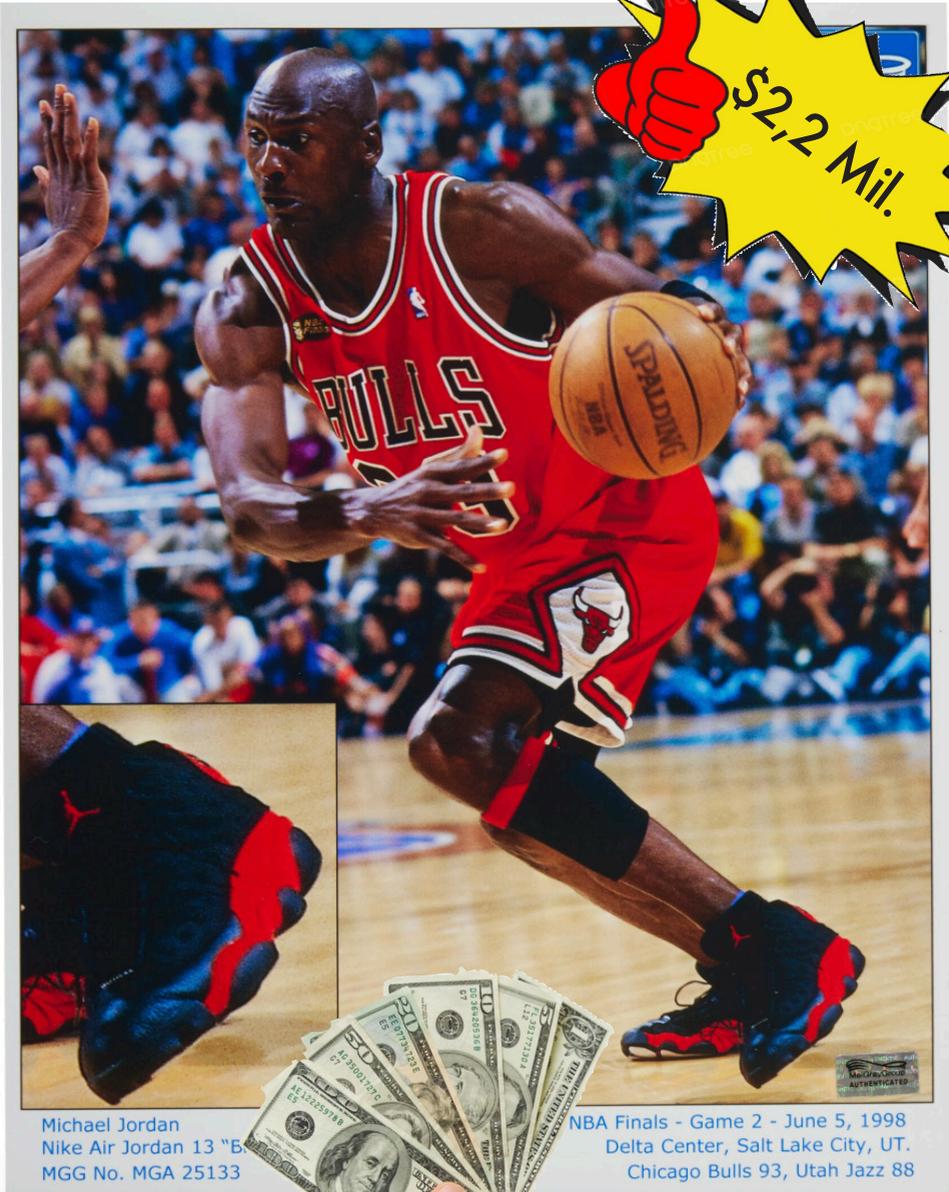




FUTURE OF KICKS





Michael Jordan
 Nike Air Jordan 13 "The Last Dance"
 MGG No. MGA 25133

NBA Finals - Game 2 - June 5, 1998
 Delta Center, Salt Lake City, UT.
 Chicago Bulls 93, Utah Jazz 88

