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COMPILED BY RYAN SCOTT RW GEAR EDITOR

G E A R

Beyond Compare

How to do you train better and have more fun? Here's 12 devices that will help you do just that - BY RYAN SCOTT

Technology has never shown as much interest in runners as it is now. Whether you are a top-class runner or the type just looking to lower your blood pressure, technology is there to help you get more feedback and have more fun. It's the ideal way to stay motivated.

Key

There are two distinct categories within the GPS and Heart Rate category:

TB TRAINING BUDDIES:
Devices that help make running more fun by giving you feedback on your body and your pace and keeping you motivated. Nike+

HT Hardcore Trainer:
Devices aimed at helping serious runners train better and make them stronger and faster. Polar Cadence





EDITORS
RUNNERS
CHOICE

HT POLAR RS800CX RUN, R4 795

As good as it gets. A brand I've been using for years. I am critical of myself as a runner and of my equipment too. Polar is far from complacent and keeps improving its products. The software is intuitive - I design complex workouts on the computer then transfer to the watch. It's like having a coach with me all the time. With the S3 stride sensor, I can change my running style incredibly efficiently and reaping the benefits with the joy all serious athletes will know so well.

TESTER'S VERDICT: Absolute winner that helps me improve immensely. - DWAYNE VILJOEN

TB CASIO SPORT CHR-100, R1 799

I think Nike first came up with this design for a running watch. I enjoyed it now as much as I enjoyed it then. A simple running watch with many different ways to time your run with the normal laps and split times, which are then able to be recalled for viewing after the workout. The screen display was always visible while running.

TESTER'S VERDICT: Functional but not so sure about the "World Times" function punted in the booklet. Do I really need to know its 2am in Auckland when I am running? - MICHAEL LANGEVELD, HALF MARATHONER



HT TIMEX BODY LINK TRAIL RUNNER, R3 999

A reliable product jam-packed with a huge amount of information that would help any runner that was doing his thing off the beaten track. The Longitude and Latitude readings are fun although it's difficult to see how you would actually use it. The GPS unit clips unobtrusively to your pants, which means you don't have to wear it on the upper arm. It takes practice getting used to the functions.

TESTER'S VERDICT: A premium product and the clip on GPS unit is a vast improvement. - ANDREW MOORE, TRAIL RUNNER



TB NIKE+, R499

Nike+ was designed to collect basic running data to create a huge community of runners. You will need an iPod and a specific Nike shoe to place the little "pill" into before clocking up the keys and logging them online to be a part of over 1.2-million Nike+ community of runners. Especially great for beginners in need of motivation. As each run is logged, you get the feeling of being watched. The "Hawthorne effect" tells us that this generally makes us perform better.

TESTER'S VERDICT: Basic and fun. - JAX DELPORT, SOCIAL RUNNER



SUPER
RUNNERS
COOL

TB BREO ROAM R300, R350

Sometimes stripping down to just the basics is all you need to get a fresh perspective. After running with all these fun measuring tools for a while, the 10g Breo Roam was a pleasure to cruise by with. It's very noticeable even though the design is so basic. It tells the time - that's it.

TESTER'S VERDICT: Often I feel like a 40min run; no mess no fuss. Start at 5:50pm and finish at 6:30pm ... perfect. And, yes, it is waterproof too. - GEAR GUY



HT GARMIN FORERUNNER 405, R4 250

Forget dogs, this is a runner's best friend. This pared-down, sleek 60g gadget is a GPS-enabled, water-resistant watch that tracks distance, pace, kilojoules, elevation and heart rate. And because it uses GPS, it tracks distance accurately. To make it easier for you, the data is all shown on the easy-to-read screen, and you tap or slide a finger around the cool touch bezel to change the settings. The new design means the GPS antenna receives a stronger signal during your run, providing improved tracking under trees and near tall buildings.

TESTER'S VERDICT: I love the Virtual Partner application where you can race against yourself over your last training runs. - ARTHUR JONES

TB SUUNTO T3C, R1 658

Not nearly as stylish as the T6C, but then this is the simple version that is a lot more affordable and targeted at the less serious athlete than the big brother. The T3C is still a fantastic training buddy however, which includes the general timing features and comfortable heart rate monitor. The Suunto GPS, Foot and Cadence Pods are all compatible and provide extra interesting data.

TESTER'S VERDICT: Great price for a very functional and stylish piece. - GEAR GUY



TB POLAR RS300X, R1 595

I have been using the Polar RS300X regularly in training, making use of the metrics of heart rate, speed, distance, pace and calorie burn to hopefully help me become a better runner and shed some weight. I enjoy using the Polar S1 Foot Pod for real-time pace and distance and the Polar G1 GPS unit also provides tracking information that I can download after the run - not included with the RS300X purchase though.

TESTER'S VERDICT: I use www.polarpersonaltrainer.com to help keep me motivated within the online running community. This fits in perfectly. - TANIA VERMAAK



HT POLAR FT60F PURPLE, R2 395

WOMEN RUNNERS ONLY

Polar has designed a unit specifically for women with a design and look befitting the fairer sex. A weekly exercise programme adapts to your training habits and gives weekly targets, feedback and guidance to help keep you motivated. There is the added option of the Polar G1 GPS unit for tracking your run and the data is downloadable on www.polarpersonaltrainer.com.

TESTER'S VERDICT: It is my first heart rate monitor and workout watch, and I have no problem operating it. I was a little nervous about that. - SANDRA O'DONNELL, MOTHER OF TWO



HT SUUNTO T6C R4 158

My favourite looking unit of the lot, with a huge screen that is visible and uncomplicated. The toggle between screens was also easy to use when searching for data feedback on the move. EPOC calculation measures recovery (very cool) and Training Effect your exercise exertion. These two functions were both accurate. The Suunto HRM comfort belt is the most comfortable of all with soft straps instead of the hard plastic. It never dropped a beat.

TESTER'S VERDICT: Lock this bad boy on my wrist and throw away the key. - GEAR GUY



NOKIA N79 R5 499

The Nokia N79 Active with Sports Tracker rocks the party. All I do is put on my shoes, strap on the Polar HR monitor and run. It does the rest. It tracks my route, distance, steps taken, speed, pace, duration and heart rate. Then when I'm driving, I switch on the Maps function and it tells me where to go.

TESTER'S VERDICT: It makes me want to get out and run, to try new routes, to compare my last run and to improve. - KARI PETERS, *RUNNER'S WORLD ONLINE* EDITOR



TIMEX IRONMAN ROAD TRAINER R2 499

One of the best mid-range models around. Legendary Timex Ironman reliability, great looks and every basic function you need on a HR monitor including call back data, recovery function, stop/split stop watch and the patented indigo light. The heart rate strap may not be the best on the market but it's still comfortable and picks up the heart quickly.

TESTER'S VERDICT: Timex quality matched with a solid, all-around product. - MIKE FINCH, *RUNNER'S WORLD* EDITOR

BEST
RUNNERS
BUY

