



How To Find the Best Style Mutual Funds

Finding the best mutual funds is an increasingly difficult task in a world with so many to choose from. How can you pick with so many choices available?

Don't Trust Mutual Fund Labels

There are at least 871 different Large Cap Blend mutual funds and at least 6,083 mutual funds across twelve styles. Do investors need 506+ choices on average per style? How different can the mutual funds be?

Those 871 Large Cap Blend mutual funds are very different. With anywhere from 20 to 1385 holdings, many of these Large Cap Blend mutual funds have drastically different portfolios, creating drastically different investment implications.

The same is true for the mutual funds in any other style, as each offers a very different mix of good and bad stocks. Large Cap Blend funds rank first for stock selection. Small Cap Value funds rank last. Details on the [Best & Worst mutual funds in each style are here.](#)

Paralysis By Analysis

We think the large number of Large Cap Blend (or any other) style mutual funds hurts investors more than it helps because too many options can be paralyzing. It is simply not possible for the majority of investors to properly assess the quality of so many mutual funds. Analyzing mutual funds, done with the proper diligence, is far more difficult than analyzing stocks because it means analyzing all the stocks within each mutual fund. As stated above, that can be as many as 1385 stocks, and sometimes even more, for one mutual fund.

Any investor focused on fulfilling fiduciary duties recognizes that analyzing the holdings of a mutual fund is critical to finding the best mutual fund. Figure 1 shows our top rated mutual fund for each style.

Figure 1: The Best Mutual Fund in Each Style

Ticker	Name	Investment Style	Assets (\$mm)
SVFYX	Smead Value Fund	All Cap Blend	\$1,154
CLPFX	Catalyst/Lyons Hedged Premium Return Fund	All Cap Growth	\$3
FVDKX	Fidelity Value Discovery Fund	All Cap Value	\$1,906
NCARX	Nuveen Concentrated Core Fund	Large Cap Blend	\$93
NSRGX	Nuveen Growth Fund	Large Cap Growth	\$49
LBISX	Legg Mason BW Diversified Large Cap Value Fund	Large Cap Value	\$896
BALIX	Ultimus Barrow Value Opportunity Fund	Mid Cap Blend	\$35
FUQIX	Fidelity SAI US Quality Index Fund	Mid Cap Growth	\$3,800
HNMVX	Harbor Mid Cap Value Fund	Mid Cap Value	\$824
BTSMX	Boston Trust SMID Cap Fund	Small Cap Blend	\$6
WASMX	Walden SMID Cap Fund	Small Cap Growth	\$34
RSEIX	Royce Special Equity Fund	Small Cap Value	\$1,450

Sources: New Constructs, LLC and company filings

Amongst the mutual funds in Figure 1, Nuveen Concentrated Core Fund (NCARX) ranks first overall, Legg Mason BW Diversified Large Cap Value Fund (LBISX) ranks second, and Smead Value Fund (SVFYX) ranks third. Harbor Mid Cap Value Fund (HNMVX) ranks last.

How To Avoid "The Danger Within"

Why do you need to know the holdings of mutual funds before you buy?



You need to be sure you do not buy a fund that might blow up. Buying a fund without analyzing its holdings is like buying a stock without analyzing its business and finances. No matter how cheap, if it holds bad stocks, the mutual fund's performance will be bad. Don't just take our word for it, see [what Barron's says](#) on this matter.

PERFORMANCE OF FUND'S HOLDINGS = PERFORMANCE OF FUND

If Only Investors Could Find Funds Rated by Their Holdings...

Our [mutual fund ratings](#) leverage our [stock coverage](#). We rate mutual funds based on the aggregated ratings of the stocks each mutual fund holds.

Nuveen Concentrated Core Fund (NCARX) is not only the top-rated Large Cap Blend mutual fund, but is also the best style mutual fund out of the 6,083 style mutual funds that we cover.

The mutual funds in Figure 1 all receive an Attractive-or-better rating. However, with so few assets in some of the funds, it is clear investors haven't identified these quality mutual funds.

This article originally published [here](#) on November 15, 2016.

Disclosure: David Trainer, Kyle Guske and Kyle Martone receive no compensation to write about any specific stock, style, or theme.

Scottrade clients get a Free Gold Membership (\$588/yr value) as well as 50% discounts and up to 20 free trades (\$140 value) for signing up to Platinum, Pro or Unlimited memberships. [Login or open your Scottrade account & find us under Quotes & Research/Investor Tools.](#)



New Constructs® – Profile

How New Constructs Creates Value for Clients

We find it. You benefit. Cutting-edge technology enables us to scale our [forensic accounting expertise](#) across 3000+ stocks. We shine a light in the dark corners of SEC filings so our clients can make safer, more informed decisions.

Our [stock rating methodology](#) instantly informs you of the quality of the business and the fairness of the stock's valuation. We do the diligence on earnings quality and valuation so you don't have to.

In-depth risk/reward analysis underpins our ratings. Our rating methodology grades every stock, ETF, and mutual fund according to what we believe are the 5 most important criteria for assessing the quality of an equity. Each grade reflects the balance of potential risk and reward of buying that equity. Our analysis results in the 5 ratings described below. Very Attractive and Attractive correspond to a "Buy" rating, Very Dangerous and Dangerous correspond to a "Sell" rating, while Neutral corresponds to a "Hold" rating.

