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## Best Running Socks of 2024

By [Melissa Boufounos, Certified Holistic Nutritionist \(CHN\)](#)

☒ Reviewed by [Marlo Jappen Porto](#)

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Running socks are designed to keep your feet dry, comfortable, and blister-free for mile after mile. Whether you're a seasoned marathoner or just getting into running, the right pair can improve your performance and make your experience more pleasant.

Generally, look for running socks made with moisture-wicking and breathable fabrics and ensure they fit snugly, but height and cushioning levels come down to personal preference. We've compiled a list of the best running socks based on our research and advice from two experts to help you find the right pair for your needs.

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## Best Overall

**Balega Hidden Comfort No-Show Tab »**



**PROS:**

- ✓ Plush cushioning
- ✓ Nonslip features
- ✓ Moisture-wicking
- ✓ Seamless, reinforced toe

**CONS:**

- ✗ No ankle coverage
- ✗ No women's- and men's-specific fits

[Buy From Amazon](#)

The Balega Hidden Comfort, the brand’s most plush and cushioned model, is popular among runners. “They’re comfortable and keep your feet dry, which is what you want in a running sock,” says Mike Julom, American Council on Exercise (ACE) certified personal trainer, CrossFit athlete, and founder of thisiswhyimfit.com. He adds, “It has plush cushioning underfoot without being too bulky, excellent moisture management to keep feet dry, and a deep heel pocket that prevents the sock from shifting. The materials provide durability and comfort, and it has a seamless toe to avoid irritation.”

Since these socks have a no-show design, they’re not ideal for runners who want ankle coverage. On the plus side, this pair’s high heel tab keeps the socks from slipping during your run.

Specs

List Price:	\$16
Materials:	84% Drynamix recycled polyester, 14% nylon, 2% elastane
Height(s):	No-show
Cushioning Level:	High

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[Buy From Amazon »](#)

Best Budget

Merrell Trail Runner Light Crew Sock »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Affordable
- ✓ Deep heel pocket helps them stay in place
- ✓ Lightweight and thin
- ✓ Mesh zones for breathability

**CONS:**

- ✗ Less cushioned
- ✗ Limited sizes

[Buy From Merrell](#)

The Merrell Trail Runner Light Crew Sock comes with an affordable price tag, and it's often on sale, too. These nylon socks are thin, stretchy, and durable. Although nylon isn't typically a very breathable fabric, this pair is lightweight with mesh zones for added breathability. For a secure fit, these crew-length socks feature deep heel pockets. The heel, toe, and sole are reinforced to prevent blisters. Plus, the zoned arch support is designed to reduce fatigue, which is a helpful feature for longer runs.

## Specs

List Price:

\$15

Materials:

97% recycled nylon, 3% spandex

Height(s):

Crew

Cushioning Level:

Midweight

[EXPAND LIST](#) ▾

[Buy From Merrell](#) »

Best for Long-Distance Running

Features Elite Light Cushion No-Show »



- PROS:

✓ Targeted compression and arch support

✓ Durable
- CONS:

✗ No ankle coverage

✗ Not as cushioned as other options

[Buy From Amazon](#)

- ✔ Dedicated left and right fits
- ✔ No toe seam
- ✔ Lifetime guarantee

These Features Elite Light Cushion No-Show socks offer arch support and targeted [compression](#), making them suitable for longer runs. These socks are made with breathable, moisture-wicking fabric to keep your feet comfortable.

Michael Mazzara, CEO of halfmarathons.net, recommends Features socks for a “just right” fit: “The construction is exceptional – they have no toe seam, strong arch support construction, and the compression is best-in-class and supports long run foot health.”

Features designs its socks with dedicated left- and right-foot fits to properly conform to the structure of your feet and reduce blisters. Committed to quality, the brand backs its socks with a lifetime guarantee.

### Specs

List Price:	\$18
Materials:	96% nylon, 4% spandex
Height(s):	No-show
Cushioning Level:	Light

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[Buy From Amazon](#) »

### Best for Everyday Running

## Darn Tough Vertex No-Show Tab Ultra-Light C...



### PROS:

- ✓ Lightweight yet durable
- ✓ Very soft cushioning
- ✓ Merino wool blend wicks away moisture

### CONS:

- ✗ No ankle coverage
- ✗ Limited sizes

[Buy From Amazon](#)

The Darn Tough Vertex No-Show Tab Ultra-Light Cushion is a low-profile running sock made from a merino wool blend. Merino wool helps manage moisture, temperature, and odor. Plus, it dries very quickly. This pair is very lightweight, making them great for everyday use. Cushioned heel tabs offer protection and comfort, while the pair's arch support helps reduce foot fatigue. Darn Tough socks are well known for their durability and come with a lifetime guarantee.

