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9 Best Running Shoes of 2024

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For runners, running shoes are arguably the most important piece of equipment. Finding the right pair can improve your performance and reduce the risk of injury, but not just any shoe will do. There's a lot to consider including size, fit, support, cushioning, and traction.

During our research, we spoke with running coaches, gear testers, retail owners, and avid runners to get their insights into choosing the best shoes for your needs. The Brooks Ghost 15 earns our top recommendation because it's versatile and sturdy. While it can work for a lot of runners, our list of the best running shoes includes a variety of options to help you put your best foot forward.

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Best Overall

Brooks Ghost 15 »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Comes in four widths and more than two dozen colors
- ✓ American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) Seal of Acceptance
- ✓ Plush cushioning
- ✓ Grippy outsoles provide optimal traction

CONS:

- ✗ Not ideal for forefoot strikers
- ✗ Runs smaller than previous model

[Buy Men's From Brooks](#)[Buy Women's From Brooks](#)

The Brooks Ghost 15 is a top-selling running shoe because it's durable and versatile enough for just about everyone. With neutral support and plush cushioning, this fan favorite can be worn for everyday runs, road running, and walking. The thick, grippy outsoles provide traction in wet conditions and on grass and gravel.

Michael Mazzara, the CEO of halfmarathons.net, says the Brooks Ghost 15 is the shoe he recommends the most to beginner runners. “The significant heel-to-toe drop is great for heel strikers,” he explains. “Unless you’re a forefoot striker (not many of us are unless you’re running pretty quickly), you’ll probably like this shoe.”

The Ghost 15 received a Seal of Acceptance from the APMA, which recognizes products that promote good foot health. This shoe is available in a variety of widths – Narrow, Medium, Wide, and Extra Wide – so it can work for a lot of people.

Specs

List Price:	\$140
Drop:	12 millimeters (mm)
Men’s Sizes:	7-15
Women’s Sizes:	5-13

[Buy Men's From Brooks »](#)

Best Budget

ASICS GT-1000 12 »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Impressive value for \$100
- ✓ Mesh upper promotes breathability
- ✓ Thick and durable outsoles
- ✓ Proprietary gel technology boosts shock absorption

CONS:

- ✗ Less suitable for experienced runners
- ✗ Runs narrower than previous model

[Buy Men's From ASICS](#)[Buy Women's From ASICS](#)

The ASICS GT-1000 12 is a budget-friendly shoe that provides neutral support and stability for overpronation (the result of your gait causing the arches of your feet to flatten more than is normal). This model has a redesigned soft mesh upper (the part that covers your foot) to increase breathability.

With thick and durable outsoles, the GT-1000 12 can withstand daily use and provide long-lasting performance. The brand designed this shoe with its trademarked GEL technology in the heel and foam cushioning in the midsole (the layer that provides cushioning, which varies by its thickness) to absorb shock and offer enhanced comfort during impact.

This ASICS model also features a stabilizing system on the inner side of the midsole to help prevent overpronation. Experienced runners may find it difficult to push the pace because of the lack of energy return. That said, these sneakers are a good pick for beginners, and they come at a price that’s hard to beat.

Specs

List Price:	\$100
Drop:	8 mm
Stack Height:	32.5 mm/24.5 mm
Men’s Sizes:	6-16

EXPAND LIST ▾

[Buy Men's From ASICS »](#)

Best for Marathons

Nike Vaporfly 3 »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Designed specifically for long-distance races
- ✓ Extremely lightweight and breathable
- ✓ More stable than previous models
- ✓ Full-length carbon plate for smooth transitions

CONS:

- ✗ Expensive
- ✗ Not meant for everyday runs

[Buy Men's From Amazon](#)[Buy Women's From Amazon](#)

Nike's Vaporfly 3 is the shoe of choice for many marathoners. It has a full-length carbon plate and is one of the lightest shoes you can wear. This updated Vaporfly model is more stable, more cushioned, softer, and roomier than the brand's previous two iterations.