QUESTION: Why shouldn't fund research be as good as stock research? Why should fund investors rely on backward-looking price trends?

ANSWER: They should not.

Don't judge a fund by its cover. Take a look inside at its holdings and understand the quality of earnings and valuation of the stocks it holds. We enable you to choose the best fund based on its stock-picking merits so you do not have to rely solely on backward-looking technical metrics.

The drivers of our [forward-looking fund ratings](#) are Portfolio Management (i.e. the aggregated ratings of its holdings) and Total Annual Costs. The Total Annual Costs Rating ([details here](#)) captures the all-in cost of being in a fund over a 3-year holding period, the average period for all fund investors.

Our Philosophy About Research

Accounting data is not designed for equity investors, but for debt investors. [Accounting data must be translated into economic earnings](#) to understand the profitability and valuation relevant to equity investors. Respected investors (e.g. Adam Smith, Warren Buffett and Ben Graham) have repeatedly emphasized that accounting results should not be used to value stocks. [Economic earnings](#) are what matter because they are:

1. Based on the complete set of financial information available.
2. Standard for all companies.
3. A more accurate representation of the true underlying cash flows of the business.

Additional Information

Incorporated in July 2002, [New Constructs](#) is an independent publisher of investment research that provides clients with consulting and research services. We specialize in quality-of-earnings, forensic accounting and discounted cash flow valuation analyses for all U.S. public companies. We translate accounting data from 10Ks into economic financial statements, i.e. [NOPAT](#), [Invested Capital](#), and [WACC](#), to create [economic earnings models](#), which are necessary to understand the true profitability and valuation of companies. Visit the [Free Archive](#) to download samples of our research. New Constructs is a [BBB accredited](#) business and a member of the [Investorside Research Association](#).



DISCLOSURES

New Constructs®, LLC (together with any subsidiaries and/or affiliates, "New Constructs") is an independent organization with no management ties to the companies it covers. None of the members of New Constructs' management team or the management team of any New Constructs' affiliate holds a seat on the Board of Directors of any of the companies New Constructs covers. New Constructs does not perform any investment or merchant banking functions and does not operate a trading desk.

New Constructs' Stock Ownership Policy prevents any of its employees or managers from engaging in Insider Trading and restricts any trading whereby an employee may exploit inside information regarding our stock research. In addition, employees and managers of the company are bound by a code of ethics that restricts them from purchasing or selling a security that they know or should have known was under consideration for inclusion in a New Constructs report nor may they purchase or sell a security for the first 15 days after New Constructs issues a report on that security.

DISCLAIMERS

The information and opinions presented in this report are provided to you for information purposes only and are not to be used or considered as an offer or solicitation of an offer to buy or sell securities or other financial instruments. New Constructs has not taken any steps to ensure that the securities referred to in this report are suitable for any particular investor and nothing in this report constitutes investment, legal, accounting or tax advice. This report includes general information that does not take into account your individual circumstance, financial situation or needs, nor does it represent a personal recommendation to you. The investments or services contained or referred to in this report may not be suitable for you and it is recommended that you consult an independent investment advisor if you are in doubt about any such investments or investment services.

Information and opinions presented in this report have been obtained or derived from sources believed by New Constructs to be reliable, but New Constructs makes no representation as to their accuracy, authority, usefulness, reliability, timeliness or completeness. New Constructs accepts no liability for loss arising from the use of the information presented in this report, and New Constructs makes no warranty as to results that may be obtained from the information presented in this report. Past performance should not be taken as an indication or guarantee of future performance, and no representation or warranty, express or implied, is made regarding future performance. Information and opinions contained in this report reflect a judgment at its original date of publication by New Constructs and are subject to change without notice. New Constructs may have issued, and may in the future issue, other reports that are inconsistent with, and reach different conclusions from, the information presented in this report. Those reports reflect the different assumptions, views and analytical methods of the analysts who prepared them and New Constructs is under no obligation to insure that such other reports are brought to the attention of any recipient of this report.

New Constructs' reports are intended for distribution to its professional and institutional investor customers. Recipients who are not professionals or institutional investor customers of New Constructs should seek the advice of their independent financial advisor prior to making any investment decision or for any necessary explanation of its contents.

This report is not directed to, or intended for distribution to or use by, any person or entity who is a citizen or resident of or located in any locality, state, country or jurisdiction where such distribution, publication, availability or use would be contrary to law or regulation or which would be subject New Constructs to any registration or licensing requirement within such jurisdiction.

This report may provide the addresses of websites. Except to the extent to which the report refers to New Constructs own website material, New Constructs has not reviewed the linked site and takes no responsibility for the content therein. Such address or hyperlink (including addresses or hyperlinks to New Constructs own website material) is provided solely for your convenience and the information and content of the linked site do not in any way form part of this report. Accessing such websites or following such hyperlink through this report shall be at your own risk.

All material in this report is the property of, and under copyright, of New Constructs. None of the contents, nor any copy of it, may be altered in any way, copied, or distributed or transmitted to any other party without the prior express written consent of New Constructs. All trademarks, service marks and logos used in this report are trademarks or service marks or registered trademarks or service marks of New Constructs.

Copyright New Constructs, LLC 2003 through the present date. All rights reserved.