

Newton Gravity Training Shoe (\$175; newtonrunning.com)

Premise: Endorsed by Peter Reid and a handful of other top triathletes, these training shoes have four large, flexible lugs under the forefoot that serve three purposes: they promote a forefoot strike, maximize your forward energy and provide serious cushioning. In addition, the lightweight shoe—8.2 ounces for women's; 10.2 for men's—is designed so that you run as efficiently in them as you would barefoot.

Tester says: Already a forefoot runner, Cassie was beyond excited to wear a shoe that complemented her running style. "I've been looking for a shoe that fits like this," she raves, "This training shoe feels like a great racing flat." While wearing them, she flew on her runs. "Running definitely took less energy," she says. That said, the forefoot-promoting lugs were slightly too hard and defined for her. "I felt like I had lumps under my metatarsal heads, which was uncomfortable," explains Cassie, who recommends this shoe to neutral-gaited runners interested in finding the most efficient foot strike. As for Cassie, her interest in the technology is piqued enough that she'd like to try Newton's racing flats.

Rating: 4.3

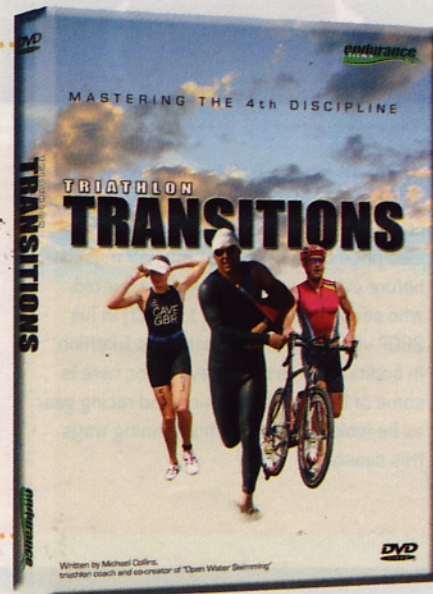


Endurance Films Triathlon Transitions DVD (\$30; endurancefilms.com)

Premise: Subtitled Mastering the 4th Discipline, this 45-minute DVD aims to make you as speedy as possible in T1 and T2. The instruction-filled DVD touches on everything from how to set up your transition area, to fast gear (lace locks on your running shoes can save almost 30 seconds), to T1 tips (how to store your goggles and cap in your wetsuit sleeve) to T2 tips (how to take your feet out of your bike shoes while still pedaling).

Tester says: "Pleasantly surprised by the quality and content of this video," says Scott, "A picture is worth a thousand words, and video can be priceless. Seeing tips performed in multiple views and speeds was infinitely more helpful than reading about it in an article." He was particularly impressed with the extensive bike mount and dismount sections, which offers multiple ways and drills for athletes of varying levels. "I learned how to avoid the dreaded lost bike shoe on the dismount," the top age-grouper adds. That said, triathletes who are relatively new to the sport will probably benefit most from this video. "You can improve your overall race time without a lot of extra work," he says.

Rating: 4



Aerus TTS Carbon Aerobar (\$499; aeruscomp.com)

Premise: One of—if not the—lightest time trial bars on the market today, these 554-gram carbon fiber bars borrow their construction design from Formula 1 auto racing: in other words, they're strong, stiff and stealthy. In addition, each pad has 85mm of lateral adjustment, while the extensions can be lengthened by 110 mm.

Tester says: Totally impressed: by the aesthetic ("functionally simple, yet aerodynamic and elegant," says J.J.); the weight ("you pay no penalty in the gram department with these on your bike"); the design ("I was pleased by the s-bends as a standard offering, and the fact that they slide easily in and out while providing inward rotation"); the ease of installation (about 30 minutes, although J.J. was aided by a diligent mechanic). That said, J.J., who admits he, "obsesses about the minutiae of fit," was not happy with the minimal width adjustment on the arm rests. "You can swing them in or out, but absolute adjustment isn't there," he says, "I prefer a slightly deeper and wider rest, although I was still comfortable on longer rides."

Rating: 4.5



TESTERS



Scott Myers, 31 years old
Wellston, Ohio



J.J. Bailey, 33 years old
Des Moines, Iowa



Kathleen Johnston, 47 years old
Nashville, Tennessee



Marc Bonnet-Eymard, 35 years old
Winter Garden, Florida



Dave Koontz, 49 years old
Charlotte, North Carolina



Tim Hola, 32 years old
Highlands Ranch, Colorado



Cassie McWilliam, 40 years old
Rye, New York



Laura Sophiea, 51 years old
Birmingham, Michigan