Although it’s a favorite among elite marathon runners, the Vaporfly 3 might not be the best bet for beginners. “These shoes are great if you’re really racing,” explains Mazzara. “If you’re training just to finish a marathon, you probably shouldn’t invest in the Vaporfly 3.”

That said, it’s a great pick if distance is what you’re after. Its foam midsole is lightweight and responsive, providing runners with the comfort and propulsion they need to tackle miles and miles of ground.

Specs

List Price:	\$260
Drop:	8 mm
Men’s Sizes:	6-15
Women’s Sizes:	5-12

[Buy Men's From Amazon »](#)

Most Versatile

Saucony Endorphin Speed 4 »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Durable enough to serve as a daily trainer
- ✓ Excellent race-day shoe
- ✓ Soft and responsive
- ✓ Nylon plate for enhanced stability

CONS:

- ✗ Only available in one width
- ✗ Heavier than Saucony's other Endorphin models

[Buy Men's From Saucony](#)[Buy Women's From Saucony](#)

The Saucony Endorphin Speed 4 is durable and can perform double duty as both a daily trainer and racing shoe. Whether you're doing long runs, moderate training sessions, or "speedwork," the Endorphin Speed 4 can handle it all. Equipped with a supportive yet flexible nylon plate and ample cushioning in the forefoot (the very front of the shoe) and heel, Mazzara says the Endorphin Speed 4 provides a snappy, responsive ride.

Specs

List Price:

\$170

Drop:

8 mm

Stack Height:

36 mm/28 mm

Men's Sizes:

7-15

[EXPAND LIST](#) ▾

[Buy Men's From Saucony »](#)

Best for Recovery

ASICS Gel-Nimbus 26 »



- PROS:

✓ Ideal for recovery runs

✓ Ample cushioning for cloudlike comfort
- CONS:

✗ Not meant for speedwork

✗ Heavier than previous model

[Buy Men's From ASICS](#)

- ✓ Better traction than previous model
- ✓ APMA Seal of Acceptance

Buy Women's From ASICS

The ASICS Gel-Nimbus 26 is a soft running shoe with maximum cushioning, making it ideal for recovery. “You’re going to get a soft, coddled feeling with your foot inside the shoe and during runs,” says Mazzara. “Is it going to be good for track workouts? No. But you can do all your slow running in them – from long runs to recovery runs.”

The Gel-Nimbus 26 is popular among beginner runners as an all-around shoe. For intermediate to advanced runners, the Gel-Nimbus is an excellent option for long slower-tempo runs and easy recovery runs. The cloud cushioning is also very comfortable for [anyone on their feet all day](#) or with foot problems. It has the APMA Seal of Acceptance for promoting good foot health.

Specs

List Price:	\$160
Drop:	8 mm
Men’s Sizes:	6-16
Women’s Sizes:	5-13

Buy Men's From ASICS »

Best for Cross-Training

Nike Metcon 9 AMP »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Versatile gym shoe
- ✓ Wider toe box for enhanced comfort
- ✓ Improved Hyperlift plate and rubber wrap offer suitable stability and support for heavy lifting
- ✓ Lightweight and breathable

CONS:

- ✗ Too clunky for speedwork
- ✗ May require break-in period

[Buy Men's From Amazon](#)[Buy Women's From Amazon](#)

The Nike Metcon 9 AMP is the top-selling gym training shoe for good reason. It can do just about anything you need it to in the gym. It's ideal for [weightlifting](#), CrossFit, functional movements, and high-intensity workouts. You can even run in the Metcon 9, but serious runners will likely find it too stiff and clunky.

The upper is constructed with synthetic materials and mesh to provide durability, support, and breathability. The larger Hyperlift plate (plastic heel insert) enhances stability, and there’s enough cushioning to support high-impact exercises. This model also has a wider toe box than the previous version for a roomier and more comfortable fit.

