

The Current Signature Shoe Athlete Takedown Model Guide

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November 17, 2025



Published

Quick Facts

- Takedown sneakers are budget priced alternatives to flagship signature models
- Several signature athletes have one or two takedown shoes
- They are a gateway for younger fans and hoopers to become fans as they grow up
- Would you wear a takedown shoe?



Nike LeBron 23 (top) and the LeBron Witness 9 (bottom)

When Kevin Garnett wore a then-unidentified [Air Jordan](#) shoe on his 1997-98 Upper Deck Basketball Series 1 trading card ([#75 if you're wondering](#)), I wondered, “what are those?!” And it was not in a pejorative manner like kids in the 2010s would use that phrase whenever they saw a sneaker that they deemed uncool. It was a genuine wonder as to what they were and how much they cost so I could calculate how many chores around the house I would have to perform in order to earn the money to buy them. In my mind, these mysterious sneakers on KG’s feet were the next Air Jordans and I would have to pay premium prices in order to acquire them. Turns out, they were not the next Air Jordans. They were the first [Jumpman Pros](#), aka the first “Team Jordans.” And they were \$120, \$20 cheaper than the [Air Jordan 12](#). Today, a \$20 difference would not prevent me from buying the flagship Air Jordan. In 1997? That was a week’s allowance. And I’m not starving myself at lunch break.

Nearly 30 years later, somewhere in the garage is a beat-up, absolutely unwearable, but complete in box pair of the black, white, and gold colorway of the OG Jumpman Pro. What are those? Air Jordans.



Jordan Jumpman Pro Playoffs

Say the words “Team Jordans” - or by their other name, takedowns - to the wrong person and you might incite a sneaker battle. And yet, nobody has that kind of energy for what might be considered a takedown LeBron or a Giannis sneaker. Part of it is the vice grip that Jordans have in the culture, but the more likely explanation is that it’s not that serious anymore. Sneaker culture created this image that a real one can never be caught wearing a [Jordan Six Rings](#) or a Zoom Soldier, but step outside the bubble and takedowns are on the feet of kids, hoopers, and your uncle who really doesn’t have time to care what some anonymous goof on the internet thinks about their Giannis Immortality 4s. Coupled with a tenuous economic climate where \$20 is somehow both minuscule and essential, a parent or a hooper on a budget is not going to blink twice when the options are a top of the line model or a takedown that carries many of the same performance benefits and aesthetic qualities for a fraction of the price.

And let’s be real: sometimes, the takedowns look better. ~~Take the Jumpman Pro Strong or the Jumpman Pro Quick. Both sneakers were clearly superior to the Air Jordan 13 in every way possible.~~

(Editor's note: Juan's opinions on the [Air Jordan 13](#) are his and his alone. They do not reflect the thoughts and views of Sole Retriever.)

Today's takedown model landscape features a number of signature shoe athletes from every brand offering a budget-priced option with similar or comparable technology. You can find these sneakers in your traditional outlets and brand boutiques, but they can also be discovered at discount retailers and big box sports specialty stores. Less focused on appealing to the crowd that demands high heat, the takedowns can be a gateway for a young fan to get into the ecosystem that eventually leads to a step-up to the flagship sneaker in the future. Here's a look at the current takedown model roster that's available in stores now.

[LeBron James](#)



LeBron James' Sneakers: LeBron 23 (top), LeBron NXXT Genisus (middle), LeBron Witness 9 (bottom)

Signature Shoe: [Nike LeBron 23](#) (\$210)

Takedowns: Nike LeBron NXXT Genisus (\$170), [Nike LeBron Witness 9](#) (\$105)

With the flagship model consistently breaking the \$200 barrier, there is plenty of room for LeBron to expand his reach through takedown models with more affordable price tags. And ever since the debut of the [Zoom Soldier 1](#) in 2007, James has consistently worn his takedowns in the regular season and the playoffs. It's a signal to fans and budget-conscious parents that when LeBron puts his name on a basketball shoe, it meets his needs on the court.

