

## “One day with...” -The idea-

As most of you will know, it takes around 3 sessions to decide whether or not you like a skate shoe. Based on that observation, I came up with the idea of a shorter review format that focuses on the first 5 hours of skating in a new shoe. It was originally introduced on the Slap Magazine homepage as part of the “Slap Shoe Blog” and from now on will also be a part of [weartested.de](http://weartested.de).

These shorter reviews – about the first few hours, where almost all qualities and malfunctions of a shoe appear or at least can be foreseen – will be more compressed and on point, but still as objective as possible.

## “One day with... the Vans AV6”

### Sizing

The Vans AV6 fits a little bit bigger than most other models. I wear US9 in Adidas, Emerica and Cons, and the AV6 is a bit more roomy in that size. People with narrow feet should be careful with buying the AV6 in their usual size.

### Durability

The design of the Vans AV6 is influenced by the Vans Era and the Old Skool. The combination of these two models really improves the durability. A weakness of the Old Skool, for example, is the canvas sidewall of many colorways. The AV6, with the Era toebox piece, makes sure that the sensitive sidewalls are well protected by the suede material that spreads further towards the heel area, compared to the classic Old Skool shape.

A small weakness of the AV6 is the soft rubber of the white sole parts. On one hand, it is very sticky and provides an excellent flick, but on the other hand, it's not very durable. After the 5 hour test, the abrasion was already at a stage where the suede under the white part in the kickflip area was visible. Since there are several layers of vulcanised rubber, and the sole is very high compared to others, it should still offer a decent life span for a vulcanised model though. The single-piece toe box also makes up for this, since there's virtually no stitching that could rip through or overlapping material where a tear-apart process could start.



The lace protection is also quite good. Due to the narrow lacing system, the sensitive laces are kept away from the griptape and the sidewalls take most of the abrasion.

## Breathability

The breathability of the AV6 is average compared to most other shoes on the market. There are two ventilation holes in the canvas sidepanels, which are a bit more permeable for air and moisture than suede or leather. The tongue, which plays a major part in the air exchange process, is also canvas, so a good amount of the shoe's upper surface offers at least some breathability, which is better than first expected from the Vans AV6.

## Grip

The vulcanized sole of the AV6 has the classic Vans waffle grip pattern, but the version with the deeper elements, as opposed to the micro waffle grip, which many skaters should like.

The grip provided by the AV6 is very rough and strong. Once you place your feet on the griptape they stay in that position and are hard to move, which is a very positive sign. With wear, the grip does decrease, but it is still one of the grippiest soles on the market, even for a vulcanised model.



## Shape

As you can see in the pics, the shape of the AV6 is comparable to that of the Vans Era. It is long, has an arrow-shaped toe box and is quite slim compared to most other models on the market. Despite its fairly simple construction, the shape stayed pretty much the same throughout the test.

## Boardfeeling

The sole construction of the AV6 is thin over the full length of the shoe. It seems to be marginally thicker than the sole of the classic Era though. The insole is also a little bit thicker.

The Vans AV6 still offers an extraordinary boardfeeling, which is comparable to a Vans Era, but the additional cushioning offers more comfort.

The sole is very flexible, so the shoe adapts perfectly to the concave of the board, keeping the contact area between it and the shoe as large as possible. This also plays a major role when it comes to good boardfeel.



## **Comfort/Cushion**

The Vans AV6 features a memory foam insole, which does take some time to get used to, but once it adapts to the shape of your feet after a few sessions, it feels very pleasant. The padding is very limited, neither the sole nor the collar feature distinctive cushion materials, but the shoe is still very comfortable. A small disadvantage of the reduced padding is the tendency of the foot to slip out of the shoe, but since the model is intended to be laced tightly, it's just a small weakness that shouldn't occur for most people.

A positive feature that should be mentioned is the almost seamless inner lining, which doesn't have any overlapping material that could cause blisters.

## **Support**

The C-shaped plastic piece in the heel was still stiff after the 5 hours of skating. The ankle section is higher compared to Eras or other vulcanized shoes, like the Nike SB Janoski, which makes the support offered by the AV6 better than similar models.

However, the sidewalls are very thin and flexible, which will probably lead to horizontal movement of the foot within the shoe, which should normally be avoided by a good skate shoe.

As mentioned before, the sole is very flexible, but this has its downsides. Even with the extra thickness, the sole still lacks protection if you land primo or on the edge of a curb, for example. The same is the case if you bail tricks down higher gaps or stair sets – the shoe will only prevent painful heel bruises to a certain degree. Like many thin vulc models, the AV6 doesn't offer much support for the foot. Higher-impact skating will quickly reveal the borders of the AV6's support.

## **One sentence summary**

The Vans AV6 is an improved mixture of the Era and the Old School, with great boardfeeling and grip but average durability and support.