

ILLUSTRATION BY ADAM DOUGHTY

WHERE DO YOUR BOOTS COME FROM?

Next time you put on your football boots take a look inside. You will see a little label that says "Made in..." but it probably won't end in "UK". Instead, most boots have been on an incredible journey before ending up on your feet!

1. DESIGN & TESTING

Before a football boot has seen a blade of grass, you need to get out your colouring pens.

Designers get creative and sketch out exciting ideas. Next they make fancy 3D models of the boots on computers, before turning them into real life samples.

These samples are then tested out to make sure they feel great on your feet. Once the bosses are happy, it's time to make the boots!

2. FIND THE MATERIALS

So you know what the boots will look like – great! But what will they be made out of?

Boots are made from a mixture of man-made plastics and leather, which comes from the skins of animals, normally cows. Leather is used because it is very tough – so your boots don't fall apart after your first volley into the top corner!

3. TO THE FACTORY

Most boots are made in **big factories** in countries such as **China** and **Indonesia**. This is because people are paid less money to work in these countries, so it is cheaper to make boots there.

First they make all the different parts – the outer layer, the soft inside that makes it comfortable and the sole, which is the bottom. Once these have been prepared, **workers sew them all together**. Factories make thousands of pairs of boots a day.

The boots are ready to wear. But you can't do keepy-uppies in them while they are on the other side of the world!

FAR EAST

4. SHIPMENT

It's time for the boots to go on a very, very long journey.

They are loaded onto lorries and taken to a port, where they are put on massive **cargo ships**. These can be up to 366 metres long – that's the length of three football pitches!

The ships are so big that it can take up to **two months** for them to make the 7,000-mile journey to the UK.

When they arrive the boots are taken to huge warehouses. From there they are sent to the shops and put out on the shelves **ready for you to buy!**

OCEANS

SHOPS

5. THE FOOTBALL PITCH!

Now it's down to you. Save up your pocket money, pick your boots off the shop shelf and get them to your local pitch. Finally, the shiny new boots can see grass for the first time!

So next time you pull on your football boots take a look inside, see where they were made and have a think about the **epic journey** they went on, and the people who made them, just so you can practise your Cruyff turns!

Turn the page to find out what life is like for the people who make your football boots