1. Game-worn Air Jordan 13 "The Last Dance" (Game 2)
 Sold for: **\$2,2 Mil.**

The Business of Cool (Top 10 most expensive Sneakers ever sold)

10. Game-worn Air Jordan 7 "Olympic"
 Sold for: **\$112,500**

9. Nike x Louis Vuitton Air Force
 Sold for: **\$151,200**

8. Game-worn Converse Fastbre
 Sold for: **\$190,373**

7. Nike Mag 2016 Auto-Lace
 Sold for: **\$200,000**

6. Nike Moon Shoe
 Sold for: **\$437,500**

5. Game-worn Air Jordan
 Sold for: **\$560,000**

4. Game-worn Air Jordan 1 "Shattered Backboard"
 Sold for: **\$615,000**

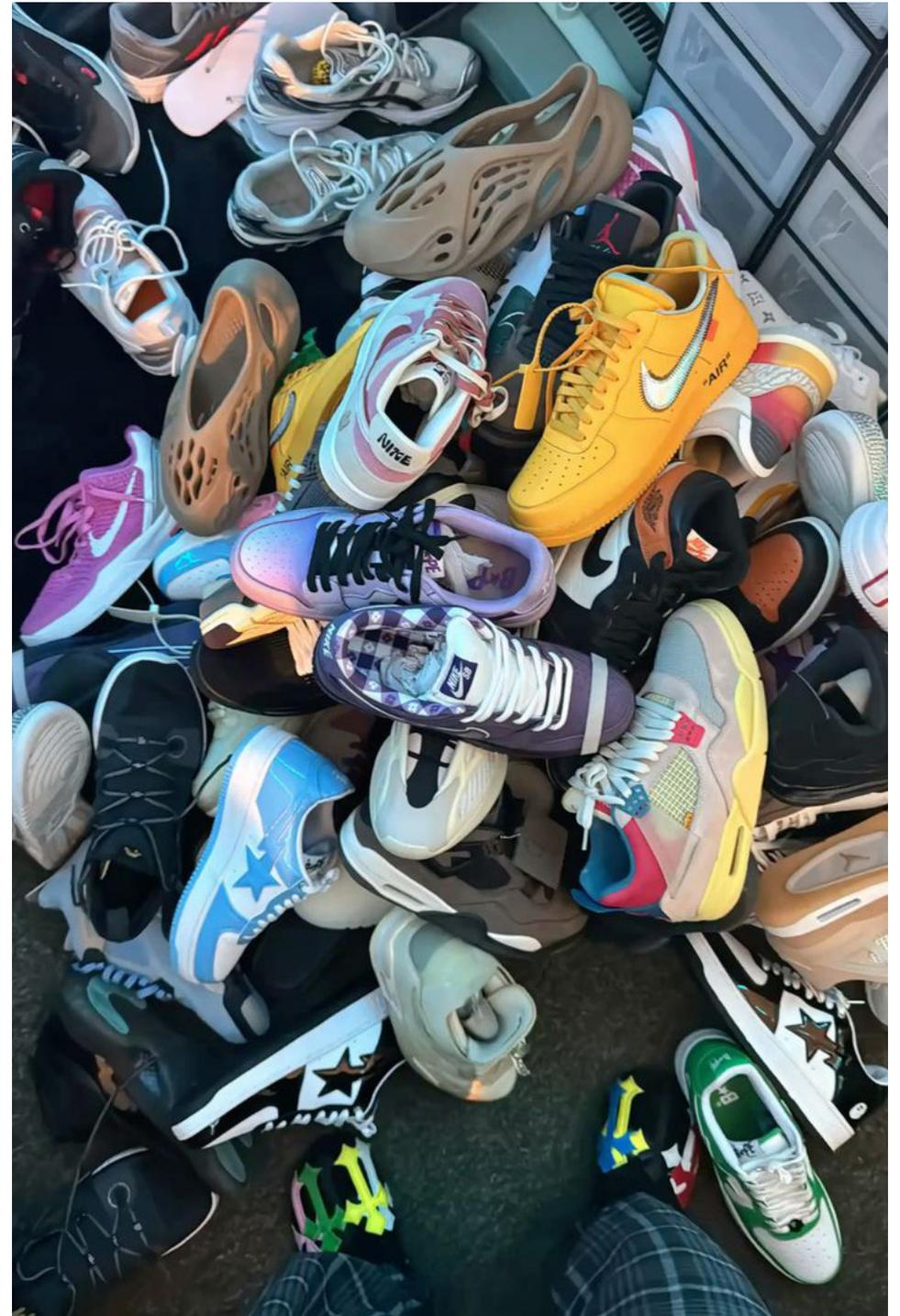
3. Game-worn Jordan's Nike Air Ships
 Sold for: **\$1,472 Mil**

