

# Barefoot Times

## Barefoot Summer

Shed footwear with these ideas in mind.

## Barefoot Preacher

How going barefoot spreads the gospel.

## Corporate Letters

Be prepared for confrontations with these resources..







# Barefoot Summer

By Joel Vander Molen

In the northern hemisphere, summer is upon us. It is a time when kids are out of school, families go on vacation, and a great time to go barefoot.

Research has shown that children's foot development can only be done properly when barefoot. Unfortunately, many schools don't allow students to attend without footwear. Therefore, summer vacation is an important time to keep feet free as much as possible, if not all the time.

Parks are a great place to visit and burn off energy. Most playgrounds have soft surfaces that are great for bare feet. Leave footwear at home and let kids move and flex their feet as designed when active. If other parents ask about

lack of footwear, it allows for a great teaching experience for families that can also benefit from a shoeless lifestyle. The same rules can apply when visiting friends' houses, going to the pool, or any summer outing. Make it a habit for kids, and parents, to leave footwear at home. It also means you won't need to find shed footwear before leaving these locations as well.

During vacations, new areas are often being explored. Let feet join in on the exploration by going barefoot and enjoying full sensations of your travels. If a business refuses to serve you due to lack of footwear (which is rare), simply go somewhere else. It's likely you won't be in the area again anyway and you can support companies that allow your

health choices. For a real adventure, try leaving all footwear at home when you go on family trips. If you're not quite ready for that step, then make sure any footwear you pack is minimalist and easy to kick off.

If you or our family is new to barefooting, it may take time for your feet to adjust to their new freedom. Slowly increase your time barefoot and allow the muscles in your feet to strengthen and adapt. During hot days, try to avoid the peak times of the day and go out early in the morning. Walking on hot pavement can be done when you're accustomed to it, but it may take time.

Whatever you or your family is doing this summer, let it be done barefoot. After a few months of free feet, you'll be well equipped to handle most situations and have a healthier life.



## Make it a habit for kids, and parents, to leave footwear at home.



# Corporate Letters

By Joel Vander Molen

As barefooters, we are used to being the only person without footwear in businesses or restaurants. Sometimes, a barefooter will receive negative feedback from workers who claim rules exist against shopping, or dining, barefoot. When this happens, we need to be prepared to stand for our rights and educate staff.

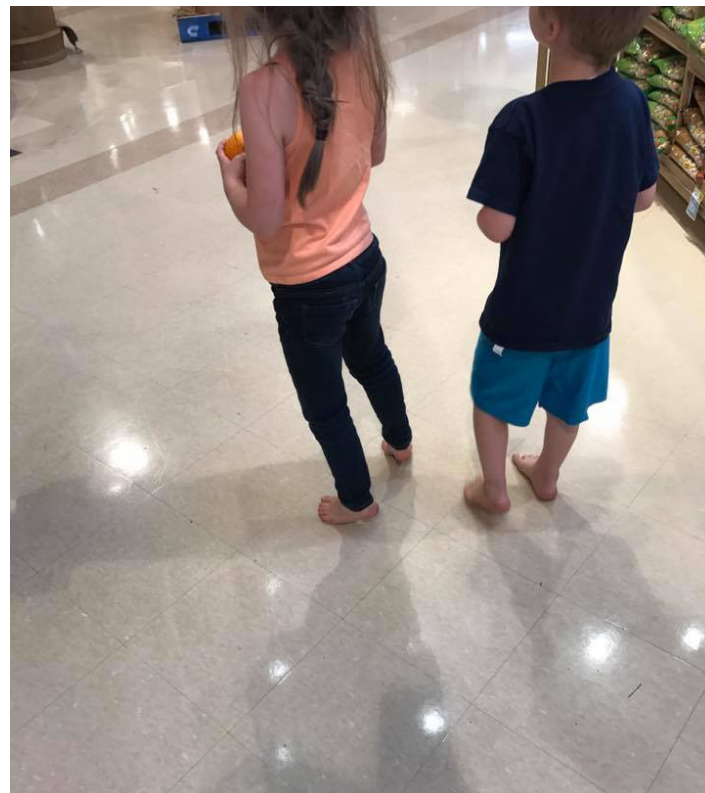
Corporations such as Walmart rarely, if ever, have written rules saying footwear is required. Looking at the website, barefootislegal.org, point to "Laws" and then click on Corporate Letters. A list of letters is available stating these companies do not have rules against barefoot patrons. It is best to have a printed copy available or have them downloaded on your phone. You can quickly show their corporate policy and that you're allowed to skip footwear.

Under the same "Laws" menu, you can also find health department regulations for your state (more are coming). Download, or print, your state's letter to have on hand if someone says footwear is required by the health department. If you're traveling, make sure to have letters for the state(s) you will be visiting as well.

Finally, the US has rules protecting health and religious accommodations. If free feet allow for better walking, which it does, or is part of your religious practices, make sure to state this. No company wants to discrimi-

nate against someone and face possible legal problems for it.

Finally, if a business or restaurant still refuses to serve you, take your business elsewhere. The majority of companies want to have paying customers and will allow you to be barefoot. If a company refuses to serve you, be sure to record your interaction and the employee's names. Contacting customer relations departments frequently results in apologies and staff reeducation. Also report your experience in the BIL website and we will help to educate a business that going barefoot is legal.



# Barefoot Preacher

By Joel Vander Molen

I have been a barefooter for several years and hope to see the movement continue to spread. My job titles include webmaster (such as for barefootislegal.org), disability awareness speaker, and preacher. In 2017, I received my license to exhort, which basically means I can help fill-in at a church when the regular pastor is gone.

When asked why I go barefoot, I can give the general health benefits and also how barefooting helps me. However, it is also a reminder of a few verses in the Bible, specifically Romans 10:14-15:

"How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? 15 And how will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who proclaim good news of good things!"

I can't say that my feet are beautiful, but going barefoot is a reminder to always be ready

to share the good news of the gospel. All of us have sinned against God by either lying, theft (no matter the object's value), using God's name without reverence and more (see Exodus 20).

Since this is the case, everyone (including me) deserves eternal punishment in hell. However, Jesus died on the cross, and rose again on the third day, to pay for our sins. All who repent and trust in Christ alone for salvation, not on works, will be saved.

Going barefoot in public has allowed me to get into gospel conversations with people who ask about my footwear. God had Moses remove his shoes when speaking with Him, and it was Moses who received the Ten Commandments.

Through this, I have physical and spiritual reasons for foregoing footwear. I hope to make this a series in future magazines and continue to be the barefoot preacher.

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