## Specs



List Price:	\$18
Materials:	48% nylon, 48% merino wool, 4% lycra spandex
Height(s):	No-show
Cushioning Level:	High

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[Buy From Amazon »](#)

Best for Cushioning

Swiftwick Maxus Zero Tab »




PROS:

- ✓ Eco-friendly plush cushioning
- ✓ Breathable knit upper

CONS:

- ✗ No women's- and men's-specific fits
- ✗ No crew-height version

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-  Relaxed compression  
for secure fit

With a thick, plush footbed, the Swiftwick Maxus Zero Tab is ideal for those who prefer maximum cushioning. The footbed is made from recycled fibers, which is a change in construction from the brand’s previous models. However, professional reviewers say these eco-friendly socks still deliver cloudlike comfort and softness.

A microtab at the heel keeps your foot from rubbing against the back of your shoe, preventing blisters. Additionally, these Swiftwick socks feature seamless toes to eliminate friction, breathable uppers to keep your feet cool, and arch band support to help keep them in place. They’re available in multiple colors, including neutrals, bolds, and brights.

Specs

List Price:	\$16.99
Materials:	52% recycled polyester, 44% nylon, 4% spandex
Height(s):	Just above ankle
Cushioning Level:	High

EXPAND LIST ▾

[Buy From Amazon »](#)

Best for Blister Prevention

Balega Blister Resist No-Show Socks »

**PROS:**

- ✓ Elastic grip and high heel tab prevent slipping
- ✓ Proprietary, moisture-wicking Drynamix keeps feet dry and cool
- ✓ Seamless toe
- ✓ Comes in other cuff heights

**CONS:**

- ✗ No women's- and men's-specific fits
- ✗ Many colors/sizes frequently out of stock

[Buy From Amazon](#)

The Balega Blister Resist No-Show Tab Socks stand out for blister prevention. “What sets them apart is their blend of natural mohair and synthetic Drynamix, which works to keep your feet cool and dry, greatly reducing the chance of blisters,” explains Julom.

He adds, “The mohair has a unique way of managing moisture and temperature, paired with Balega's high-tech fibers, you get a sock that's not just soft but really effective at preventing those painful rubs and hot spots. Plus, they have a seamless toe and extra-deep heel pocket to make sure they

stay in place because a sock that doesn't move means less friction and fewer blisters.”

Specs

List Price:

\$20

Materials:

34% nylon, 32% Drynamix recycled polyester, 32% mohair wool, 2% elastane

Height(s):

No-show

Cushioning Level:

Ultra-high

EXPAND LIST ▾

[Buy From Amazon »](#)

Best for Cold Weather

Smartwool Run Cold Weather Crew Socks »



PROS:

- ✓ Insulating and moisture-wicking merino wool
- ✓ Crew-length offers extra warmth
- ✓ Seamless toe
- ✓ Offers women’s-specific fit

CONS:

- ✗ On the pricier side
- ✗ Only two colors

Buy From Amazon

Smartwool is known for its durable ski, running, and technical hiking socks. The Run Cold Weather Crew Socks feature a blend of merino wool, which is moisture-wicking yet insulating. To further boost breathability and wick away sweat, the sock is designed with mesh zones. Its crew height covers your ankles and lower calves, delivering extra warmth when [cold-weather running](#). While these socks have targeted cushioning, reviewers say they’re not bulky. Additionally, this pair has seamless toes for comfort and is available in a women’s-specific fit.

Specs

List Price:	\$23
Materials:	56% merino wool, 13% nylon, 28% recycled nylon, 3% elastane
Height(s):	Crew
Cushioning Level:	Targeted

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Buy From Amazon »

## Best for Trail Running

### Injinji Outdoor Midweight Crew Wool »



#### PROS:

- ✓ Designed for rugged trails
- ✓ Five-toe design for better balance
- ✓ Sweat-wicking
- ✓ Mesh top
- ✓ Odor-resistant

#### CONS:

- ✗ Band around calf might be too tight for some
- ✗ Line-drying recommended

[Buy From Injinji](#)

Julom says the Injinji Outdoor Midweight Crew Wool socks are his top choice for trail running. “Their unique toe-sock design allows your toes to spread naturally and grip inside your shoe, providing better balance and reducing the risk of blisters between toes, which is common in trail running,” he explains. The midweight cushioning absorbs impact without being too bulky, and the

merino wool helps manage moisture, temperature, and odor effectively. Plus, the crew length is ideal for keeping dirt and debris out.

