

## PRODUCT GUIDE

# A girl's best friend

FOR WOMEN, WEARING A PROPER SPORTS BRA WHEN RUNNING IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS WEARING THE CORRECT TRAINERS. HERE'S OUR COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW ON THE BEST BRAS AND BRA-TOPS ON THE MARKET

Words: Sarah Russell

According to recent research, almost 70% of female runners are not wearing a supportive enough bra, causing irreparable damage to the delicate breast tissue, leading to sagging, discomfort and pain.

"The average C cup moves an incredible 6cm in bounce per step," says Kirsty Kothakota from Shock Absorber, "and during a marathon, our boobs could bounce the entire distance of 58 football pitches."

It's scary stuff, especially when you consider the damage that we're doing to our breasts could be permanent. And not only are most of us not wearing the correct bra, but we're not changing them often enough. According to Kirsty, we should replace our bra three times as often as we change our running shoes, as they lose their effectiveness with washing and wear.

Luckily, bra manufacturers have cottoned onto the needs of the female runner and there is now a huge range of styles available with something to suit every shape, size and budget, from small breasted-runners to even the most well-endowed. So there's no excuse if you're not wearing a correct fitting bra, you're bound to find something to suit. And if you have one that's looking a little grey around the edges, then perhaps it's time to treat yourself to something new. We have pulled together a selection of some of the most popular bras on the market and tested them out. We rated them all on fit, level of support, comfort, value and style.



### HOW TO CHOOSE AND FIT YOUR BRA PROPERLY

by Shock Absorber expert Kirsty Kothakota

**1** Invest in a quality product made of a moisture wicking performance sports fabric that is quick dry and breathable.

**2** If you have never worn a sports bra before, start off with the same bra size you would normally wear

**3** Make sure that the back band is at the same level all the way round. If it rides up, then it's too big. It should feel firm. Always fit your bra to the loosest hook and eye. That way you can adjust it to make it tighter as it stretches with wash and wear.

**4** Is your bust fully contained within the cups with no overspill and no bagginess?

**5** Do the bounce test! Jump up and down: this is the best way to test out the support. Still too much bounce? Try on another size to get the right fit.

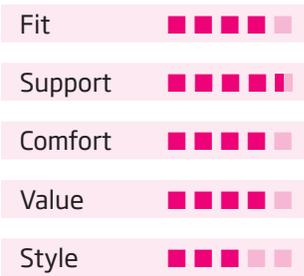
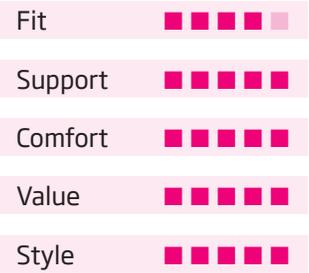
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**Triumph Extreme Tri Action** **RRP £28**  
**Website: [www.triumphlingeriestore.com](http://www.triumphlingeriestore.com)**

TESTER SIZE: 34B

**OUR TESTER SAID:** "This bra was fantastic and I honestly struggled to find anything about it I didn't like. The only minor complaint was that it gave me a slightly 'pointier' look than I normally prefer, but that is just because I usually wear a crop top and just not used to the 'bra' look." The bra was incredibly comfortable, a perfect fit and made from soft breathable fabric with no annoying itchy seams or labels. Excellent support when running and great value for money.



**Adidas Nandinia Racer Bra** **RRP £28**  
**Website: [www.adidas.com](http://www.adidas.com)**

TESTER SIZE: 34B

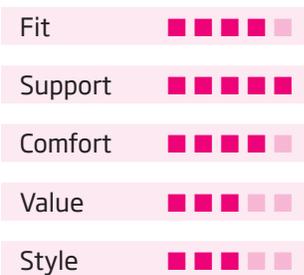
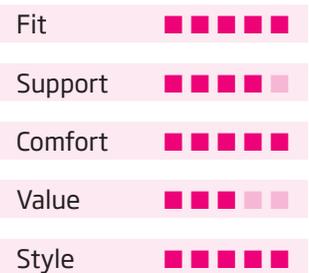
**OUR TESTER SAID:** This bra from Adidas gave an excellent level of support. It was well designed and very comfortable. The shoulder straps were a little thin compared to others on test and had no padding. They had to be fitted quite tightly to make sure it was supportive enough though and as a consequence they dug in a little bit. The highlight was the breathable and lightweight fabric - definitely the most wicking bra on test. "I really liked this bra and certainly wouldn't hesitate to buy it," said our tester.



