

Traction ▪ The best traction I've ever had has come from two shoes... the Air Jordan XX8 and the Air Penny 5. I can now add the Nike Kobe 9 Elite to that list. In fact, it'd be tied with the Air Jordan XX8 for that #1 spot. Yeah... its that freaking good. It must be a combination of the pattern itself and the thin rubber. You receive such a natural feeling when maneuvering that its almost as if you can feel the floor beneath your toes. Outdoor players will want to stay away from these as that thin rubber will likely wear out very quickly. How quickly? Wait here while I go grab my sneaker wear and tear calculator...

Cushion ▪ These feature the same system as the [Kobe 11](#) . If you enjoyed the full length Lunarlon midsole then you'll be pretty pleased here. If you bought any of the other Kobe 8 models that featured different cushion setups and foams then you can easily swap them out for a different/ custom ride. The greatest part is that you can use the LeBron 11 Lunarlon/ Zoom Air midsole in these bad boys so if low profile isn't quite your thing then all you have to do is swap them out with the LeBron midsole and you're good to go.

Material ▪ Flyknit, Fuse and some really sweet looking Carbon Fiber panels are the main materials used. Flyknit is abundant throughout and backed by a very thin TPU/ Fuse for some additional structure and support. Why would they use Flyknit if they were going to use Fuse? I don't know... why would they use Engineered Mesh if they were just going to use Fuse? Obviously basketball and running have two different styles of movement. For added security the thin layer of Fuse was put in place to ensure the structural integrity isn't compromised during play.

Fit ▪ As mentioned in their First Impression, there is a bit of dead space within the toe but I still would recommend going true to size. Length wise, everything fits fine, there just seems to be a bit of extra volume in these that I personally prefer to not have. LeBron would probably love how they fit whereas I prefer the snug fit from the LeBron 11. Speaking of the [LeBron 14 for sale](#) ... you can use that midsole that I went over in the cushion section to help add a slight lift within the shoe thus taking up the dead space within. Were they horribly sloppy without the LeBron midsole? Not at all, quite the opposite... I just like how it feels when the shoe is touching my foot... makes me feel more secure.

Lockdown is great throughout the shoe, especially in the heel... no, not because they

are really high cut. Its because the Flyknit in that area fits like a sock so you have something that really hugs and contains without limiting any restriction. A high that plays like a low. I do feel the collar height is unnecessary as I achieve perfect lockdown from the third to last eyelet but for those that wish to enable their mental placebo... these will work well for that.

Ventilation ▪ Definitely not their strong suit. The tongue and toebox perforations are the only true points of ventilation. Its nothing horrible but its noteworthy for those that wish to have something a little more breathable.

Support ▪ Yes, they are ridiculously high... no, that's not where their support comes from. Their fit, however, keeps your foot in place along the midfoot and heel which is exactly what helps support the foot upon movements. No shifting or sliding around within the shoe at all and the Carbon Fiber heel panels help ensure that no slipping will occur upon lateral movements. You'll be able to play the way you want to while being very well protected from a support standpoint.

What about the lack of shank plate? That was easier for me to describe visually so I go over that in the video above.

Overall ▪ I love playing in the Nike Kobe 9 Elite. They offer everything I personally want and need. Excellent traction, great cushion, nice materials with a supportive yet mobile fit and support for lateral movements. If you happen to want or need more cushion then that is an option, so long as you own a pair of LeBron 11's. I would have loved to have seen these in a lower cut. A high top would have still been fine... just not this high since that's just extra material that doesn't need to be there. However, If you are able to get your hands on a pair then I highly recommend them. Last year the Air Jordan XX8 was my top shoe of the year ever since their February launch... history has found a way to repeat itself on newjordans2018.com ...