



## How to Buy the Best Walking Shoes

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### What to Know Before You Buy

It's easy to get seduced by the bells and whistles. Surely, features like "air cushioning" will make you faster, more fit, more agile, more something. Not so, says New York City podiatrist James Korponay, D.P.M. He believes all they contribute to is the price. Here are some other things to consider:

- If you have a high arch, look for a thick midsole (for extra cushioning); if you're flat-footed, go for a shoe that's firm around the heel (for more structure and stability).

The shoe should be as wide as or slightly wider than your foot to ensure an even distribution of weight.

You should be able to easily bend the shoe's forefoot. This means it's a good, flexible shoe for walking.

### Your Perfect Sole Mate

You could log the equivalent of a five-mile power walk trying to find walking shoes that fit your needs as well as your feet. To help you out, the Good Housekeeping Research Institute enlisted a team of walkers to road-test nine styles. After clocking a combined total of almost 96 hours, they evaluated each for fit, comfort, cushioning, quality, and style. Our top picks:

#### 1. Brooks Sports — Defyance \$90

What's to love: Everything — fit, support, comfort, cushioning.

Tester's take: "The cushioning was like shock absorbers."

#### 2. Rykä — Moira \$70

What's to love: All the things that matter — quality, support, comfort — as well as one that shouldn't, i.e., the cool gold-satin accents.

Tester's take: "They look more like shoes, less like sneakers."

#### 3. Asics — Gel Kayano Walker 7 \$100

What's to love: The cushioning, especially at the pressure points.

Tester's take: "They're lightweight, but they also provide plenty of support and comfort."

4. Saucony — Grid Instep RT \$60

What's to love: The comfiness.

Tester's take: "I felt like I was wearing slippers."

5. Nike — Air Miler Walk+ \$85

What's to love: The overall quality, and the roominess in the mesh-top toe box.

Tester's take: "Super lightweight — lots of ventilation."