2. Kanye West's Nike Air Yeezy 1 "Prototype"
 Sold for: **\$1,8 Mil.**



“if we want to cultivate a better relationship with fashion, we need to disconnect ourselves from hype.”

-alec leach



Abstract



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Is sneaker hype really dead? For years, sneakers from Nike, Jordans or Adidas sold out instantly, fueling a booming resale market. Today, shelves are full, comments mock new releases, and collectors abandon once carefully curated pairs. Experts agree the market will keep growing, but the hype seems past its peak. So what now? Can footwear hype return, or will relevance depend on more than artificial scarcity? This zine explores signals of change, focusing on three major shifts shaping the future of kicks: sustainability, lifestyle and gender. Each category includes smaller phenomena that together sketch possible directions for the industry. While not every question can be answered, one thing is clear: sneakers remain cultural symbols, but their meaning and market dynamics are evolving.

Contents



P. 2
The Business of Cool

P. 7
Abstract

P. 10
Data Collection

P. 12
Sustainability-Shift

Longevity and Protection

Homegrown Kicks

Individualization through Upcycling
In Visuals

P. 22

Lifestyle-Shift

Grounding Shoes

Merging of performance wear into everyday life

P.28

Gender-Shift

Female athletes as sneaker icons

In Visuals

P.34

Conclusion

Sustainability-Shift

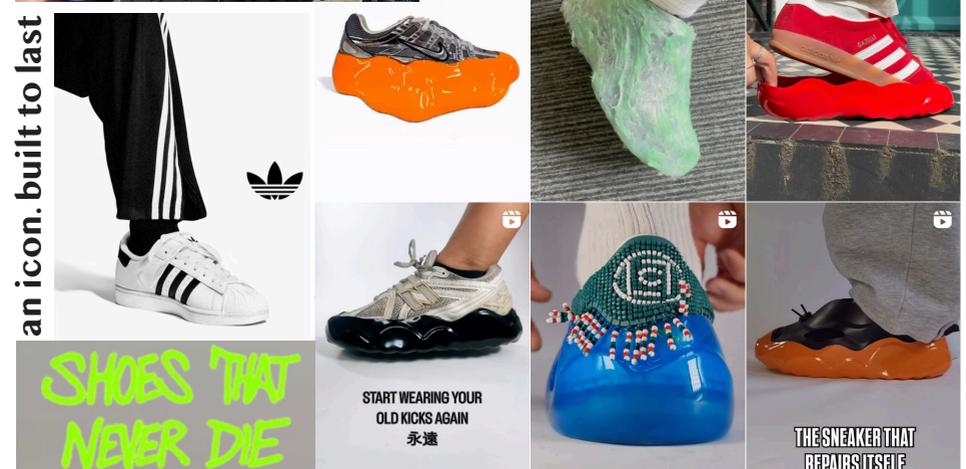


“The sneaker market can no longer be driven solely by aesthetics and newness - humanity and empathy is the way to go”

