

*Swiss*  
**AIR SHOE**

Discover the unique Swiss air-cushion shoe from kybun and the wide range of benefits that can be achieved with our high-quality products.



**Karl Müller**

Inventor of the Swiss air-cushion shoe from kybun

› ABOUT KARL MÜLLER

# The man who started it all.



Karl Müller moves to South Korea and successfully founds 12 companies in the following years.

Ten years later, he sells all of his companies and returns to Lake Constance in Switzerland.

1979

Karl Müller continues investigating how to recreate the comfort of standing in paddy fields even more accurately. He develops the elastic springy sole, which he wants to use in the next generation of MBT shoes. However, his minority shareholding partners want to continue with the round sole model, so he parts ways with MBT on good terms in 2006.

2006

The model Karl developed becomes the new kybun brand. He founds kybun AG with Markus Bartholet in 2007 and begins developing the kybun shoe and other complementary products.

The kybun shoe is a part of the kybun movement concept, which also includes the elastic springy mat and the elastic springy treadmill.

2007

1952

Karl Müller is born in a small village in Roggwil, Thurgau, Switzerland.

Karl Müller graduates from the mechanical engineering program at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich.

1997

Karl Müller introduces the MBT shoe to the market, revolutionising the shoe industry with the «rocker bottom sole». The rocker bottom shoe proves to have therapeutic effects and is currently being copied by over 100 shoe manufacturers worldwide.



**Karl Müller**  
Inventor of the Swiss air-cushion shoe from kybun



# Swiss made

Switzerland is not just the home of chocolate, cheese, clocks, pocket knives, mountains and snow. It is also the home of the Swiss air-cushion shoe from kybun, which is unlike any other shoe in the world!



Sonntagszeitung  
Switzerland, 6 April 2008



Müller, who studied engineering at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, revolutionises the physiological footwear market, as well as the aesthetics of footwear, with his Massai Barefoot Technology. He further develops the MBT, which leads to the creation of the Swiss air-cushion shoe from kybun.

The high-tech process of manufacturing the kybun shoe, developed by Karl Müller, reflects Switzerland's reputation for masterful precision and quality.

# Best of the best



## Swissness

This distinction is awarded to the most outstanding brands, including Omega watches, Swatch watches, Swiss Air and Victorinox Swiss Army knives.

## Swissness: kybun is a major Swiss achievement in design



112 Weltweit erstes Modell mit runder Sohle (Erstpräsentation September 1998)

### kybun kybun Schuh Engineering und Design Karl Müller 2006

Nichts ist unmöglich! Ihm wäre es jedenfalls möglich, eine Fabrik aus dem Boden zu stampfen, um jene Millionen Paare von kybun Schuhen zu produzieren, welche die Weltmärkte ihm sofort abholen würden. Auch hierbei setzt der Unternehmer konsequent auf organisches Wachstum und vertraut seinem Sensorium. Dabei hat er gar nichts gegen Keilschuhe oder Lifestyle-Chic, Doch das ist heute der Job von Managern, etwa bei MBT. Er «stickt» anders. Stattdessen deklariert er: «walk-on-air». Als es im Dezember 2006 zur Gründung von kybun (koreanisch für «angenehmes Gefühl») kam, hatte Karl Müller eingehende Gespräche über die nächsten grossen Schritte mit seinen damaligen Partnern hinter sich. Auf seinem Vertrauen in jenes entspannende Gefühl, das alle vom barfuss laufen auf weich-elastischen Naturböden her kennen, baut kybun auf. Die Weiterentwicklung der bananenförmigen Sohle ist darum eine weich-elastische Luftsohle, die der Bewegung des Fusses beim Gehen die maximal mögliche Freiheit gibt. Die unentwegte «Forschung an der Biomechanik des natürlichen Gehens und jahrelange Erfahrung mit revolutionären Schuhsoleneinflüssen Karl Müller zum Wunsch, dieses «Gefühl von Schwerelosigkeit», verbunden mit Entspannung, Gesundheit und Training, auf die Schuhssole zu übertragen. Die besteht beim kybun Schuh aus einem speziell aufgeschäumten Polyurethan-Luftpolster, das von eigens dafür entwickelten Robotern gefertigt wird. Ergo: «Swiss Technology». Und – keinesfalls zufällig – baut der Unternehmer die Produktion noch im Jahr 2010 in der Schweiz auf, so dass er auch mit 100 Prozent «Swiss made» werben kann.

