

The Adidas Busenitz Pro review

Football and skateboarding apparently have nothing in common.

The first is all about training, corner balls and trophies. Skateboarding is about style, innovative video parts and you most probably won't find any organised training, too.

When it comes to shoes though, except the ones with studs, the two disciplines aren't that distant anymore. Skateboarders like Daniel Shimizu and Gino Iannucci were pioneers in this field and have been spotted



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skating indoor football shoes, including folded over tongues, several times. There are rumors floating around that it also was Gino Iannucci who pushed Nike SB to release the FC, a former football model that was adapted to the requirements of skateboarding. Because of the short lifespan this project was discontinued though (with a few exceptions).

Now Adidas and the professional skateboarder Dennis Busenitz have picked up this idea and interpreted it in a new way. This step seemed likely for both parties. Busenitz, who used to live in Munich, Germany for several years and who has already been photographed for ads in "Bayern München" soccer jerseys, is obviously into football.

And Adidas, the most important Football brand on the market, hasn't just been famous for great shoes since the „Wonder of Bern“ , but also introduced a skateboarding line that stood out in the past few years.

So, what happens if you cross a football shoe with a skate shoe?

If you decide that you would like to give the Busenitz Pro a try, make sure that you pick the right size. Although most skateboarders don't like to hear it, in the end it's a „sport shoe“, if you pick the wrong size, the risk of injuries will rise significantly.

The sizing of the Adidas Busenitz Pro is rather easy. To compare: I wear US 9 in Adidas and Lakai shoes and US 9.5 in Nike SB. For this model I had to pick size US 9. Skaters who have slim feet should stay true to size like I did. People with wider feet should take a half size bigger because of the arrow-shaped toebox and the relatively slim cut. Generally, you have to keep in mind that the Busenitz Pro doesn't stretch as much as other shoes, which is a good thing, so don't speculate that the materials will stretch with wear.

Durability:

The obviously biggest difference to a regular skate shoe design is the longer tongue. It is inspired by classic football designs, where the tongue is supposed to be folded over.

There are basically three ways to wear the Busenitz Pro. First is keeping the tongue as it is, which works fine. Second would be to fold over the tongue, and tie the laces behind or on the folded tongue. This way it provides effective lace protection. The laces on the samples that were tested with the folded-over tongue remained intact for over 20 hours. Unfortunately, this way the felt material on the backside of the tongue frays pretty fast, a different material choice in this area would be an improvement.

The third way to wear the tongue is to cut it off. The tongue features printed instructions on the inside with a dotted line so you can shorten the tongue if you don't like it. This way you get a pair of "Busenitz lights" as Adidas likes to call them.

The toebox being made of one piece of material has a big impact on the overall durability. This „less is more“ concept of the shoe is one of the reasons for the long life-span. Because of the continuous surface the points of attack, where a tear-away process could start, are reduced to a minimum. Since a big part of the toebox is always in contact with the griptape, the pressure is distributed, not just on one point, which would wear a hole in the upper material after some time. The single stitchings in the forefoot area don't affect the durability because they are just part of the design.

At the edge of the toe box, in the area where the stripes are, a tear-apart process starts more easily because of the overlapping material. In this area, the whole pressure and abrasion of the griptape focuses on the material edge. But because the two layers overlap, though it could be more, the durability is adequately increased.



5 hours



10 hours



15 hours



20 hours



23 hours



27 hours

A smart detail in this area that has to be mentioned is the double-stitched first stripe, because of this reinforcement, it stays attached to the upper material.

The first three lace holes of the Busenitz Pro are recessed. This means the laces are surrounded by higher material that has to be worn down before the laces come into contact with the griptape, providing effective protection for the laces through the first three holes. Unfortunately, the stitching in this area doesn't last long. As you can see in the pictures, the stitching above the third stripe is destroyed after a few hours and the two layers aren't attached anymore. In this case, it doesn't affect the overall durability too much though.

More important are the lace holes around the toebox. The single parts are glued as well as stitched. Although the stitching rips through, the layers stay attached to each other.

The construction of the sidewall is also smart.