Wearing is caring

Longevity and protection

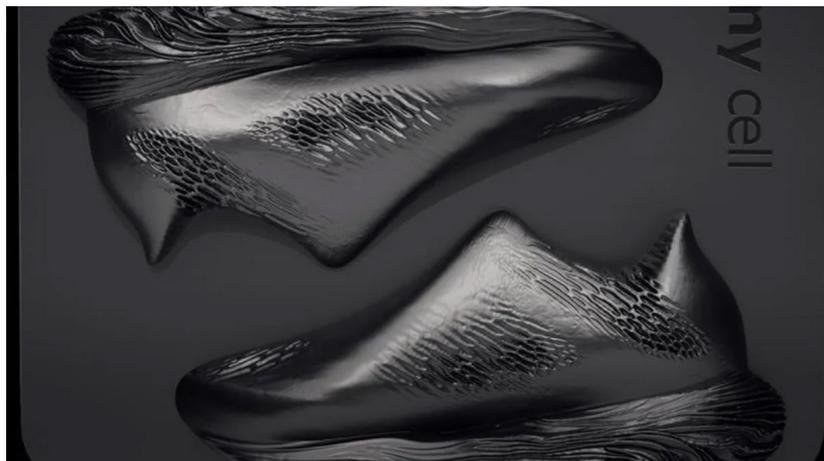
We notice a change in how sneakers are perceived in terms of "using" them. The societal shift leans away from the fast-paced product cycle, that is especially present in the sneaker-industry, and towards the wish for products that last. Underconsumption becomes a new code of value. Shoes are bought to be worn again, wearing them means loving them and loving them means protecting them. Not by heat sealing and putting them on a "trophy shelf" like it was common a few years back, but by making sure they last a long time. Brands like "glidesole" have understood the trend and supply the combination of stylish individuality and protecting one's favourite pair. Brands like adidas have also seen this shift and start to actively advertise their products as "built to last."



We got shoes at home

Homegrown kicks?

Ever since the vast majority of the fashion industry acknowledged that there needs to be a change towards sustainability, there has been one question at the root of it all: how can we continue to produce clothing without the environmental impact? One approach has for a long time been the exploration of alternative materials. Recently the root structure of mushrooms, called mycelium, has been used to make a functioning sneaker and the concept of "mycell" has made its rounds on social media, as it proposes the possibility of "homegrown sneakers". Flour, water and a special mixture are placed in a mould and after some time you get to harvest your sneakers yourself, basically making them from scratch the way Nara Smith would.



Sneakers forever

Individualization through upcycling

Another way to give a longer life to beloved sneakers is to simply upcycle them. What sounds like a no-brainer has become more acclaimed recently with concepts like repair cafés gaining popularity and the repairing instead of throwing mindset being on the rise. This also gives way to new creative approaches to give a new life to beloved footwear. Companies like “goods and services” from LA take old sneakers in and repair them by giving them e.g. a boot-sole – making them one of a kind for their wearer.

Helen Kirkum and her team lets customers send her their old sneakers and turns them into a new pair out of the best pieces from the old ones.