kybun kybun shoe Engineering and Design Karl Müller 2006  
Nothing is impossible! Not for him at least – he would be able to conjure up a factory out of nothing to make the millions of pairs of kybun shoes that the global markets would immediately snap up. Yet once again the entrepreneur consistently relies only on organic growth and trusts his senses. He has nothing at all against cult shoes or chic lifestyle choices. Yet today that is the job of managers, such as at MBT. He “works” differently. Instead he declaims “walk-on-air”. When, in December 2006, kybun (Korean for “pleasant feeling”) was founded, Karl Müller had already held exhaustive discussions on the next major steps with his then business partners. kybun is based on his trust in that relaxing feeling we all know “from walking barefoot on soft, elastic, natural surfaces”. Thus he further developed the banana-shaped sole to create a soft, elastic air sole that gives the foot the maximum possible freedom of movement when walking. His unswerving “research of the biomechanics of natural walking and extensive experience with revolutionary shoe soles” led Karl Müller to the desire to transfer this “feeling of weightlessness”, combined with relaxation, health and training, to the shoe sole. The sole of the kybun shoe consists of a specially expanded polyurethane air cushion made by robots specially designed for this purpose. Hence, “Swiss Technology”. And – by no means coincidentally – in 2010, the entrepreneur is concentrating production in such a way that he is able to claim that his products are 100 percent “Swiss made”.

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### Karl Müller (MBT 1996–2006/kybun seit 2006) 1952

Seit hundert Jahren gilt in der Schuhindustrie der Grundsatz, dass der Schuh den Fuss stützen und führen muss. Die deutsche Firma Adidas hat dieses Axiom tief ins Bewusstsein des Konsumenten eingepägt. Noch heute werden «kranke Füsse» durch Einlagen in ihrer natürlichen Bewegung behindert. Daher bedurfte es wohl erst eines Aussenseiters wie Karl Müller, um dieses schlotternde in Stein gemessenen Prinzipien zu hinterfragen und der Branche völlig neue Wege zu eröffnen. Sein revolutionärer Ansatz des abrollenden Gehens mittels einer runden Sohle beruht darauf, dass alles falsch ist, was den Fuss in seiner Bewegung einschränkt. Diese Idee kam ihm beim Gehen auf den moorartigen koreanischen Reisfeldern in den Süm, inmitten derer er in den Achtzigerjahren lebte. Der von ihm darauf 1996 gegründeten MBT («Masal Barefoot Technology») wollte niemand eine Chance geben. Gegen alle Widerstände, nicht zuletzt im Kreis jener, die von Haltungsschäden leben, überzeugte er zunächst Freunde, dann Bekannte, deren Freunde und Bekannte und so weiter. Das, was so berröris ein Musterbeispiel für organisches Wachstum wäre, mündete im Absatz von acht Millionen Paar Schuhen allein zwischen 2004 und 2009. Während sich andere da auf der Position des Generaldirektors ausruhen würden, verkaufte Karl Müller MBT 2006. Diesbezüglich hat er einmal zu Protokoll gegeben: «Geld kann doch nicht alles sein.» Vielleicht aber verdankt der Unternehmer seiner Zeit in Fernost auch jenes Leitmotiv, demzufolge er nicht derjenige ist, «der an etwas festhält, nur weil er es gefunden hat».

