

Sock it to em

SOCK TIPS: It never hurts to pay attention to the care instructions. A tumble dryer can turn a brand new pair of expensive socks into something that would only fit a three year old. Having said that, no one is really going to iron their socks, even if the care instructions say so ... are they?

SOCKS are such a regular everyday item that most of us rarely give them much thought, except when our current socks get too many holes and it's time for some new ones. Socks are a runner's best friend: they help prevent blisters and stop your shoes from smelling too much. If you believe some of the marketing hype, they can also make you run faster and improve your love life. This issue we've reviewed a selection of socks from various manufacturers, available off the shelf at your local sports shop or specialist running store.

SOCK TECHNOLOGY: The latest socks are equipped with all sorts of features to make your run more comfortable. One of the most significant changes to socks in recent years has been the use of anatomical designs. Leaps ahead of the old tube style socks, a pair of anatomical socks features a sock cut specifically for the left and right foot. This allows targeted placement of cushioning, padding and ventilation.



Adidas Sports Ankle Sock \$10
Available in both men's and women's colours and sizes, the Adidas Sports Ankle Sock is a budget everyday sports sock, made from a cotton elastane blend. The Adidas Sports Ankle Sock features an athletic ankle cut with thick, soft cushioning that stands up well to regular use.



Brooks Beast Sock \$25
Slightly thinner than the Brooks Adrenaline GTS Ped Sock, the Brooks Beast Sock is designed for runners with lower arches. The Brooks Beast Sock features a deep toe box, is fully cushioned from heel to toe, and is cut well above the ankle to help prevent sock invasions. The firm fit is both comfortable and breathable.



New Balance Sports Sock \$12
Featuring Coolmax fabric and breathable mesh inserts, the New Balance Sports Sock is a medium thickness sock with excellent breathability. Extra padding is provided around the toe box and the low ankle cuff is firmly elasticised. Available in a variety of colours, in both men and women's styles and sizes.



Asics Kayano 1/4 Sock \$30
The Asics Kayano 1/4 Sock is a snug fitting, medium thickness, anatomically designed running sock. High density pile cushioning runs the length of the sole, with further padding around the heel area and toe box, and the toe seam has been relocated to prevent abrasion. These features are also available in the shorter length Asics Kayano Ped Sock.



Asics Lyte II Low Cut Sock \$17
The Asics Lyte II Low Cut Sock is a super thin, lightweight sock that is an ideal companion for extra-light racing shoes. Although the sock may appear too small before putting it on, it stretches well and an articulated arch band helps keep the sock in place. Mesh ventilation helps keep your feet cool and wicks away moisture, while heel grips prevent the sock from slipping and sliding inside the shoe. These features are also available in the longer Asics Lyte II Quarter Sock.



Nike Anatomical Running Sock \$19
The Nike Anatomical Running Sock is a thin, tightly fitted sock with reinforcing around the heel and toe area for extra durability and blister protection. The DryFit material helps keep feet dry and cool, and the added arch support makes this sock feel like a second skin.



Nike Ergonomic Running Cushioned Ped Sock \$17
The Nike Ergonomic Running Cushioned Ped Sock features X-Static material, a pure silver yarn that Nike claims has a plethora of "anti" features: anti-odour; anti-bacterial; anti-fungal; and anti-static thermodynamic. Anti-features aside, the anatomically designed Nike Ergonomic Running Cushioned Ped Sock is well cushioned and breathable. In all, a good value, durable sock.



Asics Tactel Aquator Ankle Sock \$13
Thick and soft is the best way to describe the Asics Tactel Aquator Ankle Sock. The sock is made from two layered fabric that gives effective moisture transportation away from the skin. Elasticised arch support keeps the sock in place and the foot well positioned above the cushioned sole. These features are also available in the longer Asics Tactel Aquator Sock.



Brooks Adrenaline GTS Ped Sock \$25
The Brooks Adrenaline GTS Ped Sock is an anatomical sock designed for runners with medium or neutral arches. A medium thickness sock, the Brooks Adrenaline GTS Ped Sock features ribbing for increased moisture transfer and is elasticised in the arch and across the forefoot to help keep the sock secure. These features are also available in the longer Brooks Adrenaline GTS Quarter Sock.



Reebok Vector Ankle Sock \$9
The Reebok Vector Ankle Sock is a simple cotton elastane ankle sock, very similar to the Adidas Sports Ankle Sock. A good value, well cushioned, every day sports sock that's even better value in a three-pack.



