

## Footwear Experts Use This Hiking Boot On The Trail And The Gym

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The 6 Best Hiking Boots For Women, TestedHearst Owned

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Fall is here, and, in our opinion, it's the best season to get outside. Even if you don't live in a mountainous area, having a pair of hiking boots you can rely on for outdoor activities, long walks, and uphill climbs will help keep your feet dry, safe, and comfortable after a long journey. Different from walking shoes or running shoes, "hiking boots offer substantial support to your ankles and cushioning to absorb the impact of different terrains," says Chris Mohr, PhD, RD, fitness and nutrition advisor at Fortune Recommends Health.

### Best Hiking Boots For Women

When choosing hiking boots, Mohr emphasizes comfort and support. But don't forget to consider materials, weight, durability, and traction as well. We took all of this into account while curating the list below, which features the best hiking boots tested and approved by footwear and hiking experts. From lightweight styles to waterproof picks, read on to learn more about what to consider while shopping and find the top options for your outdoor adventures this season.

### What to consider

## Materials

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"The quality of the materials used for a hiking boot is paramount," says co-founder of [Legend Expeditions](#) Jack Fleckney. He recommends looking for sturdy and high-quality fabrics that resist abrasion and tearing. Mohr says the best materials to look for are leather, synthetic materials like nylon or mesh, and waterproof materials like Gore-tex. "Additionally, pay attention to the stitching quality, as well-stitched boots are less likely to fail under stress," says Fleckney.

## Weight

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One thing that's for sure: You never want to feel weighed down in your boots, so Mohr says to search for a more lightweight option that won't make your feet feel tired. On this list, the [Keen Targhee III Waterproof](#) is the best option if you're looking for something that won't weigh you down on your treks.

## Grip and traction

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"You should also look for shoes with good traction to avoid slipping and hurting yourself when hiking," says Mohr. Fleckney adds that good tread is essential for navigating challenging terrains such as rocky paths and muddy trails. "Most modern outdoor footwear comes equipped with reliable tread patterns that provide excellent grip," he says. When testing boots, ensure that the outsole features deep lugs and a design that enhances traction, which is essential for stability on uneven surfaces.

## Comfort

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According to Mohr, you want to look for shoes that offer adequate arch support, which can help you from getting tired and uncomfortable during long hikes by reducing strain and improving alignment. Other aspects to look for in the comfort category? "Ensure there is enough room in the toe box for your toes to move freely and that no areas of the boot dig into your foot or ankle," says Fleckney. "If you notice any discomfort during your initial fitting, it's likely to worsen with prolonged use." However, if you do buy a boot that ends up disappointing you, Fleckney recommends quality insoles, which add the support and cushion your feet need to stay cozy in your boots.

## How we chose

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For the past few years, our editors have been researching and testing the bestselling, most popular, and top-rated hiking boots. We also reached out to five footwear and hiking experts to get their take on their favorite options, which they evaluated based on material, weight, grip and traction, and comfort. They also broke down everything we need to know about what to look for while shopping.

## Sawtooth X Mid

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Out of all the hiking boots our experts recommended, the Oboz Sawtooth X Mid came out as the most highly praised. Full-time nomadic hiker and adventure consultant at Wildland Trekking [Claire Ramsdell](#) says she's hiked hundreds of miles in this boot. Once she wore it out, she got a new pair of the same ones because she feels protected and secure in it.

"While I know no shoe is ever truly 'waterproof,' the Sawtooths really put up a good fight against different weather conditions," says Ramsdell. On her recent group trekking trip to Kyrgyzstan, she experienced a really rainy hiking day, and other hikers kept remarking that she had "magic shoes" because this boot was the only one that was still dry.

During the first five days of her hike on the Arctic Circle Trail, known for its wet, boggy conditions, Ramsdell says her shoes stayed dry. Water only crept a few inches up the sides, but never got inside. By days six through eight, though, higher water levels finally breached the tops. Once water gets inside a waterproof shoe, it won't dry out quickly. Still, she found it impressive that it held up for as long as they did, given the conditions.

She also says that this shoe can take on many different conditions. It has a nylon shank, which offers solid underfoot protection and helps you stay balanced on all terrains, from rocky trails to slippery rocks. It also has a true tread rubber outsole, which offers improved traction compared to regular outsoles, no matter where you're hiking.

This shoe does require some break-in time, so be aware of that before setting off on a big hike. We recommend breaking them in for a few weeks prior.

***Read More: [Best Hiking Shoes](#)***



[Shop Now](#)

Sawtooth X Mid

rei.com

\$180.00

## **Speed 2 Leather Mid Waterproof**

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Unlike the Oboz hiking boots, Ramsdell says that this boot is great if you are looking for something that requires no break-in time. According to her, it's comfortable straight out of the box. Other great features the shoe has? Solid grip for all terrains with its Vibram soles, superior cushion with its foam midsole, and waterproof fabric that makes this shoe perfect for all conditions. Ramsdell says this shoe stands out because it's super cushiony.

