

Find Your Best Sports Bra

Choosing the correct boulder holder based on your breast size and your workout is key to a great sweat session. Check out these stellar supporters.

By Faye Brennan

The hardest-working piece of equipment in your gym bag? Your sports bra! Research reveals your breasts can move as much as eight inches—up and down, side to side, and forward and backward—as you exercise.

All that bouncing can be uncomfortable or even painful. In fact, one study found that 17 percent of women who get breast pain either skipped a workout, reduced their exercise duration or intensity, or switched activities because their hooters were hurtin’.

That’s why the right support is crucial, says study author Nicola Brown, Ph.D., a member of the Research Group in Breast Health at the University of Portsmouth in the U.K. Luckily, fitness brands have been paying attention. With advances in fit, support, and coverage, there’s now a sports bra that’s ideal for every cup size and activity.

A Perfect Fit
An adjustable back closure and shoulder straps give a custom fit to a smaller bust.

Asics Adjust Bra (XS to XL, \$42, asicsamerica.com for retailers)

FASHION DIRECTOR: JACQUELINE AZRIA. HAIR: JEANIE SYFU/TRESEMME/ARTMIX. BEAUTY, MAKEUP: KEIKO TAKAGI FOR DIOR/ART DEPARTMENT, ASICS SPORTS BRA

low impact

Pilates, yoga, and floor-based workouts

“Straps that stretch or adjust will stay on your shoulders when you bend, and a clasp-free back nixes pinching,” says LaJean Lawson, Ph.D., an adjunct professor at Oregon State University.



A Cup

This stretchy cross-strap bra wicks away sweat to keep you dry and holds its shape after washing.

Oakley Acceleration Bra (XS to XL, \$42, oakley.com)

medium impact

Cross-training, cycling, and boot-camp classes

“You need to find the sweet spot between support and the freedom to move,” says Lawson. Look for a bra that’s not too tight around your ribs and that conceals cleavage.



A Cup

Outdoorsy gals will love this fabric’s cooling and sun-protection benefits.

Pearl Izumi W Elite In-R-Cool Crop Bra (XS to XL, \$55, shop.pearlizumi.com)

high impact

Running, kickboxing, and contact sports

To protect against bouncing, sweating, and chafing, look for molded or underwire cups, wide straps, and fabrics such as polyester or nylon (with a little spandex to hug and support).



A Cup

A compression fit holds you snugly; the reflective material keeps you safe.

Brooks Epiphany Bra II (S to XL, \$44, brooksrunning.com)



B or C Cup

Vertical, lateral, and individual-breast motion control reduces bounce.

NB Psyche: Personalized Sports Bras The Airy Racer (32A to 38C, \$38, newbalance.com)



B or C Cup

Cross straps hug your shape; the jersey fabric is soft and supportive.

Under Armour Fierce Bra (32A to 38DD, \$45, underarmour.com)



B or C Cup

ClimaCool fabric and ventilated mesh ensure you stay sweat-free well past mile three.

Adidas Supernova Racer Bra (XS to XL, \$40, adidas.com)



D+ Cup

An underwire lifts and shapes; a padded back cushions your spine.

Champion Shape Too Sports Bra (34C to 40D, DD in select sizes, \$46, championusa.com)



D+ Cup

Full cleavage coverage, with a firm band to keep things anchored.

Panache Sports Bra (28B to 40H, \$68, nordstrom.com)



D+ Cup

Padded straps prevent shoulder pain; a bonded band eliminates chafing.

Lucy The Girl's Best Friend Bra (34C to 38DD, \$59, lucy.com)

Lasting Support To keep your sports bra in top-performing shape, treat it with as much TLC as a lacy number. Wash it by hand with lingerie wash or baby shampoo after every use, lay it flat to dry, and never put it in the dryer. “The extreme heat will break down the material’s elasticity,” says Jené Luciani, author of *The Bra Book*.