

## Nike Fills a Niche and Announces its New “Hands Free” GO FlyEase Sneaker



Nike has released its new “hands free” shoe which allows for slip on and slip off ease! This innovative new shoe is outfitted with a “Bi-stable Hinge,” that keeps the shoe fixed firmly in the open position when slipping the shoe on and off and stays locked securely while being worn. The Go FlyEase sneaker has a “Kickstand Heel” which Nike says, “mimics the action many intuitively perform to kick off their shoes, but by design and without compromising the heel.” The shoe is also designed with a “Diving Board,” that “maintains a continuous foot-bed for comfort and stability.” The “Tensioner,” which ensures the shoe remains open and closed and snaps the shoe into place completes the state-of-the-art design.

Nike introduced the new Fly Ease sneaker line in 2016, allowing the wearer to put on and take off sneakers with more ease. But with that release, at least one hand was needed to tie, strap or zip the sneaker closed.

The new shoe allows the wearer to simply step into the shoe and down onto the foot bed to close. Opening the shoe up to take it off is just as simple, all that's needed is to step on the ledge of the heel with the other foot and the hinge will release, allowing one to slide ones' foot out.



The creation of this shoe dates back to a letter a young man wrote to Nike back in 2012. Matthew Walzer, now 25 years old, was born prematurely. His lungs were underdeveloped and because of this his brain did not receive sufficient oxygen. This led to a brain injury, that left him with cerebral palsy, which according to the Centers for Disease Control is a “group of disorders that affect a person’s ability to move and maintain balance and posture... cerebral means having to do with the brain and palsy means weakness or problems using the muscles.” In 2012 young Matthew was about to enter his junior year of high school. He was looking forward to college but had a few concerns and decided to write Nike about them.

He wrote: “Out of all the challenges I have overcome in my life, there is one that I am still trying to master, tying my shoes.” He continued, “Cerebral palsy stiffens the muscles in the body. As a result, I have flexibility in only one of my hands, which makes it impossible for me to tie my shoes. My dream is to go to the college of my choice without having to worry about someone coming to tie my shoes every day.”

Matthew concluded by saying, "If Nike would design and produce basketball and running shoes with moderate support and some kind of closure system that could be used by everyone, Nike could create a shoe line that attracts people that face the same physical challenges I did and still do, yet it could still be possible for anyone to wear them."

Nike was motivated by his request to fill this niche in the market. That very year Nike presented a prototype to Matthew for him to test. Three years later the FlyEase line was introduced, described by Nike as "an easy-entry footwear system... designed to help athletes of all abilities and ages to perform better."

Now nine years later Nike has presented its newest addition to the FlyEase line. The Nike GO FlyEase permits the wearer to use their feet only when slipping the sneakers on and off.

During this pandemic, comfort is paramount, as more and more employees are working from home. The GO FlyEase will fit in nicely in many households. The shoe has been received enthusiastically not only by those like Matthew Walzer who suffer with chronic disabilities, but also by others who have either difficulty bending down, back pain or are recovering from surgery. They can also be a life saver for the elderly, pregnant women, those with small children and anyone who has a very busy life style.

One member who has received an early pair of the groundbreaking sneakers is Jimmy Fallon. On a recent episode of "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon," the host tried them on and showed how simple they were to put on and take off.

<https://youtu.be/xOm8ZqePSiQ>

The actor pitched a hands-free sneaker to Nike back in 2019 that he called the StepLock. He learned shortly thereafter that Nike had been working on a similar shoe for ten years. Nike acknowledged Fallon's idea by covering the box that contained his sneakers, with drawings of the shoe he pitched. They included a note that read, "Jimmy this is one of the world's first pairs of Nike Go FlyEase. Look familiar? Sorry we beat you to the punch. Can't wait to see you step in and go wherever laughter and joy await you." Fallon went on to try the shoes on, and the camera captured the moment as the shoe easily snapped into place. He summed up his experience by saying, "Look at this...that's it!" These are awesome. These are so comfy.... I love it. Look at the technology...Nike, when they do things... they just do it."

The rest of us are looking forward to the spring when according to the Nike press release, the shoes will be available to the general public.

Yahoo finance reports that the shoe will cost around \$120.

CNN.com  
Nike.com  
Health.com  
Footwearnews.com