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Humans have been wearing shoes for thousands of years, but at some point in history, they became much more than something people used to cover their feet. Shoes grew to have huge cultural significance, with ties to the Civil Rights Movement, hip-hop culture, and the emergence of some of the NBA's greatest players.

Multiple players on the Creek Boys Basketball team have cultivated large collection of shoes, and sneaker culture is something very important to them.

Senior point guard Myles Purchase explains how sneaker culture can bring people together.

"[Collecting sneakers] is something that people love doing," Purchase said. "It's a community where people from all over the world, and people who live all types of different ways, can share a love for sneakers."

Senior power forward Arden Walker has a long-time love affair with his sneakers. Growing up, he noticed people wearing cool sneakers, and he wanted to be like them.

"I love chasing the collection," Walker said. "I think my love started when I was in first or second grade. I would see some of the big

kids wearing their shoes, and that was some of the stuff I really wanted to wear."

So where do these athletes actually go to buy their sneakers?

"Usually before I shop for shoes, I know what brand and color I want," sophomore point guard Christian Hammond said. "I look on my phone and see whenever they are about to drop and try to get them when they come out."

Buying sneakers online is a route that a lot of people take due to the vast amount of shoe apps available, some of the most popular being StockX, GOAT, Nike Sneakers, and KicksOnFire.

"I don't really shop in stores anymore," Purchase said. "[I buy sneakers] online, so I basically already know what I want."

The sneakers that players wear on the court are different than what they wear in public, for reasons such as a need for ankle mobility and the fact that they don't necessarily have to match their sneakers to their uniform.

"I've been wearing these KDs that I bought," Walker said. "In terms of being on the court, it's more of a business standpoint



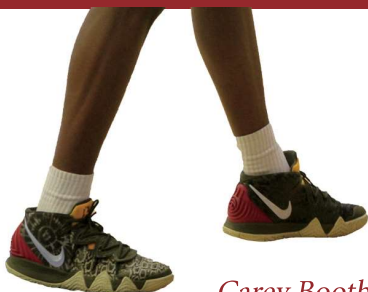
Christian Hammond

for me and I want to get the job done, so I feel like it's okay to mess those up or wear them for a while."

Hammond says he personally doesn't like bright colors, but he will wear them on the court, and save his more neutral shoes for when he's out and about.

"I don't usually wear a lot of blue off the court, and I wear blue on the court," Hammond said. "For basketball, I'll wear something that I usually won't wear when I'm just going out or chillin'. I don't like bright colors, and I only play basketball in bright colored shoes usually, like the red and the blue."

When he is out in public though, Hammond pays special attention to how he takes care of his sneakers.



Carey Booth



Blake Purchase



Trevon Chambers

"Do not crease them," Hammond said. "You have to watch where you walk, watch how you walk, and you don't want to wear the same pair of shoes too many times because they will wear out."

Sometimes Walker just likes to avoid this issue altogether by keeping his shoes in the box. His logic is that if you never wear your shoes, they can't possibly get messed up.

"People say you should rock your kicks, but I keep my shoes in my boxes for a reason," Walker said. "I think [you should] try to preserve them and keep them looking nice. I keep the paper that comes inside the shoes and I'll put it back in every time I wear my shoes. I also clean out the insole after I wear them, and I have some shoe wipes."

And do they drive in their nice shoes? They say that there are no stupid questions, but according to Hammond, Walker, and Purchase, this is definitely not something you should even ask.

"No. There's no way, I couldn't do that," Hammond said. "If I did, I would take the shoe off of my right foot."

Purchase keeps his beloved pair of Crocs on hand for situations like this, and he switches to his sneakers once he gets out of the car. But don't think the danger ends there, because he must be vigilant in every situation where his sneakers could possibly get damaged.

"I walk differently when I have shoes on that I don't want to crease," Purchase said. "You don't bend your knees, you just walk with your legs straight."

Hammond agrees that if there is even a chance of getting your sneakers dirty, creased, or ruined in any way, they must be protected at all costs.

"If it came down to it for real," Hammond said. "I would take my shoes off and walk in my socks."



Myles Purchase

People make **shoe** **contact** before they make eye contact sometimes.

Arden Walker

To many people, sneakers are an extension of their personality, a statement, and something that is a huge contributor to their personal style.

"Sneakers are important to me because you have to look good, and you have to dress good," Hammond said. "I'm laid back, so I don't go for super crazy shoes."

I'll go for a more bright colored pair of shoes every now and again to change it up."

Certain sneakers can convey different things about someone's personality. For Walker, his sneakers represent his mood on a given day.

"I feel like I make a statement no matter what shoe I wear,"

Walker said. "It depends on how I feel, and my mood for the day. If I have on some running shoes or some athletic wear, then I'm going to be chill that day, but if I have my Jordans on, I'll want to dress up that day."

Sneakers, while they are a big part of someone's style, aren't the only contributing factor. Walker says that to complete the look, you have to coordinate a good outfit.

"I got to at least look somewhat decent when I leave the house," Walker said. "Lately, I've been into cozy fits. I have some sweatpants with designs on them, it's kind of what's been trending lately, and then I put on a vintage shirt that I have in my collection."

Purchase also tries to put stylish outfits together because he wants his clothing to speak for itself.

"It's a way to express myself without even having to say anything," Purchase said. "I care about the way that I look."

Does having good shoe game make you a better basketball player? Head Coach Kent Dertinger probably wouldn't think so, but maybe it's true.

"Not necessarily," Walker answered via text. "But I think it's a potential way to stay competitive haha."

Got Shoe Game?

Q: How many sneaker apps do you have on your phone?

A: Nine: The Nike sneakers app, the regular Nike app, Goat, StockX, Footlocker, Finish Line, Champs, East Bay, and Kicks On Fire.
-Arden Walker

Q: What shoes would you buy your mom if you wanted to help her up her shoe game?

A: I would probably get her some Obsidian Jordan Ones. I like those a lot, and I feel like she could wear those well.
-Christian Hammond

For the full article and Q&A, access the QR code.



SCAN ME



Arden Walker



Christian Hammond



Chase Penry