

# the realist

## HOW TO FIND A DEPENDABLE UMBRELLA

Look for one that's at least 40 inches in diameter for sufficient shelter, says Mark Duffin, managing director at Blunt Umbrellas in New York City. An easy way to test: Stand under the umbrella and stick out your arm; the edge of the umbrella's canopy should hit about where your elbow bends.

When you open the umbrella, the fabric should be pulled taut—a firmly stretched canopy helps disperse wind more effectively. If you live in a windy climate, a vented umbrella is also a good idea because it allows gusts to pass through it instead of charging at it, says Jen Carfagno, a meteorologist at the Weather Channel in Atlanta. A continuous shaft and ribs with no breaks in the joints can help prevent flipping. Your umbrella may be less compact but more durable: "With every break in the shaft or ribs, it loses some of its strength," says Duffin. Go for a fiberglass body, which is more flexible than metal, and a rubber handle with grooves for a more comfortable hold. This model (the Stick Umbrella, \$65; [weathermanumbrella.com](http://weathermanumbrella.com)) checks all boxes.

By Maggie Puniewska

Complete your rainy day ensemble with the waterproof shoes at [realsimple.com/rainshoes](http://realsimple.com/rainshoes).

Photograph by Corey Olsen