

When you use links on our website, we may earn a fee.

[Home](#) / [360 Reviews](#) / [Fitness](#)

7 Best Weighted Vests of 2024

By [Amanda Capritto](#)



Edited by [Marlo Jappen Porto](#)

Updated: June 28, 2024



Save

Weighted vests place an additional load on your body while exercising. Often used to increase the challenge during running, walking, or body weight workouts, these vests range in weight, style, adjustability, and durability.

For this guide, I consulted Alex Rothstein, the coordinator and an instructor of the New York Institute of Technology's Exercise Science program, for his fitness expertise. I also tapped my years of experience as a personal trainer and fitness gear reviewer. I landed on the 5.11 Tactical TacTec Plate Carrier as the best overall weighted vest because of its durability and comfort. However, my list also includes other vests that suit different goals and needs.

Table of Contents

[Best Weighted Vests](#)

[Things To Consider When Buying](#)

[How We Chose](#)

[More +](#)

Our Top Picks

Best Overall: [5.11 Tactical TacTec Plate Carrier](#) »

[Jump to Review](#) ↓

Best Budget: [APEXUP Weighted Vest](#) »

[Jump to Review](#) ↓

Best for Running: [MiR Super Slim Air Flow Weighted Vest](#) »

[Jump to Review](#) ↓

Best for Women: [Hyperwear Hyper Vest Fit](#) »

[Jump to Review](#) ↓

Best for CrossFit: [Bear KompleX Training Vest Plate Carrier](#) »

[Jump to Review](#) ↓

Most Comfortable: [GORUCK Training Vest](#) »

[Jump to Review](#) ↓

Best Heavyweight: [Kensui EZ Vest](#) »

[Jump to Review](#) ↓

Best Overall

5.11 Tactical TacTec Plate Carrier »



PROS:

CONS:

- durability
- ✓ Tough but lightweight 500-denier (D) nylon fabric
- ✓ Built-in airflow channels for breathability
- ✓ Promotes full range of motion for shoulders
- ✗ Tough fabric may need break-in period
- ✗ Weight plates sold separately

[Buy From 5.11 Tactical](#)

The 5.11 Tactical TacTec Plate Carrier is a weighted vest designed to uphold its structural integrity even in the most demanding situations. It should last you a lifetime no matter how many workouts or obstacle course races you complete.

Made from 500D nylon – an incredibly durable but relatively lightweight fabric – the TacTec Plate Carrier is designed for movement. The padded shoulder straps provide comfort, while the low-cut side panels promote a complete range of motion for your shoulders. The front and back panels are also padded for comfort and feature perforated mesh airflow channels for breathability.

This ultradurable weighted vest is equipped with a front pocket for small personal items, and it's compatible with three types of weight vest plates: Enhanced Small Arms Protective Inserts (ESAPI), M-L Ballistic ESAPI, and Rogue Fitness. This vest allows you to swap weight plates when desired. The downsides are that weight plates are sold separately from this vest's already expensive list price and you'd have to buy multiple pairs for the vest to be adjustable.

The 5.11 Tactical TacTec Plate Carrier stands out in terms of durability, longevity, and functionality. It's best for individuals who do a lot of high-impact, high-intensity training that requires an unbreakable vest. Those who participate in CrossFit, obstacle course racing, trail events, Tactical Games, and fitness racing are good matches for this weighted vest.

Specs

List Price:	\$215
Materials:	500D nylon and perforated mesh
Weights:	Fits ESAPI plates, M-L Ballistic ESAPI plates, and Rogue Fitness plates (sold separately)
Adjustable:	Yes, plates are interchangeable.

[Buy From 5.11 Tactical »](#)

Best Budget

APEXUP Weighted Vest »



PROS:	CONS:
✓ Inexpensive	✗ Polyester fabric isn't the

- ✓ Available in weights from 5 to 30 pounds

✓ Soft, flexible fit

✓ Padded for comfort

✓ 30-day money-back guarantee and one-year warranty

✓ Reflective details for safety
- most durable

✗ Not adjustable

✗ Iron sands used as weight may leak eventually

Buy From Amazon

If you’re looking for a basic, comfortable weighted vest that won’t cost you three digits, we recommend the APEXUP Weighted Vest. This is a great option for beginners, those who aren’t sure if they’ll stick with weighted-vest training for the long term, and those who want a vest for walking or running. This vest isn’t adjustable, but it’s available in a range of weights in 5-pound increments from 5 to 30 pounds.