Specs

List Price:

\$23

Materials:

75% merino wool, 22% nylon, 3% Lycra

Height(s):

Crew

Cushioning Level:

Midweight

[EXPAND LIST](#) ▾

[Buy From Injinji](#) »

The Bottom Line

Comfort and fit, height, material, and cushioning are all important factors to consider when shopping for running socks. With its plush cushioning and track record for comfort and durability, the Balega Hidden Comfort No-Show Tab socks are our top choice. These socks are moisture-wicking to keep you dry and comfortable during runs, and they have nonslip features so you won't have to worry about them falling down.

Things To Consider When Buying Running Socks

**Size and Fit:** When choosing a pair of running socks, ensure the size aligns with your shoe size for a snug fit. If there's any bunching fabric or the sock is slipping down your foot, it can lead to blisters. Also, avoid socks that are too tight, as they can restrict circulation.

**Height:** Height depends on personal preference and running conditions. No-show or ankle socks provide a clean look and are ideal in warmer weather. Crew-height socks can protect your ankles from dirt and debris if you're trail running and provide extra warmth in colder conditions.

**Material:** The material might be one of the most important factors to consider when buying running socks. Synthetic blends like polyester, nylon, and spandex are popular for their moisture-wicking and quick-drying properties. Merino wool is excellent for temperature regulation and natural odor resistance, making it versatile for a wide range of conditions. A good rule of thumb when choosing running socks is to avoid cotton since it absorbs moisture, which can lead to blisters.

**Cushioning:** Cushioning comes down to personal preference. Thick cushioning is helpful for impact absorption, especially on long runs or for runners with a heavier stride. Socks with less cushioning will be thinner and more responsive if you want a closer feel to the ground.

## How We Chose the Best Running Socks

To compile our list of the best running socks, we consulted Mike Julom, an ACE-certified personal trainer, CrossFit athlete, and founder of [thisiswhyimfit.com](https://thisiswhyimfit.com). He offered insights into his favorite running socks and what to consider when buying them. We also spoke with Michael Mazzara, CEO of [halfmarathons.net](https://halfmarathons.net), the largest online directory for half marathons in the United States. We also analyzed some of the most popular and well-reviewed running socks available. We narrowed down our selections based on durability, customer reviews, and our experts' experiences with these running socks.

### WHY SHOULD YOU TRUST US?

Our editors and contributing writers have years of experience reviewing, testing, and analyzing products. The author of this piece, [Melissa Boufounos](#), is a writer specializing in nutrition, health, and fitness. Notably, she's a certified holistic nutritionist and an athlete who has run in more than 70 trail, road, and obstacle-



course races. Her work has appeared in Mindbodygreen and Clean Plates, among other wellness publications.

## FAQ

**What's the difference between running socks and compression socks?**

+

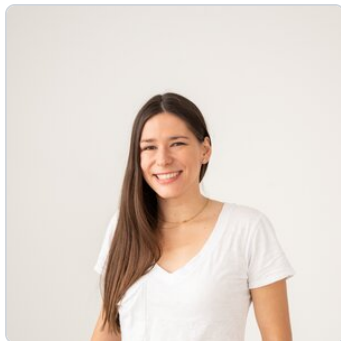
**What type of running socks are the most breathable?**

+

**What are the benefits of wearing running socks?**

+

## About Our Team



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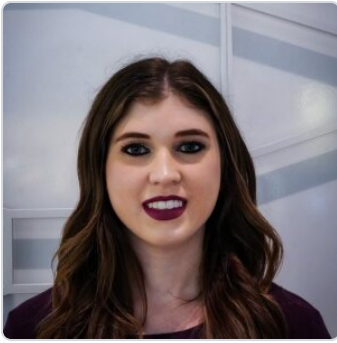
Melissa Boufounos is a freelance nutrition and fitness writer, a certified holistic nutritionist, and a lifelong athlete. She's passionate about helping people achieve optimal health and performance. Boufounos' work has been published by Mindbodygreen, Clean Plates, OptiMYz Magazine, and The Epoch Times.

[Read more](#)

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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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