### Karl Müller 1952 (MBT 1996–2006/kybun since 2006)

In the shoe industry, the maxim “the shoe has to support and guide the foot” has applied for a hundred years. The German company Adidas has deeply ingrained this axiom in the consumer consciousness. Today, insoles still impede “sick feet” in their natural movement. It appears that an outsider like Karl Müller was needed to question these principles, seemingly set in stone, and to open up to the industry completely new options. His revolutionary approach of the rolling gait, thanks to a rounded sole, rests on the principle that anything that restricts the movement of the foot is wrong. He had the idea while walking on the moss-like rice fields in Korea, in the middle of which he lived in the 1980s. He subsequently founded a company in 1996, MBT (“Masal Barefoot Technology”), but no-one was willing to give it a chance. Against all the obstacles, not least among those who make a living from postural deformities, he initially convinced friends, then acquaintances, then their friends and acquaintances and so on and so forth. That which was already a prime example of organic growth led to the sale of 8 million pairs of shoes between 2004 and 2009 alone. Whereas others might then have sat back and relaxed in the position of General Director, in 2006 Karl Müller sold MBT. He once said the following of this decision: “Money can’t be everything.” Yet perhaps the businessman also has his time in the “Far East” to thank for the guiding principle, according to which he is not the one “who holds on to something just because he found it”.

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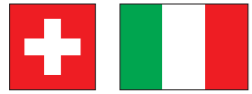


Karl Müller wieder einen Schritt voraus: Ein kybun-Modell mit Luftsohle (Erstpräsentation April 2009)

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> ATTENTION TO DETAIL

# Our own production facilities in Switzerland and northern Italy



We manufacture our products in Sennwald, Switzerland and in Montebelluna near Venice, Italy.



› HANDCRAFTING AND HIGH-TECH PRODUCTION

## Top Swiss quality

We manufacture the Swiss air-cushion shoe from kybun and its elastic springy sole largely by hand, using a process that includes up to 40 different steps.

# 100%

The high-tech kybun production factory developed by Karl Müller – who invented the MBT shoe and has sold millions of units to date – reflects the spirit of innovation and emphasis on precision and quality for which Switzerland is renowned.



swiss technology 

> KYBUNPARK

## Home of the super league team FC SG

In the summer of 2016, the stadium of Switzerland's oldest football club was renamed kybunpark and is now the beacon of the kybun brand at the gateway to St. Gallen.



### kybun in professional sport

kybun products are invaluable training accessories in professional sports. Thanks to the elastic and resilient properties of kybun treadmills, mats and shoes, regeneration is significantly enhanced with just a minimum of effort. Athletes suffer fewer injuries and can recover much faster after being injured.





› WORN ALL OVER THE WORLD

# Celebrities seen wearing the kybun shoe

For those who virtually have everything:  
less stress, better health



- 1 **Ueli Maurer** – Swiss Federal Council (President of the Confederation in 2013)
- 2 **Pope Francis** – received a pair of kybun shoes as a gift from Karl Müller
- 3 **Elena Krygina** – prominent make-up Artist in Russia
- 4 **Simon Chang** – one of the most successful designers in Canada
- 5 **Yulianna Karaulova** – Russian singer
- 6 **Tunku Imran Tuanku Ja'afar** – prince of Malaysia
- 7 **Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayid Al Nahyan, Al-Ain** – President of the United Arab Emirates
- 8 **Sheikh of Dubai** – Left: The crown prince of Dubai

