

# We tried it: The Brooks Levitate shoe

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Courtesy of Brooks

When Brooks announced that they were creating a new shoe that would help you run farther and faster without needing to exert more energy, I was intrigued. I'm currently training for a half marathon, and training runs aren't always easy. I've had some great training runs where the weather has been on my side, my body feels good, and the miles just fly by. But there have also been days where I wish I ran at a faster pace so my runs wouldn't take so long. I've had mornings where I wish I could get in more than five miles, but I just didn't have the extra energy to push farther. But now there's a shoe that could help with both? I had to try it.

## The details

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Two-and-a-half years of development and seven rounds of vigorous wear testing went into what they're calling the DNA AMP midsole. The product claims that the design of the midsole helps you log longer mileage, faster, without having to put in more of your own effort.

The sneaks have a fly-knit upper, so your foot can move in its natural pattern as you run, and

the grooves on the bottom are said to be in a front-facing arrow design to propel your foot forward with each strike.

The shoes retail for \$150 and are available at [brooksrunning.com](https://www.brooksrunning.com).

## The test

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I took the shoes first on a three-mile run to break them in. The Levitate is more of a neutral running shoe, and because I overpronate and have a bit of a flatter foot, I had to change the insoles with a pair designed specially to fit the needs of my feet. But with my insoles, I felt comfortable in them from the first steps. I definitely noticed how they gave me a bit more bounce in my step. And it was a firm spring -- nothing too cushy nor too rigid and hard.

The DNA AMP technology was also made to adapt to your foot as you run, and I can honestly say that I did feel -- less than a mile into my run -- that my foot and the shoe seemed to mold together and moved very much as one. I don't know if it was the new technology or the fact that I was distracted, thinking a lot about it and how the shoe felt on my foot, but the three miles flew by, and I did actually feel like I could have gone even farther. But because it was my first time running in them, I decided to cut myself off at three.

My next run in the Levitate was another three miles, and I had the same experience. A few days later, I ran five miles in them and still felt like I had that extra bounce in my step up until my final stride. I continued using them for a handful of three- to five-mile training runs, as well as a few longer runs up to 10 miles, and did end up improving my time on more than one.

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## What I liked

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I've always found Brooks shoes to be really comfy, and these were no different. The fly-knit upper hugged tightly around my foot, but as I walked around my apartment in them, it didn't restrict movement at all. Because of the tight fit though, I'd probably recommend going a half-size bigger in this shoe, as I did, to be sure the fit isn't too snug. They also have a more narrow look than some of my other running shoes, which I found to be attractive.

## What I didn't like

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The longest mileage I logged in the Brooks Levitate was around 10 miles. I did find that I got the most benefit and enjoyed them the most on shorter, faster runs. After six-plus miles, my legs get a bit tired and because I have relatively flat feet and overpronate a bit, I tend to need more cushioning underneath my feet to log longer mileage.

## Is it worth it?

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All in all, I really enjoyed running short distances in the Levitate. Because they're not super bulky either, I even wore them to run a couple miles to a group fitness class, and for the class itself. For anyone looking to get in some shorter, faster runs -- or maybe even set a new 5 or 10K PR -- this neutral runner is for you.