

BY MARY JO MATSUMOTO



Whether you've decided to get in shape by kick-boxing, cycling, hiking or just being on the go with a hectic life, the next decision is what shoes will best support your feet in comfort. With so many options on the market, trying to find a pair that fits your pocketbook and workout needs — not to mention your feet — can be overwhelming. Luckily, some fashionable choices are as fun to wear to your workout as they are during it.



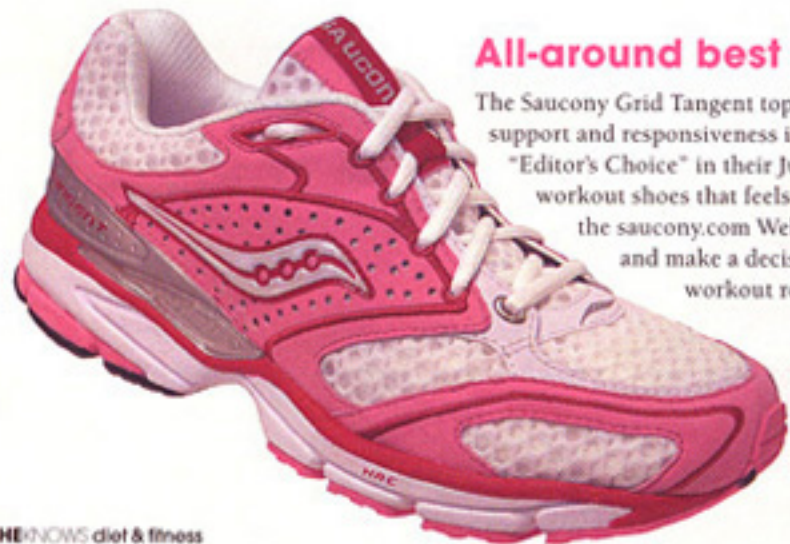
Gearing
up:

THE BEST

WORKOUT SHOES

All-around best

The Saucony Grid Tangent tops my list because it provides the perfect blend of support and responsiveness in a performance shoe. Awarded Runner's World's "Editor's Choice" in their June 2005 shoe review, this is one of those rare workout shoes that feels as good as it looks. One perk of browsing through the saucony.com Web site is that you can click on their "Shoe Advisor" and make a decision based on your arch, pronation, build and workout routine.



Saucony Grid Tangent in Pink/Raspberry, about \$90.
(www.saucony.com)

Happy trails

No roundup of workout shoes is complete without a road warrior that's worthy of the most rugged trails. I love this overachieving shoe — it's the color of the brightest blue sky and packs all the bells and whistles of an outstanding trail-running performance shoe. Designed to minimize the destabilizing effects of trail irregularities and rocky situations, this shoe is well-ventilated and quick-drying.



Brooks Cascadia in Blue Sky, \$90
(www.brooksrunning.com)



The cushy life

If you're addicted to the gym, then the New Balance women's 830 is the shoe for you. Designed specifically for athletes who work out mostly in the gym, this breathable trainer has special cushioning for lightweight flexibility. It's made for activities ranging from weight training to spinning and cardio workouts such as the elliptical and treadmill.

New Balance 830, \$85
(www.newbalance.com)

Lightweight champion

According to the experts at Runner's World, the New Balance 730 is an upgraded and lighter version of one of the most fun-to-wear shoes that New Balance — or anyone — has produced. Despite its lightness, the women's 730 is surprisingly well-cushioned with an outstanding grip and is stable even on multi-hour runs and trails.

New Balance 730, \$75
(www.newbalance.com)



Walking to work

Sometimes, the best way to squeeze in exercise is simply by walking to work. If you want to do it in style, I highly recommend the Women's Merrell Sprint Blast 1940 Print. Incredibly comfortable with great traction, you'll feel like an urban hipster even if you're not. Best of all, the sticky rubber sole will keep you from tripping. If you want to do something more taxing, these fabulous shoes sport the latest in trail-running technology.

Merrell Sprint Blast 1940 Print in Mocha, \$109.95
(www.amazon.com/sports and www.shoebuy.com)



When life is the best workout

Whether you're a working woman, a stay-at-home mom or both, juggling the day's many errands keeps you going non-stop from the time you get up in the morning until you sit down for dinner at night. When life itself is enough of a cardio rush, Puma's Red Speed Cat will keep you in fashion as well as cushion your strides. It's a great twist on the old-school lace-up round-toe sneaker.

Puma Red Speed Cat, \$74.98
(www.lovemyshoes.com)



Here's to getting in shape in comfort and style — from the tip of your toes on up!

About the author: Well-known fashion designer and style expert Mary Jo Matsumoto is co-author of the forthcoming book, *Red Carpet Karma*. She writes a daily style blog at www.trustyourstyle.com as well as several national and international fashion/beauty/body image columns, and including one at SheKnows.com. She's currently planning the launch of a green/sustainable clothing line and other products.