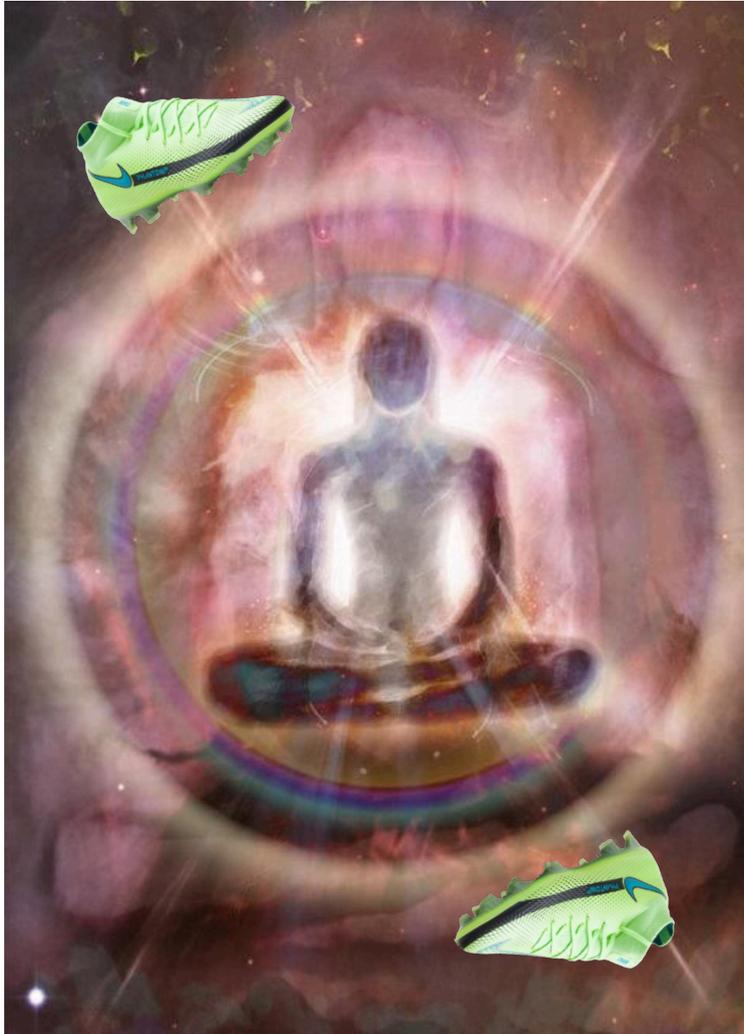


In Visuals

The visual on the right tries to provide an overview and conclusion over the possibilities of sustainable sneaker design from new to repaired / upcycled and from custom to sustainable mass market. This also puts the question to which extend people might have to give up or indulge in individualization more in order to make the future of kicks more sustainable.



Lifestyle-Shift

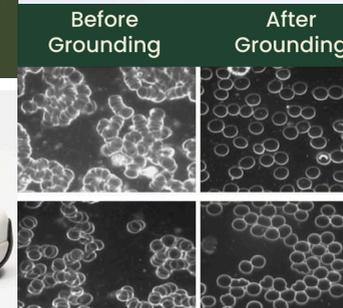
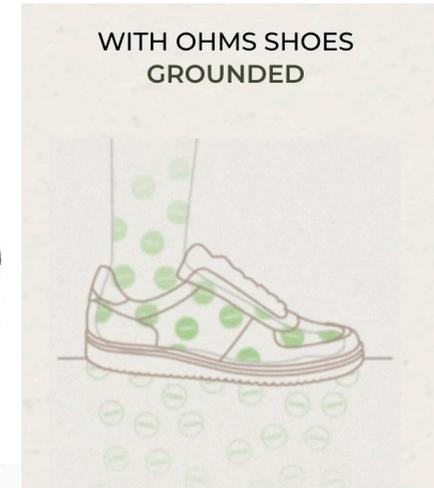
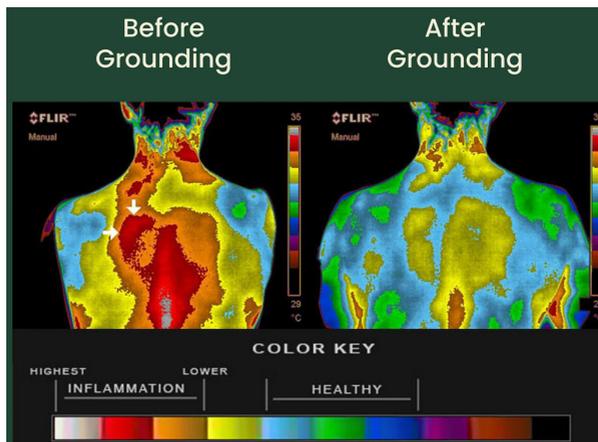


**“Health
is
Wealth”**

Touch grass

Grounding shoes

The holistic health trend we have been seeing for a while now finds its new peak in an increased interest in spirituality, which is nothing new per se but the rapid expansion into other areas of everyday life is remarkable. Clothing are brands selling "energy rocks" as accessories and so on. It seems that in times of political and societal uncertainty, humans look for something they can control and believe in simultaneously. The spiritual approach to holistic health seems like a common ground here. The sneaker industry does not get spared either with so-called "grounding shoes" as a different approach to holistic health after the concept of smart sneakers mostly flopped. Grounding shoes still seem to be at the beginning of their time and the technology behind it is opaque and brands do not disclose as to why these sneakers let the energy of the earth into you, but others don't.