Nine seasons in, the Witness line has served as the entry-level LeBron that is designed for both indoor and outdoor play. With a look that bears more than a striking resemblance to the iconic Nike Zoom Huarache 2K4, the Witness 9 uses a synthetic upper and ReactX foam, which can be found on runners like the Infinity Run 4 and the popular ReactX Rejuven8.

Sitting firmly in the middle of the LeBron 23 and the Witness 9 is the NXXT Gen, a 2020s take on LeBron's first signature shoe, the Nike Air Zoom Generation. Bronny James' sneaker of choice, the latest edition is called the Genisus and it features Zoom Air on the forefoot and a layered mesh upper. Like the flagship LeBron model, the NXXT Gen drops in limited edition colorways and collabs, including partners like [Liverpool F.C.](#), [Titan 22](#), and [FaZe Clan](#).

Giannis Antetokounmpo



Giannis Antetokounmpo's Sneakers: Giannis Freak 7 (top) and Giannis Immortality 4 (bottom)

Signature Shoe: [Nike Giannis Freak 7](#) (\$115)

Takedown: Nike Giannis Immortality 4 (\$85)

Priced at \$115, Giannis Antetokounmpo's seventh signature shoe is already operating at a level that's within the price range of most consumers. But the Giannis Immortality 4 asks, "What if you could go lower?" There might not be a more popular takedown line on this list.

Praised for its signature look (read: the reverse swoosh) and clean colorways, the Immortality 4 and its predecessors are staples of any youth basketball league. Using Renew foam, which consists of recycled Lunar foam, keeps the costs low without totally sacrificing comfort. While comparing this to the signature Freak 7 or other signature models in the Nike family might be a losing effort, it's hard to beat the Nike KD 4-like pricing of 2011.

Luka Dončić



Luka Dončić's Sneakers: Luka 4 (top) and Luka .77 (bottom)

Signature Shoe: [Jordan Luka 4](#) (\$135)

Takedown: [Jordan Luka .77](#) (\$105)

Amongst the new generation of Jordan Brand signature athletes that includes Jayson Tatum, Luka Dončić, and Zion Williamson, Luka was the first to receive a takedown model to go along with his ongoing signature line. Unlike his teammate LeBron James' NXXT Gen and Witness lines, Jordan Brand has connected the Luka 4 and the outdoor-ready Luka .77 at the hip with a handful of themed packs, including an homage to his daughter, the white, black, and red Jordan staple Bloodline pack, and many others.

Designed for street hoops, the Luka .77 aims to be a complementary piece to the flagship model that can appeal to his newly found Laker fans. The timing couldn't be better, really, as many of them have still yet to accept LeBron into their hearts and thus will never wear his sneakers. Luka's arrival and possible long-term future with the franchise mean a new

generation will invest in his sneakers and it starts at the takedown level before graduating to the flagship models.

Russell Westbrook



Russell Westbrook's Sneakers: Why Not 0.6 (top) and One Take 5 (bottom)

Signature Shoe: Jordan Why Not? .6 (\$140 in 2023)

Takedown: Jordan One Take 5 (\$100)

Released in late 2024, the Jordan One Take 5 is the very rare (possibly only) example of a signature athlete's takedown line lasting longer than the mainline. Ironically, that's actually a fitting way to describe the last few seasons of Russell Westbrook's career. Even though most of the NBA fandom has turned on the first ballot hall of famer and Jordan Brand has discontinued his signature line a few years and a few teams ago, Russ continues to be unapologetically Russ. The odds of a Jordan One Take 6 are highly unlikely at this point with Jordan now focusing on the likes of Luka Doncic, but fans of Russ can expect their guy to fight on to the very end in the One Take 5 and his many eclectic Why Notes.

Allen Iverson



Allen Iverson's Sneakers: Reebok Question (top) and Reebok Solution (bottom)

Signature Shoe: [Reebok Question](#) (\$160)

Takedown: Reebok Solution (\$85)

The Reebok Solution, a modern budget-priced take on Allen Iverson's most enduring signature shoe, has been a solid performer for the brand since its 2021 debut. Because of its Question-adjacent look, the Solution became a fine alternative to those who don't want to spend over a hundred dollars for the OG but wanted the iconic Blue Toe or Kobe Bryant PE colorways at a lower price. Last year, the Solution became Angel Reese's go-to sneaker in her rookie campaign, with the brand delivering a multitude of player exclusives to go along with the customs she had created.