The seam that connects the inner material with the suede of the sidewall isn't placed towards the inside of the shoe. Additionally, the padding creates a bead on the outside. Both of these details protect the sensitive inner material from contact with griptape.

The height of the midsole of the Adidas Busenitz pro varies a lot. It is twice as high in the heel area than it is in the front. This distribution would normally lead to the assumption, that the front foot area wears down very fast, but this didn't happen during the test.

As you can see, the outsole in the toebox area stays intact for a very long time, an important feature for a long life span of a shoe.

The outsole is also very durable. Because of the deep sole pattern there's plenty of material to wear down, this will be further analysed under the topic "stickiness".



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Inside to outside: inner material, fabric, white reinforcement, suede.



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Glued areas (white)



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Regular tongue



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Folded over tongue

All in all, the Adidas Busenitz Pro is a very durable model despite first assumptions because of the thin midsole. The small details like layers that are glued together, double stitching in the right areas and the smart sidewall construction indicate an accurate and thoughtful design process with skateboarding in mind.

The tested pair lasted for 27 hours. To compare: the Adidas Campus vulc lasted 25 hours of actual skateboarding time. It is safe to say that the Busenitz Pro is even a bit more durable than the already good Campus vulc. You shouldn't regard these time specifications as absolute though. The individual wear depends on many different factors, for instance the trick selection, how many tricks were made during an hour and how much hours of switch skating are included all affect the final outcome. The hours written down in this test should be understood as rough guidelines and their main purpose to provide a comparison between two models skated by the same person.

Cushion:

Unfortunately, the Adidas Busenitz Pro doesn't feature a separate cushion element in the heel. But the high sole construction in the back area, that does take some getting used to, ensures the shoe has the ability to cushion landings to a certain degree. The honeycomb structure that you can see in the cross section picture provides additional damping.

All in all, the Busenitz provides adequate cushioning that definitely can keep up with comparable models of other brands. Even after long sessions, the heel area remained pain-free. However, people who attach a high importance to great damping, for example, because of a former injury, should keep the limited cushion abilities of the model in mind.

Breathability:

The breathability of the Adidas Busenitz Pro is just average. The model has vent holes between the stripes on both sides but they don't go through to the inner lining. The construction of the tongue allows some air exchange, too. Below the upper part, that is made out of leather, a part made out of breathable mesh material is used, which should have the capability of moisture exchange to a certain degree.



The breathability of the tongue is generally very important since the cushioning material and the related thermal isolation causes the instep of the foot to get warm and sweat can

develop. Except of these two areas, the shoe doesn't feature other areas that allow moisture exchange.

Like almost all shoes that are on the market, the main focus of the Busenitz Pro isn't the breathability. There is a lot of potential for improvements in this area. On the other hand, there are models of other brands on the market that feature much worse breathability. So as long as your main focus isn't outstanding breathability, the Adidas Busenitz Pro is still a good choice.

Shape:

The arrow-shaped toebox of the Adidas Busenitz Pro is inspired by the football shoe Copa Mundial, the last model Adi Dassler, the founder of Adidas, was completely involved in developing before his death in 1978. The layout of the stitching in the front foot area is taken from the football classic for example, it is the only shoe that is still completely manufactured in Germany.

As you can see in the pictures, the shape falls between the duller Lakai Manchester and the sharper Nike SB FC. Because of the simple design, most skateboarders should be able to work with this shape and it should be especially popular with fans of the old Lakai Manchester.

Boardfeeling:

As you can see in the cross section, the difference in height between the front and the heel region is relatively big. In the front foot area, the sole is very thin, which leads to a great boardfeeling. In the heel area, where a direct contact to the board plays a secondary role, the sole is around three times as thick, which improves the cushioning.



In general, vulcanised soles and cupsoles

are getting closer and closer to each other, the line that used to be drawn between them doesn't exist anymore. The thickness of the soles of the Busenitz Pro and the Adidas Campus vulc are, except for the higher heel of the Pro, the same. Since the construction of the area from the toes to the middle foot is largely responsible for the subjective impression of a good boardfeeling, it is clear why the Busenitz Pro performs so well in this region.

