

Moscow Lifehack: How to Fit In (Hint: Shine Your Shoes)

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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How do I keep my shoes clean in the winter?

TMT: Wear plastic bags over your feet? Don't leave the house until pavement conditions are less perilous?

In the Russian book of etiquette, clean shoes are near the top of the must-maintain list. So to fit in, pay attention to your footwear.

First off, if you're wearing suede shoes, please put them away immediately until drier spring weather. It's just not worth it, take it from us.

But leather has its own problems. Like the disgusting tide mark from a scum-filled ocean, your shoes will carry a salt mark by the end of the day. This happens because leather soaks up water, and salt gathers at the high-water mark. If this happens day in and day out (as it is apt to in Moscow) you will eventually have permanently damaged shoes.

The trick with cleaning is little and often. While leather treatments that you rub or spray on when you first buy shoes are a good idea, you're going to need to give your shoes a bit of TLC at the end of each day to keep them shipshape.

Stuff wet shoes with newspaper to help them dry and maintain their shape. Once dry, mix a solution of half warm water, half vinegar. Take a damp cloth and rub gently but firmly along the tide mark. Once all salt traces have disappeared, brush the shoes again with a soft cloth and leave them for half an hour or until all residual dampness has gone. Come back and give them a quick nourishing polish and then gaze indulgently at your new twinkle toes.

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