Steph Curry.



Signature Shoe: Curry Series 7 (\$160)

Takedown: Curry 3Z 25 SDE (\$85)

The Curry 3Z takedown line has gone through a handful of rebrandings in the course of its run, but it has become a well-reviewed alternative to the mainline Curry Brand sneaker. The latest edition, the Curry 3Z 25 SDE, shares a lot of design similarities with the Curry 12 and Curry Series 7. Place them side-by-side and less informed consumers who are looking for Steph's latest might just confuse the 3Z with his signature. It uses the same Charged Cushioning that was found in previous flagship Currys.

Prior to the publication of this article, it was announced that [Steph Curry is leaving Under Armour](#). Although he is technically a free agent at the moment, the two will still release Under Armour Curry sneakers until October 2026.

Kyrie Irving



Kyrie Irving's Sneaker: ANTA Kai 2 (top) and ANTA Kai Team 1 (bottom)

Signature Shoe: ANTA Kai 2 (\$125)

Takedown: ANTA Kai 1 Team (\$100)

Ever since his departure from Nike and subsequent signing with ANTA, Kyrie Irving has worked quickly to continue the path he was on at the Swoosh. Along with his signature KAI sneakers, Kyrie has also released a Speed variant that is designed for quicker and more explosive play. While most people consider the Kai 1 and Kai 1 Speed on equal footing, the Kai 1 Team takes a more utilitarian approach as it is designed to appeal to all hoopers in less than optimal conditions. Thankfully, Kyrie does not ignore the little details on the Kai 1 Team as he throws a number of signature details throughout the model. It's those kinds of decisions that have made Kyrie a hero to Gen-Z hoopers and younger because he knows those kids are the key to his sneaker future. It might not be advisable to allow your kids to watch Kyrie's free thinking livestreams alone, but the sneakers? He could not say a word and people will flock to ANTA like they did to Nike just a few short years ago.

Dwyane Wade



Dwyane Wade's Sneakers: Li-Ning Way of Wade 12 (top), Li-Ning Wade All-City 13 (middle), and Wade Shadow 6 (bottom)

Signature Shoe: Li-Ning Way of Wade 12 (\$225)

Takedown: Li-Ning Wade All-City 13 (\$150), Wade Shadow 6 (\$120)

Ever since Dwyane Wade first signed with Chinese sportswear label Li-Ning in 2012, the brand and the athlete have gone out of their way to prove that Way of Wade is ahead of the curve. Apparently, one of those ways is to make enough takedowns that they eventually outlap the signature pair: that's when the Wade All-City approached its 13th iteration, one more than the mainline Way of Wade.

With updates to the shoe that include a TPU Europlate for explosive movement and a full-length BOOM midsole that is akin to Nike Zoom Air, the All-City runs into an issue with your frugal sneakerhead because they are priced less like a takedown model and more like a Nike KD. To account for that, the Wade Shadow 6 has emerged as the budget Way of Wade sneaker with a focus on outdoor hoops as it features the brand's TUFF RB tooling.

Anthony Edwards



Anthony Edwards' Sneakers: AE 2 (top) and Believe That 1 (bottom)

Signature Shoe: adidas Anthony Edwards 2 (\$130)

Takedown: adidas Believe That 1 (wait until June 2026)

Anthony Edwards will reportedly launch his first takedown model, the adidas Believe That 1, in June 2026. The timing is perfect because summertime hoops will be in full effect and kids across the country will be itching to play in Ant-Man's latest signature product. What also makes June an interesting date is it's also the same month as the NBA Finals. Will Edwards alternate between the AE 2 and the Believe That 1 (maybe even the AE 3) as the Minnesota Timberwolves advance through the end of the regular season and into playoffs ~~only to lose to the Lakers?~~ Or will he move on completely to the Believe That 1 as an acknowledgment that these are his playoff shoes similar to how LeBron James switched to his Zoom Soldiers early in his career?

