

# Marugo: The split-toe shoe specialists

"Make it new" is Marugo's message, and the Japanese firm has taken resolute steps in its mission to demonstrate to the world the value of freeing the big toe in our footwear.



Marugo Tokyo

Marugo Company Inc., established in Kurashiki, Okayama Prefecture, in 1919, has a long history of producing *Jikatabi*, a combination of Tabi – a traditional Japanese split-toe sock – together with a modern rubber sole to provide freedom of movement as well as dependable underfoot grip, just like when you are barefooted. In addition to its main product, another interesting combination for the company is its name, a result of the joining of two Japanese words: circle (Maru) and five (go) – a fitting homage to the five rings of the Olympic games,



PPE shoes

where, in its early years, Japanese marathon runners would wear split-toe, *Jikatabi* shoes.

*Jikatabi* was long loved by workers in industries such as agriculture, forestry, construction and mining, which is to say that *Jikatabi* has played an important supporting role during the industrial modernization of Japan. In recent decades, in addition to *Jikatabi*, the firm has pioneered a new market of "protective sneakers" as a PPE item which superseded conventional black heavy safety shoes in Japan. The firm proudly produces high-quality split-toe footwear in its state-of-the-art factory in Japan, at the same time, its protective sneakers are also manufactured in its associated factories overseas.

In accordance with the Olympic spirit within the firm, Marugo is looking outwards across all the continents. Chairperson Shigehiko

Fujiki describes the approach for its PPE shoes: "We would like to collaborate with trading houses who have direct connections to customers or e-trading platforms." As such, the company's idea is to manufacture and deliver locally with its design and brand names to get closer to the actual customers.



Tabi shoes

The Japanese are renowned for living long lives, with their longevity intrinsically linked to diet and a healthy lifestyle. As such, Marugo's main goal is to provide people with split-toe shoes that boast many unique characteristics, such as big toe independence, unmatched flexibility, and breathability, in accordance with



"We are proud that our tradition has succeeded since establishment."

**Shigehiko Fujiki,**  
Chairperson,  
Marugo Company Inc.

and in order to inspire a healthy lifestyle. And herein lies the key mission of the 100-year-old company – delivering a high-quality product which provides comfort and safety within both the workplace and the social environment, and which inspires and helps to maintain healthy living.



[www.marugo.ne.jp/en](http://www.marugo.ne.jp/en)