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9 Best Gym Shoes for Men of 2024

By [Alyssa Sparacino, ACE-certified personal trainer](#)

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Updated: Aug. 14, 2024

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You've got the sweat-wicking shirt, the breathable shorts, the on-trend socks, and a killer playlist – you're ready to crush your next workout. But before you lace up just any pair of sneakers and head out the door, you've got to find the right gym shoes to match your needs. Don't let footwear be an afterthought or your performance and body will pay the price. Instead, well-fit, exercise-specific gym shoes help prevent injuries and improve performance.

To put together this list of the best gym shoes for men, we consulted two experts: a podiatrist and a certified strength and condition coach and certified personal trainer. I also relied on my own experience as a certified personal trainer and fitness writer. We landed on the Nike Pegasus 41 as the best overall pick. However, you'll find other options on the list that may better suit your budget, foot shape, injury history, or workout demands.

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Best Overall

Nike Pegasus 41 »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Versatile
- ✓ Reactive
- ✓ Comfortable

CONS:

- ✗ May run small/narrow
- ✗ Not the most lightweight on our list

[Buy From Amazon](#)

If you want a workout shoe to take you from the gym, to an outdoor run, to everyday errands – while never sacrificing quality or functionality – the Nike Pegasus 41 men's gym shoes will take on whatever your day or workout throws at them.

Eric Sung, a certified strength and condition coach and certified personal trainer who coaches clients across multiple modalities from running to strength work and all the iterations in between, says he has been a fan of the entire Nike Pegasus line (keep your eye out for the release of the latest [Nike Pegasus Plus](#)) for years.

"I coach group fitness classes, train clients one-on-one, and trek throughout the city 5-6 days a week," he says. "These shoes are just so dynamic, well-

balanced, and comfortable. I can train with them, hop into an impromptu fitness class, or go on a short run and be fine.”

As someone who regularly hits 12,000 to 17,000 steps a day, Sung says these shoes last him up to eight months of wear.

Specs

List Price:	\$140
Sizes:	6-18
Materials:	Foam, rubber, knit, mesh
Weight:	10.4 oz.

[Buy From Amazon »](#)

Best Budget

New Balance Fresh Foam Arishi v4 »



PROS:

- ✓ Affordable
- ✓ Versatile
- ✓ Breathable
- ✓ Comes in three widths

CONS:

- ✗ No special features
- ✗ May not be suitable for weight lifting

[Buy From New Balance](#)

If you’re on the hunt for a sneaker that can go the extra mile without breaking your budget, the New Balance Fresh Foam Arishi v4 checks those boxes. Whether you’re a casual gym goer, getting back into working out, or testing new types of classes and techniques, a sneaker doesn’t necessarily have to have all the bells and whistles to do what you need.

These New Balance kicks have moderate cushion, breathable airflow, and neutral support, making them a good choice for short runs, [everyday walking](#), and quick gym sessions. However, they may not be the best bet for weight lifting because they don’t have a flat, stable base.

Customers remark that the price is right, the style is functional, and the shoes are comfortable for on-the-regular wear.

Specs

List Price:	\$62.99
Sizes:	7-15
Materials:	Foam, mesh, rubber, knit
Weight:	9.5 oz.

[Buy From New Balance »](#)

Best for Weight Lifting

Adidas Powerlift 5 »



PROS:

- ✓ Rock-solid stability
- ✓ Elevated heel
- ✓ Lightweight yet durable
- ✓ Mesh uppers for breathability

CONS:

- ✗ Not the most budget-friendly
- ✗ Low ankle profile

[Buy From Adidas](#)

Comfort and stability reign supreme when it comes to the Adidas Powerlift 5, and reviewers can't say enough good things about these sneakers. The elevated heel promotes ankle support – a helpful benefit during squats, for example – and the combination of laces and a hook-and-loop midsole strap help you feel locked and loaded for every rep.

These best men's gym shoes for [weight lifting](#) may cost a bit more than your do-everything sneaker, but this shoe's weight lifting specific features,

lightweight design, and breathable mesh upper may make it worth the cost for weightlifters.