The APEXUP Weighted Vest is made of soft, plush polyester and has additional padding for comfort. The weight is in the form of iron sands, which are sewn into pockets in the vest to prevent undesirable weight distribution. Reflective detailing makes it ideal for walking or running in low-light conditions, and the rear pocket allows you to take along small personal items.

This vest is unlikely to last a lifetime, though it comes with a one-year warranty and a 30-day money-back guarantee. However, starting at less than \$30, this price is hard to beat.

Specs

List Price:	Starting at \$29.99 (5 lbs.)
Materials:	Polyester, iron sands, plastic, and nylon
Weights:	5, 10, 15, 20, 25, or 30 lbs.

Adjustable:**No**[Buy From Amazon »](#)

Best for Running

MiR Super Slim Air Flow Weighted Vest »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Rides high on the body to prevent bouncing
- ✓ Thin enough to be worn beneath clothing
- ✓ Adjustable fit
- ✓ Adjustable weight
- ✓ Machine-washable
- ✓ Lifetime warranty

CONS:

- ✗ On the expensive side
- ✗ Zipper may not hold up at heavier weights

[Buy From Amazon](#)

Running with any sort of external load – whether a running belt or weighted vest – can be cumbersome. It’s critical to get the load distribution just right or else you’ll be more focused on your gear bouncing up and down than your run. Enter the MiR Super Slim Air Flow Weighted Vest. Designed to fit tightly and securely, this weighted vest can be worn under a shirt or jacket and rides higher on the body to prevent bouncing and shifting.

The vest is completely adjustable thanks to individual 0.9-pound iron weights. (Thus, you can adjust the weight in 0.9-pound increments.) This MiR vest is available in the following weight options: 8, 16, 20, 24, and 32 pounds. So, for instance, if you purchase the 24-pound option, you’ll have a vest that’s adjustable from 0 to 24 pounds.

With three adjustable straps, the MiR Super Slim Air Flow Weighted Vest is a one-size-fits-most piece of gear. It’s also machine-washable for easy cleaning. (Just air-dry after.)

Specs

List Price:	Starting at \$94.99 (8 lbs.)
Materials:	Cotton blend textile and iron weights
Weights:	8, 16, 20, 24, or 32 lbs.
Adjustable:	Yes

[Buy From Amazon »](#)

Best for Women

Hyperwear Hyper Vest Fit »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Intentionally designed for women's anatomy
- ✓ Available in three sizes
- ✓ Available in two weight options
- ✓ Fully adjustable weights
- ✓ Durable but flexible Cordura fabric

CONS:

- ✗ Only holds up to 10 pounds
- ✗ Potential for bouncing if sizing isn't right

[Buy From Amazon](#)

Wearing a weighted vest can be extremely uncomfortable for women with larger busts due to pressure on the chest. The Hyperwear Hyper Vest Fit is an adjustable weighted vest specifically designed for women. It's completely free of weights in the bust area, eliminating pressure from weight plates and allowing for optimal comfort.

The weight plates, which are 1/2-pound recycled steel bars, start at the rib cage area and line the torso, including the lumbar region if you choose the

heavier 10-pound option. There’s also a 5-pound option, but since the price difference is only about \$15 and the weight is completely adjustable, we advise you to get the heavier option. You can start with as little as 1/2 pound and work your way up to the full 10 pounds.

The Hyper Vest Fit is made of a durable and flexible Cordura polyester-Lycra blend. It uses bungee cord drawstrings for fit adjustments and closes with a durable zipper. Plus, unlike other one-size-fits-most vests, Hyperwear offers the Hyper Vest Fit in three sizes (small, medium, and large). There’s a size chart on the website to help you find the correct fit.