Tai Beauchamp, TV host and wellness expert, also loves this hiker because the treads (remember the Vibram soles?) make it perfect for rockier, tougher trails. It also has FlexPlate technology, which integrates a lightweight, full-foot stability plate and outsole pods into the boot to provide torsional rigidity, lateral stability, and forefoot stability.

Another pro? It's treated for natural odor control, so you never have to worry about those extra long days getting the best of your shoes. Beauchamp also mentions that the colors are fun, so your feet feel fancy while you climb.

Ramsdell says that this isn't her all-time favorite boot because it feels too soft and malleable for her taste, but everyone's preferences are different. If you like something on the cushier side, this one is for you.



[Shop Now](#)

Speed 2 Leather Mid Waterproof

merrell.com

\$190.00

## **SFB Gen 2 8" Tactical Boot**

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Beauchamp has had this super lightweight, waterproof hiker for seven years. "It fits and wear like sneakers, which I love because I can hike and then go to the gym," she says, adding that the boot hits just below the shin, which means it also provides great ankle support.

This boot is built for speed and flexibility on rough terrain. It's made with durable synthetic leather and nylon canvas, offering protection while keeping things breathable. For added support, it features dual-zone lacing, which allows you to adjust the tension of the laces in different sections of your foot to lock your foot in place and help prevent ankle rolling. And if your feet start to get sweaty, no worries—the boot has metal screen vents on the sides to keep them cool.

If you're walking on loose rocks, this shoe is perfect, as it features multi-surface grip and an internal rock shield to help prevent any punctures.

One thing to note about the boot: It's not as long-lasting as others on this list, so you may have to re-purchase a pair every year or two.





[Shop Now](#)

SFB Gen 2 8" Tactical Boot

[nike.com](#)

\$145.00

**Targhee III Waterproof**

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Mohr loves this hiker for its quality and comfort. And, it's also the most lightweight option on this list, which helps you not feel slow and heavy on your hikes.

Aside from how light this shoe is, it's also super waterproof and breathable, making it perfect for hiking in any condition. Even better, the boot has a lugged sole for superior traction, a toe guard to prevent from injury, and a mud guard—a strip of material on the upper part of the shoe to protect the boot from dampness.

This boot is also great for those with wide feet or bunions, as it has a wider toe box. And, if you don't have time to break a boot in, you don't have to worry. Testers say it's extremely comfortable straight out of the box and doesn't cause blisters. However, the shoe does run small, so we recommend sizing up.

***Read More: [Best Shoes For Bunions](#)***



[Shop Now](#)

Targhee III Waterproof

rei.com

\$119.73

## **Elixir Active Mid GTX**

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Sun & Ski Sports footwear buyer Shelby Milstead says this shoe is designed to perform and keep you steady in your movements. "Lightweight and versatile, it offers unmatched comfort and balance with every step, regardless of terrain," she says. And, that's thanks to padded zones in the collar and tongue for increased foot-hugging comfort.

It's also great at keeping water out and keeping you steady on slippery surfaces, says Milstead. "The waterproof feature ensures your feet stay dry, while the durable rubber outsole provides reliable grip on both wet and dry surfaces."

Comfort is a priority with this hiker. It features an energy foam midsole for premium cushioning and a padded tongue for a snug fit. Plus, it's equipped with Sensifit technology, a foot cradle that provides a snug and secure fit for the foot.

This shoe runs a bit narrow, so it may feel tight if you have wider feet. After walking for several hours, it could cause cramping unless your feet are on the narrower side.



[Shop Now](#)

Elixir Active Mid GTX

zappos.com

\$170.00

## Kaha 2

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Thanks to nubuck leather and a Gore-Tex waterproof membrane, this shoe is super durable and long-lasting, and it can also withstand all sorts of different hiking conditions. It also features Vibram grippy soles with traction lugs for increased ground contact. Plus, there's an abrasion-resistant toecap and heel so the boot doesn't show signs of wear and tear quickly.

This shoe is also one of the most waterproof options on this list, but we will say it feels less breathable because the waterproofing is so thick.

The Kaha 2 also features a very thick bed of cushion, so this is a great option for those of you who like that plush under-foot feeling. Additionally, it has a swallowtail design on the heel, which provides a smooth ride and improved stability. The high ankle shaft adds even more support to prevent rolling an ankle.



[Shop Now](#)

Kaha 2

[hoka.com](https://hoka.com)

\$179.99

**Meet the experts**

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- Claire Ramsdell is a full-time nomadic hiker and adventure consultant at Wildland Trekking.
- Tai Beauchamp is a TV host and wellness expert.
- Chris Mohr, PhD, RD, is a fitness and nutrition advisor at Fortune Recommends Health.
- Shelby Milstead is a footwear buyer at Sun & Ski Sports.
- Jack Fleckney is the co-founder of Legend Expeditions.

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