



Innovation > Work & Lifestyle > Haptic footwear gives wearers smartphone-free directions

## HAPTIC FOOTWEAR GIVES WEARERS SMARTPHONE-FREE DIRECTIONS



WORK & LIFESTYLE

**Two ventures -- Lechal and SuperShoes -- are enabling anyone to turn their shoes into smart devices, using vibrations to let them know which way to turn without checking their phone.**

Regular readers of Springwise may remember the [OpenGo science](#) insole, which is laden with sensors to help doctors and sports scientists to analyze foot health and performance. It now seems that similar technology from two ventures is enabling anyone to turn their shoes into smart devices, using vibrations to let them know which way to turn without checking their phone.

Firstly, India-based [Lechal](#) has created a shoe with smart insoles that use Bluetooth to connect with wearers' smartphones. Users can set their destination using their phone, and the shoes will vibrate depending on which direction they need to go in. The shoes can also track steps made and calories lost, record the route they've taken, and tag a location by tapping their toe on the floor. Lechal is available as a pair of shoes or just an insole that users can place inside their own shoes. Customers can register to pre-order their pair now, with the insoles and shoes set to cost USD 100. The video below shows the devices in action:

US-based [SuperShoes](#) are a similar product, although they're being sold as just the insoles for now. Created by Dhairya Dand, a researcher at the MIT Media Lab, the devices also use a vibrating interface to communicate with owners and let them know where they should be going. However, users can also sign up to ShoeCentral, a social network and recommendation engine that offers suggestions based on wearers' preferences. If they pass a location ShoeCentral thinks they'll like, both the shoes vibrate once and the user can check their phone to see the recommended venue. Wearers can also set location-based to-do lists, and the shoes vibrate twice to remind them when they're near the place they need to go. SuperShoes aren't currently available to buy, but have been demonstrated at Tokyo Design Week 2013. The video below explains a bit more about the shoes:

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Both of these products offer a glimpse into what wearable technology looks like when it moves away from the smartwatch and integrates itself into our clothes. Are there other ways the items consumers wear every day can be made technologically smarter?

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Website: [www.lechal.com](http://www.lechal.com), [www.dhairyadand.com](http://www.dhairyadand.com)

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