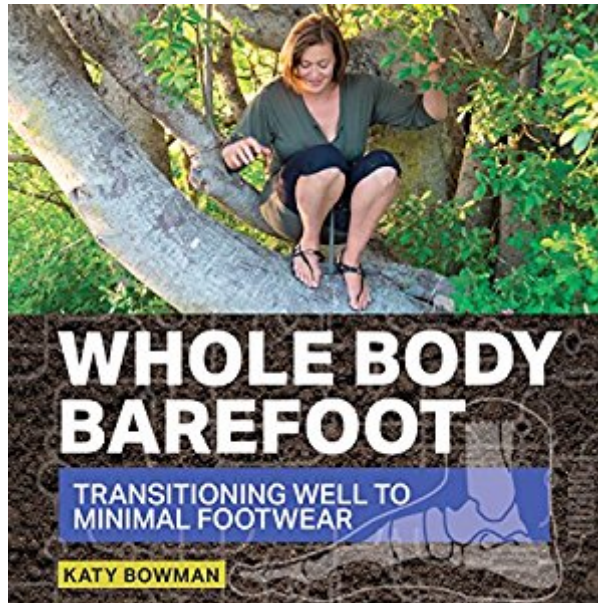




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Whole Body Barefoot: Transitioning Well To Minimal Footwear



Synopsis

Barefoot enthusiasts say ditching your shoes is essential for optimal whole-body function. Doctors say minimalist shoes cause injury. Who's right? What if they both are? In *Whole Body Barefoot*, biomechanist Katy Bowman explains how both sides are right and wrong by broadening the perspective of over-simplified "shoes are good" or "shoes are bad" arguments. Using evolutionary-based and biomechanical arguments, Bowman demonstrates that shoes, in a modern context, have purpose, but that the trade-off for protection can be reduced whole-body health if we don't select the right shoes for our body and skill-level.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have to say, I wasn't expecting to learn much. I thought it would be a repeat of info in her other books and what is online. However, it was so much better than that. Have I seen the exercises before? Sure, I even do most of them on a regular basis. But it was the in-depth info that I found so great. Not just "do this." But **why**. I was the kid that always asked "why" and wanted all the details. Now I know. BTW, I've already transitioned to barefoot shoes, and I still learned lots from this book.

This book is surprisingly spectacular. If you're wondering how a book about feet and minimal footwear can be spectacular, well, then you haven't read the other books on the same subject. I came to minimal footwear reluctantly and by accident, but my foot and back problems -- which I did not see as connected -- were wreaking havoc in my life. As soon as I moved to a big city in my early 30's and started walking full time on pavement, that was the end of a pain-free body as I knew it. My

feet fell apart almost immediately. But it took years for me to figure out my shoes had anything to do with it. Like most (?) people who embrace barefoot/barefoot-like footwear, I learned about it from the trusty internet. The problem is, the internet -- shock of shocks! -- is full of some very bad information. I read that basically just strapping on a pair of minimalist shoes and/or going barefoot was going to solve all of my problems, immediately. In truth, some of my problems resolved right away (no lower back pain, gone, just like that!); but my feet became a painful mess -- pain that would come and go, in places I'd never even had pain before. I knew I was onto something with the minimal shoes because of the positive improvements, yet I knew something wasn't right because I kept experiencing injury. I think I've read every book on barefoot-ing out there -- even though much of it applies to running, which I don't do. Most of the books are terrible and full of pseudo-science and new age dogma, which I found to be a giant turn-off. Even more disappointing, most of the information stops with the foot itself -- not making the connection that the body, bio-mechanically, is whole, from head to foot. Enter Katy Bowman. First of all, she's a very talented, funny writer, and she accomplishes something that almost seems impossible: this book is practically entertaining! She also has a knack for communicating complex ideas in a clear, convincing way; it's as if she's reminding you that many of the ideas espoused in this book are common sense, which they are. I have been wearing minimalist shoes for a few years now -- not 100% of the time, but most of it (dress shoes, occasionally; sneakers once in a blue moon -- for the shallow reason of "fashion"). The improvement in pain has been extraordinary, yet I learned a lot in this book, which I think will, over time, will offer even more improvement (unlike other books, Katy is careful to point out that it's NOT an overnight miracle). I, too, have focused too much attention on my feet themselves, instead of considering the other muscles and systems involved in walking and movement in general. If you experience any kind of bodily pain, I really can't recommend this book more highly. What this book offers is a real path to living a dramatically different life. That might sound like hyperbole, but it isn't. The absence of pain, even those small annoyances that many of us chalk up to the inevitable effects of aging, is truly liberating and life changing. Following the advice in this book, and completing the exercises, has the potential to be transformative. Really. And even if you don't have pain, that's an even better reason to read it: maybe you'll be spared the misery that so many of our bad habits eventually create.

I love Katy Bowman's books, there is a little overlap but she is so inspiring that it reinforces and motivates me. I was already switching to neutral shoes and going barefoot and this book gave me all the information I needed to do it properly. The most valuable tool in this book is the exercises she

lays out to help strengthen the necessary muscles to correct flat arches (bunions), adjust posture and avoid long term chronic issues (and correct them). I made a list of the exercises in the back of the book and adjusted to fit my needs. Simple exercises that really challenge and improve our ability to stand, walk and move. Thank You Katy! To get an idea of the work Katy does, google her short video on Runner's World, really amazing...

I am recommending this book to anyone who asks me about my minimalist shoes. I've also bought copies for my child's teachers and my chiropractor. Katy offers up the science behind why going minimal matters but also offers a tempered approach to transitioning over the course of, well, however long it takes. It's a whole body-centered approach, as the name implies, in a culture where we tend to see feet as "just feet." Science + practical application ... it's a winner.

Very well written. Katy puts all pieces into one big perspective and this is what is so good about this book. It's not only feet you need to focus on, but an alignment of the entire body that matters. Every piece of the alignment chain is analyzed separately with pictures and recommended exercises at several levels of difficulty. A must read for anyone considering barefoot / minimal footwear.

I had arch challenges for about 3 years starting during pregnancy and continuing afterward. The challenges made it so that I could not go barefoot. A friend recommended this book. After reading it and making changes, the foot problems have disappeared and I can walk around barefoot with no problem! The advice this book promoted was opposite of what the podiatrist recommended to me, but it worked!

If you are interested about learning more about your feet, body, and how your body moves in space so that you can live a healthier life, this book is definitely a good read. If you are interested in transitioning out of your 'sexy' shoes and broken back to something for comfortable that causes no pain, this book is a good read. Once you are done with this book and ready to continue aligning your body, I would highly recommend to follow with this: *The Roll Model: A Step-by-Step Guide to Erase Pain, Improve Mobility, and Live Better in Your Body*.

Have read several of her books and applied her ideas and it has changed how my feet and body feel. It is a process but worth it. I now can't hardly stand to wear heavy shoes! Have noticed a difference in my mobility and fitness and I am 50! So many of her ideas are pretty basic makes you

wonder why they are so fresh and different than modern society.

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