

### Best Buy

A high value, high quality shoe

### Best Update

A significant improvement of an existing model

### Blown Rubber

A rubber outsole compound which is expanded or mixed with air to be lighter in weight and cushier. It is less durable than carbon rubber.

### Carbon Rubber

A solid rubber with a carbon additive to increase durability. It is harder and heavier than blown rubber. Many outsoles use carbon rubber in high wear areas (such as rearfoot) and blown rubber in midfoot and forefoot.

### Cushioned Shoe

Shoes with maximum midsole cushioning and minimum medial stability. For biomechanically efficient runners who don't pronate abnormally.

### EVA

Ethylene Vinyl Acetate. The most common midsole foam used in running shoes.

### Editor's Choice

The outstanding new shoe in a category.

### Flex Grooves

Notches cut into the outsole to improve forefoot flexibility. Look for single or multiple grooves in the forefoot outsole of most shoes, allowing the foot to roll more naturally at toe-off. To make sure the shoe flexes properly, try flexing it with your hands. It should flex in the forefoot.

### Heel Counter

A firm, usually reinforced plastic cup within the upper that surrounds the heel and prevents excessive rearfoot motion. Look for a snug yet comfortable fit. Too loose a fit can cause blisters on your heels. If you require extra stability, look for a stiff heel counter or an external heel counter or ring that wraps around the outside of the heel.

### Heel Height

The height the foot rests on top of the midsole and outsole. Look for heel heights that match your cushioning needs. If you are a bigger runner, chances are you're more of a heel-striker and want more midsole foam under the heel, so you need a greater heel height. Faster runners tend to strike more in the midfoot and need a lower heel.

### Heel Notch

Look for a slight depression cut into a shoe's heel collar to reduce Achilles tendon irritation and provide a more secure heel fit.

### Laces

Look for cotton laces that aren't too long and slippery. If they are, cut them and use lace locks.

**Last**

A shaped piece of wood or metal on which the shoe is built. The shape of the last determines the shape of the shoe. Shoes are made in three basic shapes: straight, curved and semi-curved, but all three shapes vary from company to company as each company has its own lasts.

**Lateral**

Refers to the outer edge of a shoe.

**Medial Post**

Firmer density of midsole material added to the inner side of the shoe. A post is designed to reduce overpronation.

**Medial**

Referring to the inner side (or arch side) of a shoe.

**Midsole**

The cushioning foam. It's the light colored layer of foam between the upper and the outsole. Look for one of two midsole foams--polyurethane or EVA. Polyurethane is denser, heavier and more durable than EVA, which has a softer, cushier feel. Generally, bigger runners do well with polyurethane midsoles. EVA is more common because of its lightness and more cushioned feel.

**Motion Control Shoe**

A shoe which has certain materials and devices that reduces excessive inward foot motion (overpronation) during the gait cycle.

**Motion control**

The ability of a shoe to limit overpronation.

**Neutral**

A shoe that does not reduce overpronation.

**Outsole**

The material, usually made of hard carbon rubber