

Really? A [performance review](#) on a 20 year old shoe? Serious? Ab-so-lutely. Why not? If the Nike Air Shake Ndestrukt was good enough to help Dennis Rodman win rebounding titles and NBA titles with the Chicago Bulls in the late '90s, it's good enough for me to hit the court in now. Besides, the two colorways released so far (this one and the black Playoff colorway) have been flying off shelves. So, does the Nike Air Shake Ndestrukt stand the test of time, or is it a shoe better left in our rainbow-haired, nipple-pierced, Rodman memories? Let's do this.

Nike Air Shake Ndestrukt traction

Yeah, this is the stuff that haunts other traction patterns' dreams. A wide herringbone pattern that honestly sticks to any surface that was played on - rubber floor, clean wood, dusty-\$\$\$ 24 Hour fitness courts, and both rough and smooth outdoor concrete courts. It just worked, and even though it isn't labeled DRC like the original (that was the XDR of the time) it shows little to no signs of wearing out (these photos were all taken after the review was done).

Dust isn't a problem because of the width between the lines, but the flat blades do grab all the grime and dirt. However, the texture you see on the pattern keeps the Nike Air Shake Ndestrukt from becoming completely slick and sliding. One thing 90's shoes had down? Traction. It seems like every pattern was good on any court. Of course, they all weighed 62 pounds per pair, but they knew how to endure.

Nike Air Shake Ndestrukt cushioning

Uh-oh. Traction definitely still holds up, but we have come to our first sign that this is definitely a '90s shoe. When the Shake Ndestrukt was originally released Zoom was a baby and Max Air was everything (Uptempo, More Uptempo, Pippen 1, etc.). The Shake Ndestrukt uses a visible Air unit in the heel and the forefoot uses...polyurethane.

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PU isn't bad for a cushioning set-up...in 1996. Today, it is definitely behind the times, as it should be. The deal with PU is break-in time. You hear people talk about having to break in [New Yeezys Boost](#) or Zoom shoes, but there is nothing like the time it takes to break in a leather/synthetic shoe with a poly midsole. After about six days of wear, the midsole actually felt the same as the first time. Serious ▪ it takes a long time.

The plus is the PU lasts forever, until it oxidizes and crumbles from age. Shock absorption was non-existent in the forefoot, but court feel and response time was actually decent. The harder PU allows your foot to push and immediately respond into the next move, unlike a shoe with softer foam or Air that will have a sinking-in and lag time before getting back to form.

The heel unit does the job and breaks in sooner than the forefoot, which is good. No problems with any jarring or impact injury back there, and housing the Air unit in PU makes the shoe more stable than using a completely exposed Max unit. Plus, there is still something about a window to the soul (sole) of a shoe.

Nike Air Shake Ndestrukt materials

Every retail site says the Nike Air Shake Ndestrukt retro uses a “leather upper with high-top collar for a secure fit.” Now, there may be real leather, especially on the overlay, but it isn't a completely leather upper. Make no mistake ▪ the materials are still really nice, and the closest you will get to a leather '90s model. But the rand and toebox are definitely using a synthetic and it's harder and smoother than the tumbled feel of the overlay wrap. That makes sense ▪ the outer is stiffer for stability while the overlay has to flex and bend with the ankle.

The base of the overlay is old-school ballistic mesh and it is not breathable. This is the stuff the Jordan XI is made of, and while it is durable, it also needs a break in period. Until it does soften up, the lacing system is extremely difficult to get tight enough to play, but more on that in fit.

The lace loops feature metal grommets, which means they are super-durable. But, pull

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hard enough, and the grommets rip through the leather. Guess how I would know? Yep - second pair on the way. The ankle area is heavily padded and seriously hot, but the feel is great; it wraps completely around your joints and hugs you like that fat aunt at the reunion.

Nike Air Shake Ndestrukt fit

Stay true to size, or even a half size down if you want a super-snug fit once the upper breaks in. Leather stretches, but most synthetics won't, so if you expect the toebox and rand to move out, think again. In my TTS, I had about a thumb's width from the end of my toe to the toebox and it was perfect. (For reference, I am a 10.5 in Rose 7, [Nike Kobe 11](#), and Curry 3, with the same space in the length.)

Width-wise, wide footers should love the Shake Ndestrukt, as it allows for all foot shapes to wear it.

Now, for lockdown, and as mentioned above, give the shoe a lengthy break-in period. Initially, the upper is stiff and will not wrap around your foot like shoes of today. Stay with it because it gets much better. Once you figure out the lacing you will get an absolute lock from heel to toe. (My method: pull tight, but not from the top loop - start at the bottom and work up. Tie the shoes before going through the elastic loop, then push the knot and loops into the elastic band).

The overlay was done right, wrapping the upper into the sole while the laces pull the foot right with the shoe into the footbed and down. The heel is not a problem with the thick padding cutting any movement out completely. Again, if they feel loose or bulky, they are, but give the shoe time to break in.

Nike Air Shake Ndestrukt support

It wouldn't be a true '90s shoe without great support. Designers two decades ago believed the stiffer and wider the better (be mature), and in some ways, they were right. The stiffer upper does provide great lateral stability and containment, keeping stretch and movement to a minimum - once broken in. The wider base gives you a platform to land on that won't roll over or buckle.

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Again, encapsulating the Air unit keeps it from falling on harsh landings. The midsole is a thing of beauty; it wraps up perfectly on the lateral side to 1). provide support on plants and cuts, keeping the foot over the footbed, and 2). give the foot a “starting block” on those same movements. For example: you are guarding a wing, said player goes left and crosses back right. You plant on your right foot to cut that player off ▪ the Shake Ndestrukt holds your foot so you don’ t roll over.

Now you need to move into place to cut the next move off. A shoe without the lateral containment? You are still going the other direction ([Melo M13](#)). The Shake? You have pushed off and are hopefully in position ▪ methods to the design madness.

The Shake Ndestrukt is from a time before carbon fiber shank plates, or even TPU plates, so the midsole is molded with a higher arch support and thick PU cushioning in that area. No problems with downward bends, but the overall transition is a little clunky because of the stiffness of the tooling. Unfortunately, this doesn’ t go away with wear ▪ it’ s just a downside to playing in a classic. Nike Air Shake Ndestrukt overall 3 Surprisingly (at least to me), the Shake Ndestrukt is an overall good performer. The cushioning could be better, and the upper is stiff, but the traction is still killer and stability and support are still great ▪ unless you step on a foot. Again, break-in time is completely necessary, but once it’ s broken you will have a locked in, durable, stable ride for the summer outdoor games.

If you need or want a super-sleek, well-cushioned ride, well, that wasn’ t Worm and neither is this shoe. One surprising thing to be aware of, at least to some of us who saw these sit on the original release, is that the Shake Ndestrukt is selling out almost everywhere. Finish Line is sold out, but retailers like Eastbay, Foot Locker, and Champs have restocked after selling out. The white/navy OG colorway is coming, and being an original colorway, look for it to move quickly as well.

Overall, this is as close to an OG for a Nike retro that we have seen in a long time. Will you rebound like Rodman? Probably not, but since his short-shorts are coming back, you might as well grab a pair, dye your hair red, and pierce your face. You know, for old times’ sake.