Improved sleep



Cleats in the club

Merging of performance wear into everyday life

A smaller development that can be noticed is the increased performance wear in everyday life. This topic as well is nothing that has just magically appeared recently and probably started with terrace-sneaker making their way out of football-halls and into closets. However there seems to be more and more exaggeration on the one hand (wearing cleats outside on a normal day) and tapping into more niche sports on the other (mainly ballet, boxing or taekwondo). This once again can be tied to the bigger picture of increased awareness and focus on holistic health.



Gender-Shift



“What’s exciting is that women’s sport isn’t just replicating the men’s model. It’s reshaping it. There’s a real sense of purpose and community behind the movement.”

Ball like a girl

Female athletes as sneaker icons

Caitlin Clark, Angel Reese, Sabrina Ionescu – some of the brightest names in modern sports. U.S. basketball is leading a new wave of sneaker icons, and this time it's female. The best proof: Indiana Fever star Caitlin Clark. She's not only set to drop her own signature sneaker in 2026, but also a Nike apparel line. Sneaker pages now curate looks inspired by her, and reworked kicks in her WNBA team colors are selling out fast. The future is female – even in a male-dominated industry. Women's sports are no longer a side note but a powerful stage with fresh creative freedom, far beyond the over-commercialized male sphere.



CAITLIN CLARK BASKETBALL SHOES

Shop a curated selection of Caitlin Clark basketball shoes worn by the transcendent women's basketball player during her decorated collegiate career at the University of Iowa. Clark broke the NCAA women's basketball all-time scoring record in the Kobe 5 'Bruce Lee,' surpassed Pete Maravich to become the leading scorer in NCAA basketball history in a pair of 'White Del Sol' Kobe 6s and made her WNBA debut in the Kobe 6 'Grinch.' Discover a curated selection of basketball shoes worn by Clark including Player Exclusives Kobe 5 'Indiana Fever' and Kobe 6 'Light Armory Blue' from Flight Club.

In Visuals

The visual on the right outlines a timeline of the recent evolution of women-sports. LSN Global calls the summer of 2025 a "cultural tipping point" for the industry and forecasts a further independence from male-sports due to the recognition of the higher creative freedom for brands and agencies in women-sports. Projects like Nikes Think Tank for female athletes of all sports and newly founded agencies that solely focus on the representation of women indicate a bigger shift towards a more female dominated industry - also in footwear.



Angel Reese and Sabrina Ionescu get their own signature Basketball shoes

founding of sports and marketing agencies that are specifically for female athletes



Womes sport as sub-genre of the male sport

2022: Nike introduces "Think Tank for female athletes, Lionesses win EURO

Summer 25 "Cultural tipping point"

2026 Caitlin Clark releases Signature Sneaker with Nike

Womes sport separated from over commercialized male counterpart

Conclusion



Sneaker culture is shifting. What once thrived on hype, scarcity and resale madness now finds new energy in different places. The market is still growing, but its heartbeat has changed. Instead of chasing every limited drop, attention turns to sustainability, lifestyle, gender and new icons shaping the scene. Figures like Caitlin Clark, Angel Reese or Sabrina Ionescu show how women's sports can redefine sneaker culture with fresh narratives and authentic influence. Their success proves that sneakers are no longer just tied to male-dominated spheres but to broader cultural movements. The hype might not be dead, but it has transformed. The future of sneakers is less about artificial exclusivity and more about diversity, inclusivity and creativity. Brands that adapt and embrace these shifts will remain relevant. Sneakers are not losing meaning—they are evolving into symbols of change, reflecting the values and voices of a new generation.



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