

Asics Gel-Noosa Tri 2

\$180

The colour scheme of the Gel-Noosa Tri 2 was inspired by the city of Noosa in Australia and that city's proximity to the Great Barrier Reef. Noosa has long been the site of one of the world's most competitive triathlon events, which is why Asics used the name for this tri racing shoe.

The shoe stands out thanks to the bright yellow and red colour scheme. It looks fast, and you certainly can run fast in it. The curved last makes it easy to get up on your toes and run fast. While the DuoMax midsole and Trusstic moulding under the midfoot area of the shoe provides some added support, this really is a shoe for light-weight athletes who don't have huge pronation or supination issues. Shock absorption comes from the Rearfoot Gel pad and the lightweight Solyte Midsole.

The air mesh upper is extremely breathable, and there are vents on the bottom of the shoe to enhance air flow. The insole is also breathable, and the shoe is quite comfortable to wear without socks, making it a great choice for fast triathlon racing. Asics has used what they call AHAR+ Heel rubber in the rear foot to reduce excessive wear but this really isn't a shoe you'll want to do a lot of training in – it is best used as a racer or for tempo or interval workouts.

Newton Gravity

\$188

The cushioned training flat from Newton utilizes the Active Membrane Technology that makes these shoes so different in both the heel and forefoot. The idea behind the Newton shoes is to mimic barefoot running while providing enough support and cushioning to prevent injury and leg fatigue.

The big difference you'll notice with these shoes is the actuator lugs under the ball of the foot. These actuator lugs replace foam, air or gel that you'll typically find in other shoes. As you land a membrane is stretched, then as you take off, the membrane returns to its original shape, providing some extra forward propulsion.

Our reviewers didn't notice a lot of extra forward momentum, but you will immediately notice the ease at which you'll be able to get up onto your forefoot and run fast. The actuators take a bit of getting used to – when walking in the shoe you'll feel like you're dealing with a reversed heel.

The Gravity is geared for distance training for runners who have neutral to high arches. While the shoe feels very supportive, the way it changes your running stride does take some getting used to. This is a shoe you'll want to break yourself into slowly.

That said, you'll immediately notice how easy it is to hold your form and run fast in the Gravity. It's extremely light and seems to provide cushioning (especially in the forefoot) and support just where you need it.

Saucony Grid Sinister

\$140

The new Grid Sinister is a lightweight performance trainer designed for neutral runners. Like many Saucony shoes, the Grid Sinister's heel-fit is slightly narrow with a mid to low volume forefoot. Runner's with slender feet will love this shoe. Saucony uses an innovative flexion plate for a smooth heel-to-forefoot transition while the aggressively sculpted midsole provides cushioning and encourages maximum flexibility. Heel cushioning is further increased by



Newton Gravity



Reebok Premier Road Plus KFS



Nike Women's Free 7.0