

# MINIMALIST SHOES

Minimalism is getting big! The RF team round-up and try out some of the latest offerings

Until recently minimalism was a term reserved for trendy homes. But in 2011, minimalism provided an answer to shoe manufacturers faced with the conundrum of making shoes for those who don't want them – the new 'barefoot' running community. The truth is minimalist, stripped-down, lightweight shoes aren't new and neither is barefoot running – remember Zola Budd! In the new minimalist category you'll find transitional shoes, which help you get used to less (not unlike racer trainers). But even manufacturers are aware of the shortcomings of providing lightweight shoes to the mass market, and many are selling them with 'education' as part of the package (i.e. you need to get used to these shoes, and get strong, before switching over). Here, the RF team test out the latest lightweight shoes. Read more reviews at our editor's blog, [www.therunningshopper.com](http://www.therunningshopper.com)



**BROOKS PUREPROJECT CONNECT, £90, [www.brooksrunning.co.uk](http://www.brooksrunning.co.uk)**  
 "Super flexible shoe with "toe flex" for easier lift-off, an "ideal heel" to help you land further forward, a nav-bar to protect the mid foot, and Brooks BioMoGo DNA which blends into the entire sole, making it thin and adaptive. Connect give the lightest ride of the range. To be launched in October 2011."



**ADIDAS CLIMACOOL® RIDE, £72, [www.jjbsports.com](http://www.jjbsports.com)**  
 "A lightweight shoe that rides close to the ground. A selling point is that these shoes keep you cool. A "minimalist upper lets air flow from all angles due to ClimaCool® material." The unique sole makes this comfortable shoe very flexible. The CC Ride is miCoach ([www.micoach.com](http://www.micoach.com)) compatible."



**ECCO BIOM B WOMEN'S £160, [www.lovethehoseshoes.com](http://www.lovethehoseshoes.com)**  
 "An anatomical last is designed for a woman's foot, providing optimal fit. Ecco Biom offer a tier system on the sole from A through to C, with A being for the serious runner and C the less serious. A yak leather upper is combined with the patented ion-mask™ treatment for durability." Not tested by RF.



**ECCO BIOM C MEN'S, £150, [www.lovethehoseshoes.com](http://www.lovethehoseshoes.com)**  
 "With very similar features to the women's version above, this 'C' graded shoe is for the occasional runner. Again not tested by RF, the shoe is described as a lightweight shoe with XDR foam for comfort, mesh upper for breathability and a rounded heel for improved rear to forefoot transition."



**ASICS GEL TARTHER, £80, [www.asics.co.uk](http://www.asics.co.uk)**  
 "Weighing at just 209g for men and 179g for women (Diva), these lightweight racing shoes from Japan are made with Asics' renowned Duosole for superb grip and responsiveness. They're supposed to be worn for shorter races, but I wore them for the marathon. I felt I got support and a light ride."