Grip:

The Adidas Busenitz Pro has the same sole as the Adidas Spezial, which was originally developed for indoor sports like handball. The rough and relatively deep pattern in the forefoot area that consists of overlapping circles is very suitable for the use as a skate shoe sole.

The thin and high lines are very flexible and provide a great grip. The deepness of the pattern guarantees that the profile stays intact for the whole life-span of the shoe, so a long-lasting stickiness is provided.

The adhesion of a skate shoe is also influenced by the flexibility of the sole. The bendability, especially in the front, assures that the sole is able to adopt to the concave of the



deck. This way the contact surface gets bigger which heightens the grip. Although after about 15 hours, the areas that experienced the most stress lost their pattern, except for a minimal rest, the sole kept its great grip for the duration of the test.

Comfort:

First thing that stands out is that the Adidas Busenitz Pro doesn't require a break in period and is ready to skate right out of the box. Although the tongue has a lace loop, it tends to slide towards the outside of the shoe. So every now and then you have to put it back into position, which is a bit annoying but doesn't affect the performance.

The Busenitz Pro features, as most other models of the Adidas line, the Geofit technology in the heel area. But instead of four pillows like the Campus vulc has, for example, it has just two that are positioned around the achilles tendon. But although the number has been reduced the system still works great. It stabilizes the ankle and fixes it in the same position. The resulting pressure under the ankle bone feels pleasant and supportive. Unfortunately, the effect decreases with time because the pillows lose their volume and suspension, a problem that also appeared with the Campus vulc.

The Adidas Busenitz pro features an economically shaped insole. Because of the “wedge” under the arch of your foot, it is much more comfortable and, when landing, the insole can cushion better in this region. Without the wedge there's a gap between your arch and the insole, the foot gets pressed flat if a non-ergonomic insole is used. The insole of the Busenitz Pro has a distinctive shape and the previously mentioned wedge is quite big, which should suit most people's feet and feels highly supportive and comfortable. The original dimensions of the ergonomic insole stay almost the same over the whole lifespan of the shoe, it doesn't decrease a lot with wearing, which is very positive. The inner construction of the Busenitz Pro is kept simple. There just one line of stitching on each side that connects the white heel material with the black forefoot. For this junction, the “stich and turn” method has been used so the stitching doesn't rub on the foot.



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Stability:

The support of a skate shoe is one of its most important features. Whereas the flexibility of the materials in the forefoot is explicitly requested, the heel area is all about keeping the foot in position and being supportive, so injuries are prevented.

A disadvantage of the Adidas Busenitz pro is that it is cut relatively low. On one hand, this design provides a lot of free moving space,



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on the other, the foot tends to slip out more easily and the stability suffers. This is adjusted by the geofit lining and the very stable architecture of the complete back foot area. As you can see in the pictures, the core is the support element in the heel, a c-shaped piece of strong plastic. In general, all shoes feature such an element, but not in these dimensions and made out of such stiff material as the Busenitz Pro.

This construction leads to a shoe that is capable to hold the foot safely and provide the best possible. The black enhancement on the outside adds further stability and stiffness. By using these different stiffening materials in the heel area, the shoe keeps this supportive function over its whole life span, which isn't the case with many comparable models that lose their supportive function over time when worn.

Improvements:

Although the Adidas Busenitz Pro makes a good impression in almost all relevant areas, there's still space for minor improvements.

First, the Geofit system could be improved. A foam that keeps its original dimensions for a longer time or that returns to them would greatly extend the lifespan of the supportive effect of the pillows.

Second, the breathability, as already mentioned, isn't too good. A solution would be the use of the rough mesh material that is used on Adidas jogging shoes. You could apply it on the inner side of the shoe, for example, between the stripes, this way the mesh would be out of reach of griptape. Of course, this should only be executed if the overall stability doesn't suffer too much.

One sentence summary:

The Adidas Busenitz Pro is a simple but well-thought out skate shoe with an arrow-shaped toebox that offers great grip and board feel while remaining durable and stable.

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Thanks to Sneakers Magazine and Tim Weissberg, my corrector.

Some of the pictures show a sample of the Busenitz Pro with a slightly different tongue than the released version has.