Specs

List Price:	\$130
Sizes:	4-16
Materials:	Canvas, mesh, rubber (some recycled content)
Weight:	15.38 oz.

[Buy From Adidas »](#)

Best for Breathability

APL TechLoom Wave »



- PROS:

 - ✓ Breathable and cooling
- CONS:

 - ✗ Steep price tag

- ✓ Lightweight
- ✓ Machine-washable
- ✓ Tons of color options

✗ Runs small

Buy From APL

Keeping your feet cool, dry, and comfortable gets you out of your head (thinking about that blister that’s sure to form any minute) and into your workout.

As your heart rate begins to climb and your body temperature starts to rise, your feet will start to trap in warm air – no matter what type of workout you’re doing. So, it makes sense that many of the top gym shoes for men have breathable elements.

“Breathability helps your feet moderate the circulation of blood, oxygen, and sweat,” says Sung.

The APL TechLoom Wave earns high marks in this department thanks to its strategically placed ventilation zones, which allow for airflow. Additionally, the shoe has a 3D stretch upper which adapts to your movements and gives the shoe flexibility, so you can easily stow these shoes in your suitcase or [gym bag](#).

Specs

List Price:	\$245
Sizes:	7-14
Materials:	EVA (ethyl-vinyl acetate) foam, mesh, knit, rubber
Weight:	7.1 oz.

[Buy From APL »](#)

Best for Comfort

ASICS Gel-Nimbus 26 »



PROS:

- ✓ Ample cushioning
- ✓ Soft knitted tongue and collar
- ✓ Enhanced shock absorption
- ✓ Made from recycled materials

CONS:

- ✗ Bulkier style
- ✗ Not meant for weight lifting

[Buy From ASICS](#)

The ASICS Gel-Nimbus 26 combines FF Blast Plus Eco foam (the brand's softest cushioning yet) and PureGEL technology to deliver enhanced shock absorption, softer landings, and smoother transitions so the soles of your feet don't take the brunt of the hard work during every rep or stride.

Customers appreciate the plush comfort that this cushioning provides. For further comfort, the shoe is designed with a soft, stretchy tongue and collar,

which provide a more adaptive fit and an easy on-off.

Specs

List Price:	\$160
Sizes:	6-16
Materials:	Knit, rubber, reflective elements, foam
Weight:	10.8 oz.

[Buy From ASICS »](#)

Best for Treadmill Running

Brooks Ghost 16 »



- PROS:

 - ✓ Shock absorbers at
- CONS:

 - ✗ Not ideal for those who

bottom of shoe promote
smooth transitions

- ✓ Breathable mesh upper
- ✓ Soft cushioning
- ✓ Available in four widths

need added support

- ✗ Big heel-to-toe drop not
suitable for powerlifting

Buy From Brooks

Soft cushioning, a comfortable and secure fit, and a breathable design make the Brooks Ghost 16 an obvious match for treadmill running. (Though, you can wear these shoes for outdoor runs, as well.) At the bottom of the shoe, you’ll notice the Segmented Crash Pad, the brand’s system of fully integrated shock absorbers. This helps promote smooth transitions.

Hillary Brenner, DPM, a New York-based podiatrist and foot surgeon, and spokesperson for the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA), likes these shoes for their impressive traction, cushioning, arch support, and breathability – its mesh upper helps keep your feet cool and dry no matter how long or fast you decide to run.

They’re available in more than a dozen colors and four widths: narrow, medium, wide, and extra-wide. Plus, they’re made from recycled materials so you can feel good about your purchase.

Specs

List Price:	\$140
Sizes:	7-15
Materials:	Knit, mesh, rubber, foam, some recycled materials
Weight:	9.5 oz.

Buy From Brooks »

Best Cross-training

Vivobarefoot Motus Flex »



PROS:

- ✓ Versatile
- ✓ Sole offers grip and stability
- ✓ Breathable
- ✓ Flexible design makes them easy to pack

CONS:

- ✗ Minimal cushioning
- ✗ Zero-drop design isn't for everyone

[Buy From Vivobarefoot](#)

The Vivobarefoot Motus Flex is a performance trainer designed to provide you with a sturdy connection to the ground while also offering the flexibility needed for all kinds of movements, training styles, exercises, and classes. These will take you from box jumps to treadmill sprints to [kettlebell](#) training and back again.