Specs

List Price:	\$150
Drop:	4 mm
Men’s Sizes:	6-15
Women’s Sizes:	5-15

[Buy Men's From Amazon »](#)

Best for Flat Feet

New Balance Fresh Foam X 860v13 »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Provides stability for flat feet
- ✓ APMA Seal of Acceptance
- ✓ Breathable mesh upper
- ✓ Thick and durable outsole

CONS:

- ✗ Short tongue
- ✗ On the heavy side

[Buy Men's From Amazon](#)[Buy Women's From Amazon](#)

The New Balance Fresh Foam X 860v13 is a moderate-stability shoe that's ideal for runners with flat feet. Embroidered lines in the midfoot work with a firm medial post (the wedge above the ankle bone) to help prevent overpronation and collapsing arches. The midsole features the brand's soft Fresh Foam X cushioning, which delivers a balance of comfort and bounce. The shoe's upper is made of mesh to promote breathability. Notably, this shoe received the APMA Seal of Acceptance for promoting good foot health.

Specs

List Price:	\$139.99
Drop:	10 mm
Men's Sizes:	7-16
Women's Sizes:	5-13

[Buy Men's From Amazon »](#)

Best for Wide Feet

New Balance Fresh Foam X 880v14 »



- PROS:

 - ✓ Spacious toe box
- CONS:

 - ✗ Not the best for speed

[Buy Men's From New Balance](#)

- ✓

Available in four widths
- ✓

APMA Seal of Acceptance
- ✓

Lightweight
- ✗

Some runners may prefer more support

Buy Women's From New Balance

“For wide feet, I will almost always opt for a New Balance – not only do they generally have the most width options, but they run wide to begin with, so their wides are really wide,” explains Gabrielle Hondorp, who tests and reviews running gear for halfmarathons.net. “The [New Balance Fresh Foam X] 880[v14] is a more affordable, mid-cushion model that still uses Fresh Foam X, and has a light, snappy feel.”

This shoe features a roomy toe box and comes in an extra-wide width, and its neutral support makes it a good choice for an everyday running shoe. Additionally, it received a Seal of Acceptance from the APMA, which means a panel of podiatrists deemed it suitable for foot health.

Specs

List Price:	\$139.99
Drop:	8 mm
Men’s Sizes:	7-16
Women’s Sizes:	5-12

Buy Men's From New Balance »

Best for Plantar Fasciitis

Brooks Glycerin GTS 21 »

**PROS:**

- ✓ GuideRails technology for support
- ✓ Extra cushioning
- ✓ Breathable knit upper

CONS:

- ✗ Heavier
- ✗ Runs small

[Buy Men's From Brooks](#)[Buy Women's From Brooks](#)

If you have [plantar fasciitis](#), Mazzara says you should look for a shoe that provides notable cushioning, arch support, and heel stability. The shoe he most recommends for runners with plantar fasciitis is the Brooks Glycerin GTS 21. “The Glycerin GTS 21 has a wider midsole base for stability, an above-average cushioned midsole, and the Brooks GuideRails system to offer structural support,” he explains. “It’s a heavier shoe, but sometimes heavier is better when it comes to stability.”

Steve Lemig, an avid runner who oversees the communications and marketing at Road Runner Sports (RRS), is also a fan of the Brooks Glycerin GTS 21. However, he adds that people with arch and heel pain like plantar

fascia should look into getting custom [insoles](#), explaining “Every foot is unique, so there’s no one shoe out there that’s going to fit everyone and solve all your foot pain problems.”

Specs

List Price:	\$160
Drop:	10 mm
Men’s Sizes:	7-15
Women’s Sizes:	5-12

[Buy Men's From Brooks »](#)

The Bottom Line

Comfort and fit, support, cushioning, and individual biomechanics are all important factors to consider when shopping for running shoes. The best running shoes are the ones that work for you. That being said, the Brooks Ghost 15 is our top choice. It is comfortable and durable enough for daily use, provides the right amount of cushioning and support, and works for just about anyone who heel strikes. There’s a reason it’s one of the bestselling running shoes.

Things To Consider When Buying Running Shoes

Size and Fit: When choosing a running shoe, make sure it’s wide enough and that it doesn’t cramp your toes. Aim for at least a thumb’s width of space between your longest toe and the end of your shoe. Running shoes are typically a half or full size

bigger than your regular shoes. Walk around in running shoes to ensure the heel fits snugly and your foot doesn't slip out of the shoe. We recommend visiting a local running shop that has a [treadmill](#) so you can try on and run in different brands and models.