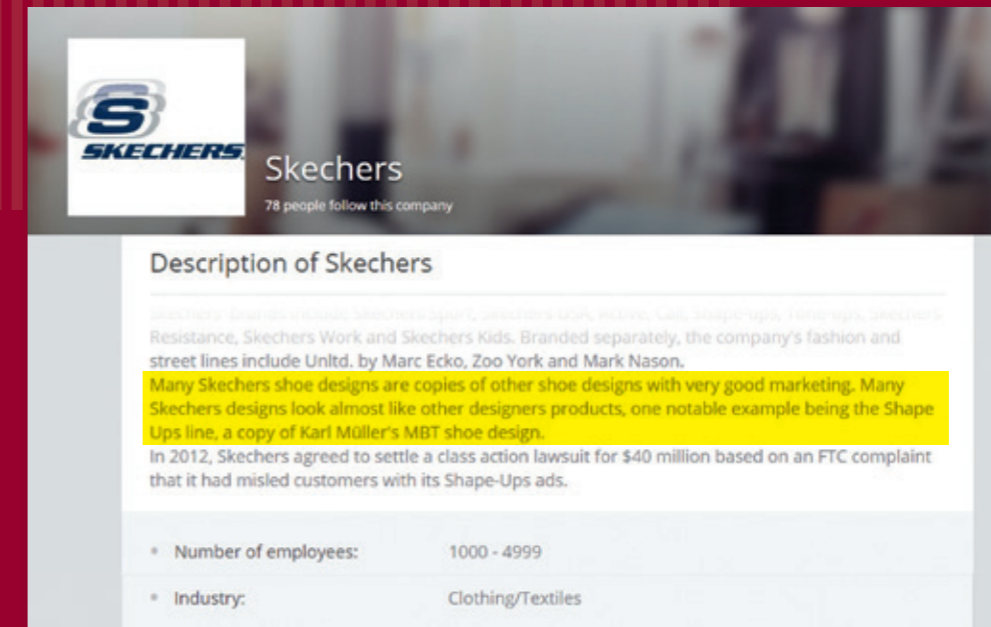
# kybun inventor revolutionises the mindset of the entire shoe industry

Although the idea has been copied many times, the original is still the undisputed leader. The air-cushion shoe from kybun offers unbeatable efficiency and a sense of comfort for your entire body.



«Unlike the Nike Free, the effect is not just on the foot but on the whole body.»

# Skechers copied MBT 1:1 and elevated themselves to rank 2 in the world behind Nike



«Many Skechers shoe designs are copies of other shoe designs with very good marketing. Many Skechers designs look almost like other designers products, one notable example being the Shape Ups line, a copy of Karl Müller's MBT shoe design.»

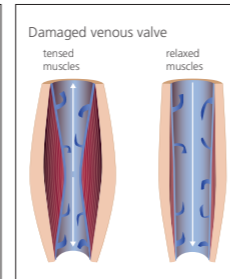
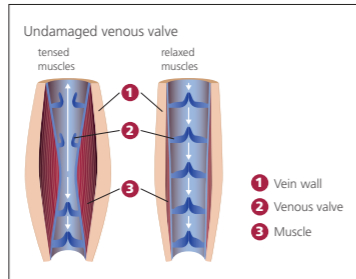
# First choice of medical professionals

The following painful symptoms can be addressed with kybun therapy:

- ◊ Chronic Achilles tendon inflammation
- ◊ Bunions – deformity of the big toe
- ◊ Osteoarthritis of the knee/hip
- ◊ Vein problems
- ◊ Back pain
- ◊ Plantar fasciitis/heel spurs

### Strong feet make healthy people

Too much time sitting down is a major cause of health problems today, as is walking on hard, flat everyday surfaces, which damages the joints and the back.



«We are able to reduce our patients' pain medication thanks to the kybun shoes. As a result, the shoes play a key role in the therapy process.»

Dr med. Markus Müller, consultant for orthopaedic surgery certified by the Swiss Medical Association, Switzerland



«Wearing the shoe does not require any social attentiveness, however, it's fun to walk consciously in them.»

Dr. Günter Niessen, specialist for orthopedic and trauma surgery and physical therapist, Switzerland



«The shoe suited my foot shape and needs from the very start, and I have been able to wear shoes without insoles for the first time in many years.»

Dr Andreas Gösele-Koppenburg, head of the Swiss Olympic Medical Center, Medical Director of Crossklinik Basel, Switzerland

› ADVANTAGES AND IMPACT

# A life of pain-free walking?

You will be thrilled with the kybun shoe from the very first step. The kybun shoe is relaxing, helps you to get fit and protects your joints.

The airy honeycomb structure of the kybun shoe creates an air cushion between your foot and the ground. Every step pumps a fifth of the air volume into the foot space to create a comfortable shoe climate.

The kybun sole enables your foot to feel every detail of the floor. The soles of your feet will be gently stimulated with every step. The elastic springy air cushion provides optimum cushioning and your feet are strengthened.

**kybun**<sup>+</sup>  
Switzerland



[www.kybun.com](http://www.kybun.com)