They’re “one of my favorites for an all-around gym shoe,” says Sung. “They train the stability of your feet, making them great for single-leg exercises like lunges and deadlifts but I also use them for squats.”

Barefoot-style gym shoes like this pair bring you closer to the floor. So, if you’re looking for a shoe with maximum cushioning to help you withstand long runs, this isn’t the type of gym shoe for you. However, if you’re someone who doesn’t want to choose just one type of workout and is constantly bouncing from the cardio machines to the weight room, the Motus Flex is a smart choice.

Specs

List Price:	\$190
Sizes:	7-15
Materials:	Knit, elastic, rubber, foam
Weight:	9.38 oz.

[Buy From Vivobarefoot »](#)

Best for HIIT Workouts

Reebok Nano Gym Shoes »

**PROS:**

- ✓ High-traction outsole provides grip
- ✓ Breathable
- ✓ Heel clip for enhanced stability
- ✓ Plush foam collar for comfort

CONS:

- ✗ Not the best for long, outdoor runs
- ✗ Limited colorways

[Buy From Amazon](#)

Reebok's line of Nano sneakers are a favorite among CrossFitters for their flat sole, stable footbed, and rugged durability. With the Reebok Nano Gym Shoes, the brand was able to take those beloved elements and add some flexibility and versatility to create an all-around best HIIT shoe for men.

HIIT requires a shoe with dependable traction for any type of surface, ankle and heel stability to make quick pivots between exercises, and just enough flexibility to keep you moving smoothly. The Reebok Nano Gym Shoes do just that with their high-traction outsole, supportive heel clip, and plush foam

collar. Bonus: The mesh upper ensures they stay breathable throughout your toughest training days.

Specs

List Price:	\$100
Sizes:	6.5-14
Materials:	EVA foam, rubber, mesh
Weight:	12 oz.

[Buy From Amazon »](#)

Best for Everyday Wear

HOKA Skyflow »



PROS:

✓ Versatile

CONS:

✗ Not great for weight

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✔ Good energy return

✔ Protective cushioning

lifting

✗ Chunkier style

Buy From HOKA

HOKA shoes are known for their cushioning support. Skyflow is the latest iteration in the HOKA collection of everyday training shoes, and these shoes will make you feel like you’re walking on clouds.

“I like HOKAs for running and everyday gym use,” says Dr. Brenner. “They’re made with EVA, which is a foam that helps with shock absorption.”

That absorption means these high-cushion HOKA gym shoes for men offer a lot of protection for your feet – those with **plantar fasciitis** will especially appreciate the soft sole.

“An important rule of thumb overall is to make sure you can’t bend the shoe in half like a burrito,” says Dr. Brenner. “You want a thick arch and wide heel.” One caveat: All that extra padding on the HOKA Skyflow gym shoes makes this style not the best choice for weight lifting as the bounce and height can sacrifice stability.

Specs

List Price:	\$160
Sizes:	7-16
Materials:	EVA foam, knit, rubber
Weight:	10 oz.

[Buy From HOKA »](#)

<https://www.usnews.com/360-reviews/fitness/best-gym-shoes-for-men>

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The Bottom Line

Keep your preferred workout type, budget, and style in mind when shopping for the best gym shoes for men. Our best overall pick, the Nike Pegasus 41, is breathable, comfortable, and durable. However, the best gym shoe is entirely up to your needs and preferences.

Things To Consider When Buying Gym Shoes for Men

Size and Fit: Ill-fitting Shoes – whether too big or too tight – aren't just uncomfortable, but they can cause blisters or even other injuries over time as these shoes can impact your gait. Similarly, gym shoes that are overly wide or too narrow can cause issues, especially for those with [bunions](#).