Material: Look for a running shoe with a lightweight, breathable upper, such as one made from knit mesh fabric. Derek Roach, the owner of Flow Feet Orthopedic Shoes, says a cushioned midsole helps absorb shock as your feet hit the ground when running. Common cushioned midsole materials are ethylene-vinyl acetate (EVA) and polyurethane.

Weight: While lightweight running shoes can reduce fatigue, Roach says they may offer less cushioning and support. Find the best balance between cushioning and support and the weight of a shoe for your running style and distance. EVA midsoles can help keep the shoe lightweight while still offering exceptional cushioning.

Support: The support necessary for your feet is highly individual. If you have low to flat arches and tend to overpronate when running, consider a shoe with stability features to help prevent excessive inward rolling of your feet. On the flip side, people with high arches usually need less support and should choose a neutral shoe.

Cushioning: The amount of cushioning you need in your running shoes will depend on your style of running, the surface, and the distance. If you're running on hard surfaces like concrete or asphalt, more cushioning can help absorb shock. Likewise, if you're putting tons of miles on your feet, you'll benefit from a maximum amount of cushioning.

However, some runners find that soft cushioning doesn't provide enough responsiveness from the shoe. In that case, look for responsive cushioning to reduce fatigue and improve your stride. If you're running shorter distances or looking for a fast race-day shoe, you'll want to look at shoes with a little less cushioning.

Traction: Traction will largely depend on your surface. If you mainly run on [rocky or technical trails](#), you'll want a [trail running](#) shoe with lugs (a protruding tread). Some running shoes are better suited for the road, while others might provide better traction on gravel and cinder tracks.

How We Chose the Best Running Shoes

To compile our list of the best running shoes, we considered customer reviews and spoke to the following running coaches, gear testers, retail owners, and avid runners for their recommendations: Michael Mazzara, CEO of [halfmarathons.net](#), the largest online directory for half marathons in the United States; [Gabrielle Hondorp](#), who spent six years in running retail before joining Runner's World as a tester and reviewer of running gear; Steve Lemig, who oversees communications and marketing at [RRS](#); and Derek Roach, owner of [Flow Feet Orthopedic Shoes](#), an orthopedic and comfort shoe company. This list started with more than 50 potential pairs of running shoes for inclusion, and the author ultimately narrowed it down to the select pairs featured above.

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At U.S. News & World Report's 360 Reviews, our editors and contributing writers have years of experience reviewing, testing, and analyzing products. The author of this piece, [Melissa Boufounos](#), is a freelance writer specializing in nutrition, health, and fitness. She's a certified holistic nutritionist and athlete who has completed more than 70 obstacle courses, trails, and road races. As a runner, Melissa personally understands the importance of high-quality running shoes. Her work can be found in Mindbodygreen and Clean Plates, among other wellness publications. [Marlo Jappen Porto](#), who edited this piece, is a home goods editor at 360 Reviews, specializing in fitness content.

FAQ

How can running shoes help improve my performance?



How long do running shoes last?



What type of running shoe is best for long distances?



What's an ideal heel-to-toe drop for running shoes?



About Our Team



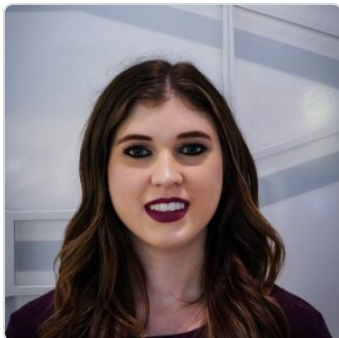
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Melissa Boufounos is a freelance nutrition and fitness writer, a certified holistic nutritionist, and a lifelong athlete. She's passionate about helping people achieve optimal health and performance. Boufounos' work has been published by Mindbodygreen, Clean Plates, OptiMYz Magazine, and The Epoch Times.

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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.

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