

## SPORTS BRAS Get the Right Fit

By Jandi Girard, Inspire Style Coaching

We've heard the lecture from Oprah about getting the right fit for your everyday bras, but what about your sport bras? The need for a proper fitting sport bra is arguably more important than the everyday bra. Consider what you put your "girls" through when running a marathon, kickboxing or even hanging them upside down in downward dog.

Sport bras really aren't just for sports anymore. Some of us wear them daily to get the best support for an active lifestyle. Attractive sports bras can even replace the tank or camisole as a layering piece. It is so universal it seems more like an active bra rather than a sports bra, seamlessly transitioning us through work, Pilates and running errands.

There are three different sports bras that are most widely sold, the compression bra, the constructed or encapsulation bra and the Sportssiere. The compression bra is the most commonly known style that can create the dreaded mono-boob.

The constructed or encapsulation sports bra separates the "girls" like an everyday bra, but are often complicated with elaborate under wire and hooks, snaps and straps. Although many of the encapsulation bras look atrocious, they offer a supportive and natural-shaped bra.

Luckily, we now have the Sportssiere. Designed by a woman, this sports bra combines the support of a compression bra with the flattering fit of an encapsulation bra. Handful's ([www.handfulinc.com](http://www.handfulinc.com)) breakthrough Sportssiere was designed with removable pads that contour and conceal (no more distracting nippy moments), a polyester liner that wicks moisture away, while the Nylon/Spandex that shell dries quickly and allows for smooth layering. Love it!

Here is what to look for when fitting your sports bra:

- A taught fit through the rib cage (the majority of support should come from the band), but without restricting your ability to breathe easily
- When viewed from the side, the band that runs around the body should be horizontal and should not ride up at the back
- Look for moisture wicking fabrics
- Make sure if the straps are at your collarbone or have seams under the arm they aren't rubbing or chaffing
- The heavier your breasts, the tighter the weave of fabric needed
- The breasts should not be bubbling out the top of the bra, there should be a smooth line from the bra to the breast
- Solid stitching and quality construction ensure a longer lasting garment

You should have enough bras so that you only need to wash them once a week. For example, if you wear them four times a week, you should have four fully functioning sports bras. Fully functioning means, there are no holes, missing elastic or fabric that is stretched out and no longer offers support. And contrary to popular belief, when your everyday bra gets old and tired you cannot transition them into athletic bras. You need even more support for activity.

Although many sports bras are machine washable, hand wash is preferred. If you machine wash them use cold water, a gentle detergent and hang them dry for a longer bra life. Follow the above guidelines for your girls and they will do their best to defy gravity for you.