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Tricks of the Trade

Even shoes should age gracefully. Keep them in top condition with these tips from David Mesquita, owner of Shoe Service Plus in New York City.

- **Stretch them a bit.** Nothing sparks a blister like too-tight straps. “Put on your new sandals with thick socks and walk around your house,” Mesquita says. “If they’re still uncomfortable, a professional can stretch the straps without ruining the integrity of the shoes.”
- **Do damage control.** “Most designer shoes have been treated with water and stain repellent, but it doesn’t hurt to spray them with an extra layer,” Mesquita says. And don’t panic if the material gets nicked or torn. “In most cases, a pro can add new leather or dye satin to match,” Mesquita says. “Just don’t attempt to fix it yourself—you could make things much worse.”
- **Stay well-heeled.** Just because a heel snaps in the middle doesn’t mean your shoes are ruined. “Stiletto heels are built with a support tube inside,” Mesquita says. “If that breaks, it can be taken out and replaced with a stronger, metal one.” In a pinch, “a small dab of Super Glue can hold the heel together temporarily.”
- **Give them air.** “Rather than sealing your shoes in a plastic container, use a cloth shoe bag,” Mesquita says. “If it bothers you that you can’t see them, staple a picture of the sandals to the outside.”

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