7. Re-check!

- Pads and cushions, especially large ones, affect fit. Re-check the fit with all cushions in place.
- Repeat the deep demi-plié test and the pinch-at-heel test after every adjustment and one last time before sewing on the ribbons.



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