X-Sock Run Speed One/Run Sky Run \$25
With a list of trademark features that would sound more at home on an automobile than a running sock, the anatomical X-Sock Run Speed One is a futuristic looking sock that actually performs very well. Strategic padding and support protects the foot from the friction that causes blisters and provides well ventilated cushioning in the foot strike areas. The X-Sock Run Speed One is designed for sprint to middle distances, while the Run Sky Run is designed for marathons.



R4YL publisher, Daniel Green sporting his favourite cap next to the famous 'Bull' statue in the Wall Street district of New York, USA.

COMING INTO SUMMER we thought it might be useful to take a look at some of the specialist running caps available. Caps are useful for all sorts of things: keeping the sun off your face, sweat out of your eyes, or covering your bald spot. The caps reviewed below will do all that and more. We have even reviewed a model designed specifically for night use!



2XU Run Cap

The 2XU Run Cap is made from lightweight, quick drying woven nylon, and features a low profile fitted design with good peak coverage. An elastic sweat band and Velcro strap helps keep sweat out of your eyes and the cap secure. The zoned panel construction features mesh inserts that enhance airflow and improves breathability.



Brooks HVAC Mesh Cap

Featuring thermo-regulating silver-infused panelling, the Brooks HVAC Mesh Cap conducts heat away from the head to the peak of the cap where it is released. The polyester mesh helps transport moisture away from your head, and the underside of the peak is black to reduce glare. The Velcro strap and elastic head band make this cap suitable for all but the smallest and largest head sizes.



Brooks Visibility Cap

A stylish and quick drying cap, the Brooks Visibility Cap has a unique feature not seen in any of the other caps in this review. Attached to the Velcro strap at the rear is a pair of flashing red LEDs that are activated by a firm press. Combined with reflective piping, this cap will protect you from the sun during the day and is guaranteed to make you highly visible while running at night.



2XU R4YL Cap

Only available to R4YL subscribers, the 2XU R4YL Cap has identical features to the 2XU Run Cap. With distinct Run For You Life colouring and our instantly recognizable R4YL logo, you'll stand out from the crowd and proudly display your membership to Australia's most comprehensive running magazine. Don't worry; we have top scientists working in a secret underground lab looking into making the logo more washing machine-friendly.



Adidas Run Adistar Cap

The Adidas Run Adistar Cap is a slim fitting cap made from Climacool material with a wide, flat peak. An adjustable elastic strap and buckle keeps the cap snug, and twin longitudinal vents provide excellent flow through ventilation. Reflective logos front and rear provide extra visibility when running at night.



CoolRunning Cap

The CoolRunning cap is easily the lightest and the brightest of all the caps reviewed here: it's rumoured that no one has ever been hit by a vehicle while wearing this cap. The wide brim is soft and flexible, and the mesh side panels are both quick drying and breathable. Part of the CoolGear range of clothing from the CoolRunning Australia website, expect to hear random cheers of 'Go CoolRunner!' when wearing this cap whilst training or racing.



Diadora Mesh Cap

The Diadora Mesh Cap is a low profile, fitted cap made from soft breathable DiaDry mesh that wicks away moisture and enhances evaporative cooling. The long curved brim provides excellent sun protection, and the fully adjustable strap and buckle allows it to fit almost all head shapes and sizes.



Adidas Run Supernova Cap

The Adidas Run Supernova cap has a short, wide, mouldable peak that allows you to easily customise its shape. The mouldable peak, when combined with an adjustable strap and buckle, allows a secure and comfortable fit. Reflective piping and logos improve the visibility of the dark navy cap, while the Climacool fabric and side mesh panels provide reliable ventilation.



Asics Run Cap

The tapered peak and low profile upper make the Asics Run Cap the most snug-fitting of all the caps tested. Secured with an adjustable Velcro strap, the Asics Run Cap features four mesh panels for breathability and has been treated with Scotchguard for improved moisture wicking.



New Balance Running Performance Cap

With the widest brim of all the caps reviewed, the New Balance Running Performance Cap resembles the more traditional baseball cap design. This casual, understated cap is runner friendly with small mesh inserts, reflective piping and logos, and a nylon mesh lining.



Puma Running Cap

The Puma Running Cap is made from breathable polyester microfibre with a lightweight rounded bill. Ventilation is further enhanced by air flow mesh panels. The terry towelling head band provides extra comfort, and the elastic strap and buckle allows you to adjust the cap to a perfect fit.