

## adidas | THE TRAINER



When 20-year-old Adi Dassler from Herzogenaurach changed tack after his apprenticeship as a baker and began to make sports shoes, he had a vision. Every athlete should have shoes which were perfectly suited to his discipline. The fact that he remained true to this ideal until his death in 1978 is borne out not only by 700 worldwide patents and registered designs, but also by the numerous victories and triumphs by sportsmen and women wearing the three stripes on their kit.

However, when he made his first shoes in 1920, he had to make do with the few materials which were available shortly after the War. Despite this, the specialist shoes quickly made the breakthrough and at the Olympic Games in 1928, the sports-crazy Dassler looked after 'his' athletes himself in order to optimise their shoes.

After the Second World War, Adi Dassler was forced to start again virtually from scratch. When he made the first post-War shoes from sailcloth and rubber from American fuel tanks in 1947, he was looking for a catchy name for his products and – as the first shoe manufacturer around – a trademark. So, in 1949, he came up with the adidas name, based on his own name, plus the adidas logo with the distinctive three stripes. Adi Dassler was also the first person to recognise the potential in sports sponsorship. Famous athletes from numerous sports acted as adverts and made a significant contribution to the constant rise in awareness of the brand.

The German victory in the 1954 football World Cup was a successful milestone in adidas' history as a company. The fact that Adi Dassler himself stepped in at half-time of the final to adjust the innovative screw-stud shoes to the legendary "Fritz Walter Weather" is part of the myth that has gone down in the history books as the "Berne Miracle".

In the Sixties, adidas expanded its range to textiles and balls. Here, too, the company quickly set standards, thanks to its innovations. For example, it has been adidas balls that have been kicked into the

back of the net at all major football events since 1970.

After the death of Adi Dassler, the company gradually modernised the structures he had put into place, without losing sight of the company's tradition. First, adidas was converted into a joint stock company in 1989, which was then floated on the stock exchange in 1995. Two years later, it bought the Salomon Group, whose product range (Salomon for winter sports equipment, TaylorMade for golf and Mavic for bicycle components) made it a perfect complement to adidas. With sales of 6.3 billion euros in 2003, the newly-formed adidas-Salomon AG is now the second largest sports product company in the world and employs more than 16,000 people.

In October 2000, the company presented a new, revolutionary business strategy for the core brand, adidas. Instead of what was previously a business structure divided into shoes, textiles and accessories, a contemporary, innovative business model was introduced, with adidas Sport Performance for sportsmen and women, adidas Sport Heritage for lifestyle customers and adidas Sport Style for discerning, fashion-conscious consumers with a sporting bent. Thanks to this strategy, adidas can address its customers more directly, build on its customer base and further penetrate existing markets. In 2004, the company introduced an advanced shoe with intelligent cushioning which automatically and continuously adjusts itself. Called "i", it does so by sensing the cushioning level, using a sensor and a magnet. The changes are gradual and happen automatically, so all the runner notices is that the shoe feels right during an entire run. This also fulfils the condition for the steadfastness of the adidas name, which will continue to stand for competency in all areas of sports now and in the future.



Company name adidas-Salomon AG	Classic product adidas trainer (since 1949)	Employees over 16,000 worldwide	Founder Adi Dassler (1900–1978)	Distribution over 114 subsidiaries worldwide	Group sales 6.3 billion euros
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