**Anita Active Extreme Control sports bra** **RRP £43-95**  
**Website: [www.anita.com](http://www.anita.com)**

TESTER SIZE: 32E

**OUR TESTER SAID:** Our first impression was a high quality bra made of extremely soft high tech fabric. The style seemed relatively simple with breathable fabric inserts at the back and a fine absorbent towelling lining. On, it is extremely comfortable with wide soft and supportive straps. However, after a 40-minute run we felt the cut at the front on this size could have been slightly higher for more support. Conversely on a smaller bust this might not have been so noticeable and it is important to point out the cut of the bra means it could be worn under a wide range of necklines and styles of running tops.



**Enell** **RRP £42.50**  
**Available from: [www.boobydoo.co.uk](http://www.boobydoo.co.uk)**

TESTER SIZE: 34DD

**OUR TESTER SAID:** "This was an incredibly supportive bra for running, once you were in! I had a bit of a wrestling match to get everything in and all those hooks and eyes done up! A snug fit, but in a good way, the straps didn't move, you can still wear your HRM with it, and it feels really secure on. It's a really good shape at the front and the back, and the straps are quite high up on your shoulders, so a sleeveless running top didn't show the bra at all. It isn't the best for wicking away sweat, especially around the cleavage where there is no circulation at all, but to be honest, if movement (or lack of it) is your primary concern, then this is a great option.



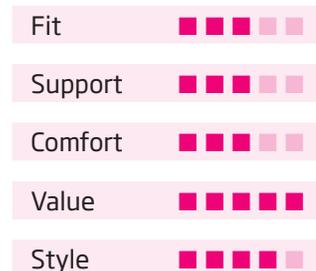
**Freya Soft Cup Sports Bra**  
**Stockists: [www.leialingerie.com](http://www.leialingerie.com)**

**RRP £27**



lightweight and breathable fabric. I wasn't too keen on the 'ice cream cone' look that it seemed to give me though but I normally prefer a crop top compression style. A very nice lightweight bra though, and very good value for money."

TESTER SIZE: 34C



**OUR TESTER SAID:** "I loved the trendy colours of this bra, the lime and grey was really nice and different to other brands. It was comfortable, provided a decent level of support (although not the most supportive on test) and was made of a fantastic

**Moving Comfort Juno**

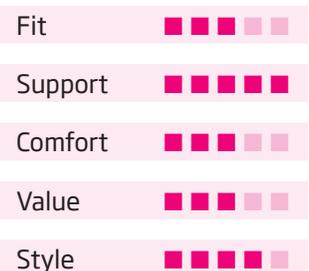
**RRP £37**

**Website: [www.Lessbounce.com](http://www.Lessbounce.com)**



on, but once there it was comfortable and very supportive. No itchy seams and straps and great colour. The design was slightly strange with 'velcro' straps (based on a nursing bra design), but it seems to work and has the advantage of making it easily adjustable. Only downside is that the fabric is quite thick, making the bra pretty hot and sweaty.

TESTER SIZE: 34C



**OUR TESTER SAID:** This is truly a 'gravity defying' bra and one of the most supportive on test. According to the manufacturer's blurb it is designed to 'encapsulate and compress' and it certainly lived up to expectations. It did require a bit of wrestling to get it

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## Odlo High Ultimate Fit

RRP £39.99

Website: [www.odlo.com](http://www.odlo.com) Stockist: [www.girlsruntoo.co.uk](http://www.girlsruntoo.co.uk)

TESTER SIZE: 34C

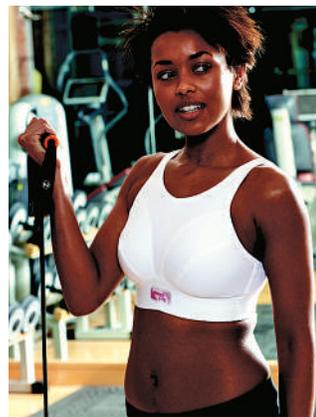
**OUR TESTER SAID:** Fantastically comfortable, soft and breathable bra in a choice of black, white or limited edition red, with matching briefs. Despite being cut low both at the back and front it provided an excellent level of support. Our tester said: "I loved the padded shaped straps and the mesh ventilation making it one of the most breathable bras we tested. The cup shape was nicely rounded and avoided the 'pointy' look without compressing my boobs too much." Sizing did come up on the small end, so our tester ended up going for a larger bra than in the other brands. The chest band isn't too tight or compressive and allows a heart rate strap to be worn in comfort.

