

editors' choice



Notches around the perimeter of the Symbioz Elite's plastic decking enhance the shoe's flexibility.

NO-SLIP SNOWSHOES▲ TSL Symbioz Elite

"THE BEST SNOWSHOE INNOVATION in years," raves one tester. "A revelation on hard-packed sidehills and technical steep," says another. In testing from Wyoming to British Columbia, our crew agreed: The Symbioz's radical design—which bucks a century of snowshoe construction with a flexible, carbon-reinforced plastic deck—provides unparalleled traction for slopes up to 40 degrees. Unlike rigid decks, this one conforms to the shape of the hill, creating more surface contact (read: friction) and allowing each of the eight long crampon teeth to bite deeper into the crud. The flex also reduces torque on lower legs and ankles because you don't have to mash the uphill edge of the deck into the slope. Testers reported less fatigue as a result, and one credited the Symbioz's more natural gait with easing the pain from his plantar fasciitis. (Downside: The flex causes these snowshoes to sink in soft snow. They're best for icy, technical conditions, not for flotation across fresh powder.) In another bit of genius, TSL places the climbing bar on the binding rather than the deck, so it flips down (easily, with one hand) rather than up. And the ratchet binding is one of the best: It takes less than 10 seconds to secure and only two to undo, thanks to quick-release levers you can operate even when wearing bulky gloves. **\$299; 4 lbs. 2 oz.; tsloutdoor.com**

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