Specs

List Price:	Starting at \$83.99 (5 lbs.)
Materials:	Cordura polyester-Lycra blend, satin lining, and recycled steel weights
Weights:	5 or 10 lbs.
Adjustable:	Yes

[Buy From Amazon »](#)

Best for CrossFit

Bear Komplex Training Vest Plate Carrier »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Durable 500D Cordura fabric can withstand high-intensity movements
- ✓ Promotes full shoulder range of motion
- ✓ Minimalist breathable side panels
- ✓ Adjustable fit

CONS:

- ✗ Weight plates sold separately
- ✗ Only adjustable in weight if you buy multiple sets of plates

[Buy From Amazon](#)

Bear KompleX Training Vest Plate Carriers are a staple in CrossFit gyms. Made from military-grade 500D Cordura nylon, this vest can easily withstand the abrasive movements in CrossFit programming, such as burpees, chest-to-bar pullups, and wall walks.

In CrossFit, range of motion and breathability are key to performance, and this Bear KompleX vest promotes both. The side panels are almost nonexistent and double as the adjustment mechanism for tightening and

loosening the vest. This leaves plenty of room for spinal rotation and lateral flexion (bending). The 3-inch-wide shoulder straps are hefty enough to stay in place but flexible enough not to limit the shoulder's range of motion. Plus, the side straps are made from a thick elastic that expands and contracts as you breathe.

The Bear KompleX Training Vest Plate Carrier is compatible with Rogue Fitness, RX+, and 24-millimeter medium or large mil-spec Small Arms Protective Inserts (SAPI) weight vest plates. This vest can be adjustable in weight if you purchase multiple sets of weight plates, all of which are sold separately.

With a midrange price of about \$135, the Bear KompleX Training Vest Plate Carrier is a stellar pick for those who participate in CrossFit but don't want or need a heavy-duty vest.

Specs

List Price:	\$134.99
Materials:	500D Cordura nylon, steel alloy buckles, and elastic straps
Weights:	Fits 24-mm medium/large SAPI, Rogue Fitness, and RX+ weight vest plates (sold separately)
Adjustable:	Yes, plates are interchangeable.

[Buy From Amazon »](#)

Most Comfortable

GORUCK Training Vest »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Designed with comfort in mind
- ✓ Backpack-inspired straps feature extra padding
- ✓ Contoured design reduces abrasion against skin while exercising
- ✓ Made of durable, long-lasting Cordura fabrics
- ✓ Universal weight plate pocket
- ✓ Lifetime guarantee

CONS:

- ✗ Weight plates sold separately
- ✗ Expensive

[Buy From GORUCK](#)

The GORUCK Training Vest is inspired by [GORUCK rucksacks](#), which are packs meant to be worn for hours, over miles, and through any terrain while

weighed down with gear. If that doesn't scream comfort-first design, we don't know what does.

Notably, the GORUCK Training Vest features backpack-like shoulder straps with more padding and contour than the straps on most weighted vests. On top of that, key details make this vest more anatomically comfortable, such as curvature on the top corners of the weight plate pocket where the fabric touches your chest and shoulders; a 210D nylon lining, which is softer than the 500+ denier fabric used on the exterior, so the vest can be comfortably worn shirtless or over a sports bra or tank top; dual-density foam in the shoulder straps; and flexible, minimalist side panels.

This vest fits [GORUCK](#) and Rogue Fitness weight plates and any other plate carrier weight plates measuring 9.5 inches wide by 11.6 inches high. There's a Velcro strap in the plate pocket to secure the plates in place so they don't bounce during explosive movements or while running.

With a list price of \$195, the GORUCK Training Vest isn't cheap, and weight plates are sold separately for an additional cost. That said, high-quality fitness gear generally isn't cheap, and it's usually worth it to pay more upfront. This is especially true if you plan to do CrossFit, obstacle course racing, calisthenics, or rucking (a type of exercise rooted in military training) in your weighted vest.