Breathability: Having a workout shoe that's breathable is important year-round as your feet directly impact your overall body temperature and that regulation, but it's especially important when exercising outdoors in warm climates. "Breathability helps your feet moderate the circulation of blood, oxygen, and sweat," says Sung.

Cushioning: "The more cushion the better to help with shock absorption which is good for high-impact activities like running," says Dr. Brenner. Plus, the type of shoe will largely depend on the purpose and function of the shoe, says Sung. Breathability, cushioning, and stability are each part of that functional equation and tie together to create the right mechanics for your activity, he explains. Specifically, "Cushioning provides your feet with the appropriate absorption for impact," says Sung. The goal of any workout shoe for men is to enhance your experience and performance. Sung adds: "If the materials and construction of the shoe are restricting your ability to perform, you might want to sacrifice stability for cushioning."

Support: Support can come in many forms – from arch support to heel support and everything in between. Injuries aren't uncommon during exercise, but wearing shoes with good support can decrease this risk, says Dr. Brenner. "It's important to wear the right shoe to get the most out of your workout, such as having a sneaker that's

providing support and comfort,” she says. Plus, “stability provides your joints with the support they need to help prevent unwanted movement within the shoe,” adds Sung.

Traction: Traction or grip on the bottom of the shoes on your men’s gym shoes is important in every type of workout (not just hikes or slippery surfaces). Weight lifters will want to look for a gym shoe for men with a flat, firm sole with impressive traction so they can feel secure when lifting heavy loads. This helps athletes use the press firmly through the lower body down to the feet to and be explosive with each rep – which is crucial for powerlifters. Runners and cross-trainers will also need to look for gym shoes with good traction to prevent falls on slippery surfaces and to ensure stability in a variety of movements, adds Dr. Brenner.

How We Chose the Best Gym Shoes for Men

You want your gym look to feel fresh without sacrificing style for functionality and performance. That’s why we tapped experts who know what it means to move well, stay healthy, and prevent injuries – yes, all while looking great, too. Pros who help select the must-have features and the exact pairs of winners for this list of the best gym shoes for men include Hillary Brenner, DPM, a New York-based podiatrist and foot surgeon and spokesperson for the [APMA](#).

We also spoke with [Eric Sung](#), a certified strength and condition coach and certified personal trainer who coaches clients across multiple modalities from running to strength work and all the iterations in between. Sung also has a certification in pain-free performance, so moving well through every stage of life and staying injury-free is his specialty.

In addition to these expert insights, we reviewed customer feedback and available information from the various manufacturers to find shoes with the support, stability, cushion, structure, and fit that will work for any training style.

WHY SHOULD YOU TRUST US?

[Alyssa Sparacino](#), the author of this piece, has been an American Council on Exercise (ACE)-certified personal trainer since 2015 and has worked as an editor and writer

for various health and fitness publications for more than a decade. She regularly tests fitness and outdoor gear and has more sneakers than she'd like to admit.

[Marlo Jappen Porto](#), who edited this piece, is the Fitness editor at U.S. News' 360 Reviews. She's passionate about helping people find products that improve their health, wellness, and comfort.

FAQ

How often should I replace my gym shoes?

+

What should I consider when choosing gym shoes for various workout activities?

+

What type of gym shoes are the most durable?

+

What kind of gym shoes are best for weight lifting?

+

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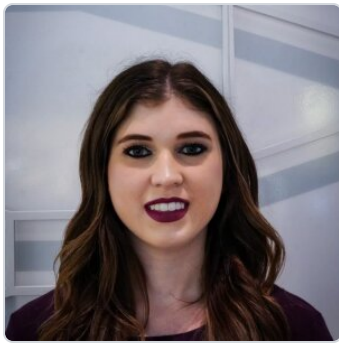
Alyssa Sparacino, ACE-certified personal trainer

Contributor



Alyssa Sparacino is an ACE (American Council on Exercise)-certified personal trainer and a health and fitness journalist with more than 13 years of experience. She has held staff positions at national publications, including Health and Shape, and has written for Well + Good, Men's Health, and Real Simple, among other publications.

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