



## All-Terrain Vehicles

Grip and support on any dirt, at any distance

BY LISA JHUNG AND CORY SMITH

### GEAR OF THE YEAR

**Brooks Divide** \$100

With the all-new Divide, Brooks proves that quality running shoes don't have to break the bank. Head-to-head against kids with stellar reputations, this trail all-rounder triumphed. It features the same midsole as Brooks's bestselling Ghost: a biodegradable EVA compound that's remarkably bouncy and smooth, exceptional for leisurely runs at any distance. The sticky rubber outsole and shallow, spaced-out lugs offer excellent grip on mild, buffed-out trails without feeling knobby on concrete. The soft upper doesn't lock down or protect feet as much as more aggressive models like Brooks's Cascadia, so this isn't our go-to shoe for technical descents or up-tempo days. But for those who run on both pavement and smooth singletrack, these offered the best performance-to-value ratio in our test. 10.3 oz (men's, pictured) / 9.2 oz (women's); 8-mm drop



**BEST FOR GOING FAST****On Running Cloudventure Peak \$150**

The lightest shoe in our test feels even more feathery on the foot than it measures on the scale. Chalk that up to a wispy yet secure rip-stop-nylon upper that wraps an inner bootie, holding your foot without adding bulk. Deep channels up the center of the outsole maximize flexibility and minimize weight, while a snug midfoot and textured outsole make for a nimble ride. On's trademark rubber-coated foam pods absorb impact without compromising rebound. The Cloudventure Peak isn't particularly supportive, but efficient runners felt fast wearing it. 9.2 oz (men's) / 7.4 oz (women's, pictured); 4 mm drop

**BEST FOR LONG DISTANCES****La Sportiva Jackal \$140**

La Sportiva is known for producing shoes with a narrow fit. The Jackal broadens the lineup. Literally: It's perhaps the brand's most wide-foot-friendly design to date. Comfortable and roomy, with a 25-millimeter heel and a dual-density midsole that combines soft, compression-molded EVA foam with a firm PU insert, this shoe is cushioned enough for the long haul yet equally suitable for short, feet outings. As one tester summarized, "It's light on the foot and easy to maneuver around in technical terrain without feeling clunky." 10.5 oz (men's) / 8.8 oz (women's, pictured); 7 mm drop

**BEST ON MOUNTAIN TRAILS****Dynafit Feline SL \$130**

The second iteration of Dynafit's bestselling, performance-oriented grip master is perfectly suited to charging hard on short-to-medium-distance runs in alpine terrain. The completely redesigned Feline SL has top-notch wet and dry grip, courtesy of outsole rubber developed by Dynafit's sister company, Pomoca. Our wide-footed testers found the last a bit narrow, but everyone loved the aggressive 4.5-millimeter multidirectional lugs, which kept us at ease in rocky no-fall zones. The tough nylon upper and TPU toe guard offer tanklike protection. 10.2 oz (men's) / 8.8 oz (women's, pictured); 8 mm drop



#### **BEST FOR LONG, TECHNICAL RUNS**

##### **Arc'teryx Norvan LD 2 \$160**

When a shoe sheds nearly 15 percent of its weight without sacrificing performance, we take notice. In Arc'teryx's case, credit Litebase, a Vibram outsole that's up to 50 percent thinner than the competition, with similar grip and durability. A single-layer polyester mesh upper and microfiber heel lining led one of our testers to declare the Norvan LD "one of the most comfortable shoes I've ever worn." The modest 27-millimeter heel keeps you close to the ground for incredible stability over rough and uneven terrain. Also available in a Gore-Tex version, 9.2 oz (men's, pictured) / 7.8 oz (women's); 9 mm drop

#### **BEST IN VARIABLE TERRAIN**

##### **Salomon Sense Ride 3 \$120**

Like its predecessors, the Sense Ride 3 has a superb cush-to-weight ratio that supports both distance and agility. But it also has a new midsole that combines lively foam with a softer, more cushioned one. Testers found it "smooth" and "squishy." The Sense Ride 3 also gets a new mesh upper with durable one-pull Kevlar laces, which kept our feet secure on off-camber terrain. A thin, decoupled rock plate protects from underfoot jabs while allowing flexibility. And the four-millimeter multidirectional lugs grip rugged trails and run smooth on mellow dirt, 9.9 oz (men's, pictured) / 8.3 oz (women's); 8 mm drop

#### **BEST CUSTOM TRAINER**

##### **Tecnica Origin \$170**

The Origin is the most customizable running shoe to date. A store employee (or a website) uses metrics like weight, running mechanics, and monthly mileage to match you with a men's or women's version of either the less cushioned LT or the more cushioned XT. A heat-molding process then conforms the shoe to the shape of your heel and arch. The downside: custom molding is available only through select retailers. Personalization aside, the Origin handles rugged terrain with aplomb, and it runs and flexes smoothly on gentle trails, too, 10.8-11 oz (men's, pictured) / 9.2-9.4 oz (women's); 9 mm drop