Specs

List Price:	\$195
Materials:	1000D Cordura nylon, 210D Cordura nylon, 1050 ballistic nylon, and Velcro plate closure
Weights:	Fits GORUCK and Rogue Fitness weight vest plates and any weight vest plates measuring 9.5 in. W x 11.6 in. H (sold separately)
Adjustable:	Yes, plates are interchangeable.

[Buy From GORUCK »](#)

Best Heavyweight

Kensui EZ Vest »



PROS:

- ✓ Holds up to 300 pounds
- ✓ Easily adjustable
- ✓ Uses any weight plates with 2-inch collar
- ✓ Made of military-grade 1680D ballistic nylon
- ✓ Machine-washable padding
- ✓ Lifetime warranty

CONS:

- ✗ Bulky
- ✗ Not good for running or plyometrics (exercises with rapid contracting and stretching of muscles)

[Buy From Amazon](#)

The Kensui EZ Vest is the weighted vest for advanced athletes who aren't receiving enough of a challenge with traditional weighted vests and plate

carriers. Many vests max out at 50 pounds or less, whereas the Kensui EZ Vest Pro holds 80 to 300 pounds.

There are three versions of the vest: The Lite V2 holds up to 80 pounds, the Pro V2 holds up to 150 pounds, and the Max V2 holds up to 300 pounds. The vests can hold so much weight because they utilize actual weight plates rather than sand, iron sand, steel shot, iron bars, or steel bars.

With the Kensui EZ Vest, you load weight plates onto the fiberglass sleeves (aluminum sleeves on the Max V2), secure them into place with the included collar clip, and start exercising. Constructed from polyurethane (PU) leather and 1680D ballistic nylon, the EZ Vest is durably built and meant to hold up under extreme duress.

The vest design may take some getting used to, as it can feel bulky and awkward. It’s certainly not designed for running or plyometrics but designed more so for calisthenics (rhythmic body exercises) and strength training. That said, it’s unbeatable as far as weight capacity.

Specs

List Price:	Starting at \$100 (Lite V2)
Materials:	1680D ballistic nylon, fiberglass, aluminum, and PU leather
Weights:	Up to 300 lbs.
Adjustable:	Yes

[Buy From Amazon »](#)

The Bottom Line

The best overall weighted vest is the 5.11 Tactical TacTec Plate Carrier. Its military-grade design and ultradurable construction mean it should last a lifetime even when put through tough workouts in tough conditions.

Things To Consider When Buying Weighted Vests

Comfort and Fit: Rothstein says the two most important components to consider when choosing a weighted vest are the fit and comfort of the vest.

“What I mean by the fit of the vest is that it can be secured to your body so that there are little to no excessive movements of the vest independent of the rest of your body,” he explains. “If the vest shifts each time you perform a movement, it will cause excessive rubbing and joint or muscle stress that will not be beneficial.”

“This uncontrolled and unwanted stress will increase the risk of experiencing an injury or discomfort,” Rothstein continues. “The vest needs to fit snugly and comfortably so that you can exercise safely and spend most of your focus on maintaining good exercise form.”

For women, there may be additional considerations. Some companies manufacture women-specific vests that keep the bust area free from weight plates. Women with larger busts may find that type of design more comfortable. Otherwise, most weighted vests have the same general design and aren’t sex-specific.

Fixed vs. Adjustable: The adjustability of the weight is also very important. “Many individuals overload with a weighted vest too quickly because a lighter load initially does not feel challenging enough,” Rothstein says, and this can lead to a higher risk of injury or poor movement technique.

Having flexibility with the load of the vest is important to minimize the risk of injury while allowing room for progression. Rothstein recommends choosing a vest with adjustable weights and starting with a lighter load to see how things feel. From there, you can progress. A fixed vest may be beneficial in an environment with prescribed loads for the workouts, such as CrossFit workouts. (In CrossFit, women typically use a 14-pound vest and men a 20-pound vest.)

Weight: Weighted vests are available in weights from as little as 5 pounds to more than 30 pounds. Choosing the right weight requires knowledge of your current fitness level and strength limitations. While it may be tempting to choose the heaviest vest you can find, Rothstein cautions against this. “The largest drawback to using a weighted vest is that the additional load can actually change the movement/exercise being trained,” he says. “With more weight, we tend to move slower and this can actually cause an individual to become stronger but potentially less powerful.”