Fit	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Support	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Comfort	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Value	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Style	■ ■ ■ ■ ■

## Royce Impact Free

Website: [www.royce-lingerie.co.uk](http://www.royce-lingerie.co.uk)

**OUR TESTER SAID:** "Designed with the larger lady in mind (starts at cup size D), I had high hopes for this bra, but it just wasn't quite supportive enough to cope. The up/down movement was clearly visible (according to my husband!) and I could feel the jolt of every step. I did like the high cut front however and the straps felt very secure. The fabric was soft and wicked away the



sweat and there were no scratchy bits or seams. Perhaps best suited to a smaller cup size."

TESTER SIZE: 34DD

RRP £30

Fit	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Support	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Comfort	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Value	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Style	■ ■ ■ ■ ■

## Shock Absorber Tankini

RRP £35.50

Website: [www.shockabsorber.co.uk/swim](http://www.shockabsorber.co.uk/swim)

**OUR TESTER SAID:** This is the perfect solution for triathletes, providing a fast drying and flattering tankini suitable for swimming, but with a proper bra inside to support you during the run. Most 'tankinis' or trisuits have a bra shelf which just doesn't do the job, but this one from Shock Absorber takes the supportive 'run bra' and cleverly fits it inside the tankini, making it perfect for

TESTER SIZE: S



swimming, triathlon or even just the gym. The bra inside is modeled on the 'run bra' and provides a fantastic level of support - although it is a little tricky to get on until you get the knack. It's very flattering with a long body and it's not too tight around the waist - therefore preventing 'roll up'.

Fit	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Support	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Comfort	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Value	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Style	■ ■ ■ ■ ■



## Shock Absorber Run Bra

RRP £36

Website: [www.shockabsorber.co.uk](http://www.shockabsorber.co.uk)

TESTER SIZE: 34C

**OUR TESTER SAID:** We had high expectations of the current market leader in running bras and thankfully weren't disappointed. Once you've manoeuvred yourself into the bra - a slightly complicated fastening and adjustment process - it really does live up to the hype. No rubbing, itching or scratchy seams. Incredible support and design due to the innovative shock absorber 'infinity-8 support system'. Like the Triumph, it does give a bit of a 'pointy' look, so if you prefer a flatter shape, go for the Shock Absorber Pump Bra instead which is just as supportive for a small cup. A lot has been invested in the design and testing of this bra and it is certainly worth every penny.

Fit	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Support	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Comfort	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Value	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Style	■ ■ ■ ■ ■

Fit	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Support	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Comfort	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Value	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Style	■ ■ ■ ■ ■

## SportJock Action Sports Bra

RRP £27

Website: [www.sportsbra.co.uk](http://www.sportsbra.co.uk)

TESTER SIZE: 34C

**OUR TESTER SAID:** 'I loved the raspberry colour of this bra and the crop top style which meant it could be worn on its own in the summer or the gym. The fabric was soft and very comfortable, although I didn't find it especially breathable. I did find the band around the chest quite tight and it was quite uncomfortable with a heartrate monitor strap. Even though I'm only a B/C cup, this bra just didn't provide enough support for me, and my boobs bounced quite a lot as I ran.' SportJock does make a more supportive 'Super Sports Bra' aimed at C cup and above, and for bustier individuals, that may be a better choice.



## Sugoi Fizz Bra

RRP £30

Website: [www.sugoi.com](http://www.sugoi.com)

TESTER SIZE: S

**OUR TESTER SAID:** If you like a crop top style bra, then you will love the Sugoi Fizz Bra. It is incredibly comfortable and comes in a great selection of colours (which change seasonally) meaning it can be worn on its own in the summer or the gym. The wide band around the ribcage wasn't too tight and allows you to breathe deeply without feeling compressed. We loved the 'ventilation' fabric on the back and on the straps, which prevented overheating in key areas. Our tester said: "As a small B cup the crop top style is supportive enough for me, but it may not provide enough support for a larger bust. All in all though, one of my faves!"

Fit	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Support	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Comfort	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Value	■ ■ ■ ■ ■
Style	■ ■ ■ ■ ■