## Easy Street

Kicks to sustain your toughest blacktop efforts  
BY LISA JHUNG AND CORY SMITH

### Altra Provision 4 \$130

The best stability shoes shed weight and run smooth without a lot of extra foam and plastic, but they're usually clunkier than their neutral counterparts. Altra's new Provision 4 changes that. What's unique: a panel of laminated, perforated (read: breathable) foam that runs underneath the entire footbed and connects to a trio of TPU straps that wrap around the arch to the laces on the medial side. When your foot rolls inward, the straps catch and support it. When you're not pronating, they're barely noticeable and the shoe runs neutral. Testers said the Provision feels "remarkably smooth" with an impressive balance of cushion and flex. That engage-as-needed support system makes for an exceptionally comfortable ride. It's a great choice for neutral runners whose feet collapse inward when they're tired and for chronic pronators who've had their fill of bulky shoes. 10.2 oz (men's) / 8.3 oz (women's, pictured); zero drop



**BEST FOR UP-TEMPO DAYS****Hoka One One Mach 3** \$140

The original Mach wowed us with its peppy but forgiving ride, winning our 2018 Gear of the Year award. Two iterations later, it's better than ever. Just don't expect the ultra-plush midsole that Hoka is famous for. This mid-fat, low-stack-height speedster is perhaps Hok a'afi most-ridings hoe—not necessarily a bad thing. "It's got pop and bounce to it, ideal for higher-paced runs," a tester said. The improved knit upper, now engineered for increased support without bulk, is simple and unobtrusive, and it securely locks in the foot. Testers' biggest complaint? The forefoot can feel a little restrictive. 8.6 oz (men's) / 7.1 oz (women's, pictured); 5 mm drop

**BEST LIGHT STABILITY SHOE****Nike React Infinity Run** \$160

With its uncharacteristically cushioned feel, stable shape, and subtle support, the React Infinity appeals equally to neutral- and stability-shoe lovers, and it quickly became our go-to trainer for everything but speed runs. Underfoot, it features Nike's most durable foam in an hourglass footprint that flares out at the forefoot and heel, offering exceptional comfort and stability that's not overbearing. That's bolstered by a thin TPU strip encompassing the rear foot and a semi-firm heel counter to keep everything in place. Be forewarned: despite appearances, the React Infinity isn't a particularly fast shoe. 10.3 oz (men's) / 8 oz (women's, pictured); 9 mm drop

**BEST FOR DATA HOUNDS****Under Armour Hovr Machina** \$150

From the propulsive forefoot plate, made of a carbon-filled thermoplastic polymer, to the Bluetooth-enabled chip, which allows UA's app to send you real-time coaching feedback based on stride mechanics, the all-new Hovr Machina had our tech-minded testers head over heels in love. Under Armour's premium midsole uses a proprietary foam infused with a synthetic material called olefin; the result is so energetic that we felt like we were indeed above the concrete. Despite the slightly stiff mesh upper, the Machina is a top-performing everyday training shoe with a techy twist. 10.4 oz (men's) / 8.7 oz (women's, pictured); 8 mm drop





#### **BEST FOR VARIABLE TRAINING**

##### **Salomon Sonic 3 Balance** \$130

Long distance, tempo, even dirt—this shoe can do it all. Its new midsole, made up of a high-rebound foam atop a more cushioned layer, is meant to reduce vibration and increase shock absorption. The combination runs a little firm, which we actually liked. “You don’t worry about sinking in and losing energy,” one tester said. Runners with feet of all shapes raved about the streamlined mesh upper’s fit and comfort. Those factors, plus a full-rubber outsole, means that the Sonic 3 can handle mild trails, too. 8.9 oz (men’s, pictured) / 7.6 oz (women’s); 8 mm drop

#### **MOST COMFORTABLE**

##### **Skechers Gorun Maxroad 4 Hyper** \$130

Skechers’ Hyper Burst cushioning, which is resilient and durable, thanks to a special CO<sub>2</sub>-heating process, helped the brand win Gear of the Year in 2019. Now it’s back, this time in a distance shoe that offers an amazing cush-to-weight ratio. We marveled at how the Maxroad seemed to render pavement and concrete less jarring. “Bouncy!” “Springy!” testers exclaimed. It’s also flexible, with durable outsole rubber only on parts of the shoe that make contact with the ground, like the heel and toe, while the rest is recessed, exposed midsole. The stretchy knit upper and socklike heel collar proved comfy, if a bit loose on narrow feet, so we’d limit these to straight-forward road runs. 8.4 oz (men’s, pictured) / 6.3 oz (women’s); 6 mm drop

#### **BEST FOR SPEED RUNS**

##### **New Balance Fresh Foam Tempo** \$110

The Tempo features one of our favorite New Balance midsoles, Fresh Foam, which uses small convex and concave hexagons to offer a soft, shock-absorbing, yet springy ride. Testers raved that it ran “super fast but didn’t feel like a racing flat, because of the great cushioning.” (The Tempo offers more flexibility and affords better ground-feel than the also speedy Hoka.) Bootie construction and embroidered stitching on the breathable upper around the midfoot lock you in for further feet-footedness. This will be our go-to summer speed trainer. 9.6 oz (men’s, pictured) / 8.4 oz (women’s); 6 mm drop