

(from Nike corporate website, accessed September 27, 2007,
<http://www.nike.com/nikebiz/nikebiz.jhtml?page=26&cat=reuseashoe>)
reuse-a-shoe

Worn out. Play on.

Every year, across the globe, millions of pairs of athletic shoes end up in landfills or are disposed of in some other way. That's a lot of shoes going to waste that contain valuable materials that could be re-used if a degree of imagination, some ingenious engineering and a persistent pursuit of the principles of sustainability were to be applied.

What if these shoes could be recycled and used to create something useful? And better still, what if waste was significantly reduced altogether, at every stage of the product life cycle? What if some of the remnants from the manufacturing of footwear were turned into materials that could go back into making new footwear?

We asked ourselves questions like these back in 1993. The answers led us to the creation of Nike Reuse-A-Shoe, now one of Nike's longest-running environmental and community programs, where worn-out athletic shoes of any brand are collected, processed and recycled into material used in sports surfaces like basketball courts, tennis courts, athletic fields, running tracks and playgrounds for youth around the world.

Since Reuse-A-Shoe began, we've recycled more than 20 million pairs of athletic shoes (we accept any brand, not just Nike) and we've contributed to more than 250 sport surfaces to provide access to places to play for kids as part of Let Me Play, Nike's global community investment program.



How Reuse-A-Shoe Works

Shoes, ready to be recycled, fill the storefront windows of Niketown San Francisco.

Collections

Reuse-A-Shoe collects worn-out athletic shoes of any brand from a variety of sources, including post-consumer (shoes collected through a variety of recycling programs, special events and at Nike stores and other retailers and also shoes that are returned to us from retailers due to a material or workmanship flaw and counterfeit shoes) and pre-consumer (scrap material from the manufacturing of new Nike footwear). Nike Stores as well as participating partner retail stores, athletic clubs, schools and colleges are all locations where shoes may be collected. In the U.S. we also partner with members of the National Recycling Coalition to increase recycling efforts in communities across the country. We provide communications materials for collection partners to spread the word.

Since it began, Reuse-A-Shoe has expanded to include Canada, U.K., Netherlands, Germany, Australia and Japan. And we expect the expansion to continue. For more details about where and how Reuse-A-Shoe collects in your region, please select the appropriate regional link in the left navigation.

As a company committed to becoming climate neutral, we're also keenly aware of the environmental impact of transportation of goods. We continue to seek the most carbon-efficient means of transporting the collected shoes and focus on reaching full capacity of our selected carriers when shipping the collected shoes to their final destination.



Shoes are recycled at our facility in Meerhout, Belgium.

Processing

Once enough shoes have been collected, they are transported to a processing facility. We then separate the athletic shoes into their most useful materials-- rubber from the outsole, foam from the midsole and fabric from the upper. We call this material Nike Grind.

Nike has two Reuse-A-Shoe processing facilities – one in the U.S., which has been operational since the program began in 1993, and one in Belgium, which was built in 2005.

The U.S. facility uses a “slice and grind” technique. Each shoe is cut into three slices that contain the main materials – rubber from the outsoles, foam from the midsoles and fabric from the uppers. These slices are fed through grinders and purified to become the different types of Nike Grind – Nike Grind Rubber, Nike Grind Foam and Nike Grind Upper material.

The Belgium facility grinds up shoes whole, then passes the resulting material through a series of complex separators that eventually produce the three main types of Nike Grind. Nike runs this facility in partnership with a local community organization that provides access to employment for socially excluded people in the area.

To date, approximately 20 million pairs of athletic shoes worldwide have been processed through the Reuse-A-Shoe program.

Using Nike Grind

We partner with industry-leading sports surfacing companies to incorporate [Nike Grind](#) materials into their standard product lines. Together, we're working toward a common goal: to create the highest-quality sports surfaces available using the most innovative methods and advanced recycling technology.

After years of extensive research and development by Nike engineers, we've also found uses for the Nike Grind material in other areas of our business as well as the sports surface industry.

Surface Donations

We work with our partners to bring Nike Grind surface donations to underserved communities. Since the program began in 1993, we have contributed to more than 250 sport surfaces in communities around the world. Surface donations are made in association with our community investment program, Let Me Play, which leverages the power of sport to change young peoples' lives, build communities and create positive social change.

Read more details about the types and locations of surface donations in the US and globally.

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