He adds: “The additional weight can also change our biomechanics. One’s running form with a weighted vest will be altered just from the redistribution of weight and the change in their center of mass. Because of this, it can be argued that training with a weighted vest is potentially beneficial to sports performance but also potentially detrimental particularly if precise form is required.”

That said, you can mitigate these risks by choosing the correct weight for your fitness level and the workout at hand. If you’re unsure, the best advice is to seek a movement assessment from a certified personal trainer, who can help you choose a weighted vest based on the assessment results.

Materials and Durability: Since weighted vests are often worn for outdoor exercise, such as running, rucking, or calisthenics, and sometimes for movements that can result in abrasion, like burpees, your vest must be made from durable materials and components.

Cordura, a tough woven nylon fabric, is the preferred textile for weighted vests, and it’s what you’ll see in tactical-inspired kits. Look for a higher “D” rating for more durability – 1000D Cordura is tougher (but heavier) than 500D Cordura, for example. Aside from the fabric, you want the components, such as zippers and adjustment mechanisms, to be durable. Look for stainless steel zippers; buckles made of tough, thick plastic; and tight-knit textiles for any pockets.

How We Chose the Best Weighted Vests

We consulted exercise science expert [Alex Rothstein](#), the coordinator and an instructor of the Exercise Science program at the New York Institute of Technology.

Vests were rated against a multipoint methodology accounting for comfort, durability, materials, weights, and adjustability. In addition to rating vests based on those specifications, customer reviews were taken into account. The author pored through reviews to learn about buyer praise points and complaints for each vest, which ultimately informed the selection criteria for this guide.

WHY SHOULD YOU TRUST US?

[Amanda Capritto](#), the author of this guide, has been a certified personal trainer for more than seven years. She also holds certifications in corrective exercise, functional training, and CrossFit. In addition to being a credentialed fitness professional, Amanda is a gear reviewer and commerce writer who has tested hundreds of products in the fitness industry. For 360 Reviews, she's covered the best in [elliptical machines](#), [cycling shoes](#), [hiking boots](#), and more. [Marlo Jappen Porto](#), a U.S. News 360 Reviews editor, is an experienced commerce editor who focuses on fitness products.

FAQ

Why do people use weighted vests?



How heavy should a weighted vest be?



How can I prevent injuries while using a weighted vest?



About Our Team

Amanda Capritto

Contributor

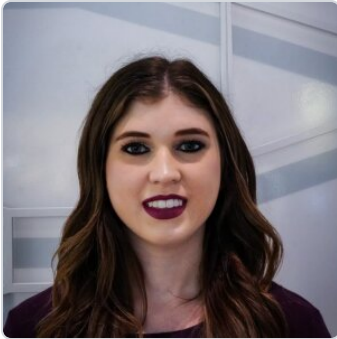


Amanda Capritto is a content writer and journalist with extensive experience covering health, fitness, outdoors, and



nutrition. She is a certified personal trainer, a sports nutrition coach, and the founder of Smarter Sweat, a fitness coaching business where she focuses on helping individuals reach their full potential in the outdoors.

[Read more](#)



Marlo Jappen Porto

Former Editor



Marlo Jappen Porto is a former editor for U.S. News 360 Reviews, focusing on home goods. Prior to joining the team, she was a researcher at NBCUniversal, where she gathered compelling and relevant archival content for live broadcasts. In addition, she has spent years working as an editor and community journalist.

[Read more](#)

U.S. News 360 Reviews takes an unbiased approach to our recommendations. When you use our links to buy products, we may earn a commission but that in no way affects our editorial independence.

HOME

HOME SERVICES

SLEEP

TECHNOLOGY

LIFESTYLE

INSURANCE

BUSINESS

360 REVIEWS UK



[About](#) [Editorial Guidelines](#) [Contact](#) [Press](#) [Advertise](#) [Newsletters](#) [Jobs](#) [Site Map](#)
[Store](#)

