



## How to Find the Best Style ETFs

With an ever-growing list of similar-sounding ETFs to choose from, finding the best is an increasingly difficult task. How can investors change the game to shift the odds in their favor?

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### Don't Trust ETF Labels

There are at least 206 different All Cap Blend ETFs and at least 814 ETFs across twelve styles. Do investors need 68+ choices on average per style? How different can the ETFs be?

Those 206 All Cap Blend ETFs are very different from each other. With anywhere from 3 to 3,693 holdings, many of these All Cap Blend ETFs have drastically different portfolios with differing risk profiles and performance outlooks.

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

### Avoiding Analysis Paralysis

We think the large number of style ETFs hurts investors more than it helps. Manually conducting a deep analysis for every ETF is simply not a realistic option, exposing investors to insufficient analysis and missing profitable opportunities. Analyzing ETFs, with the proper diligence<sup>1</sup>, is far more difficult than analyzing stocks because it means analyzing all the stocks within each ETF. As stated above, there can be as many as 3,693 stocks or more for one ETF.

Anyone focused on [fulfilling the fiduciary duty of care](#) recognizes that analyzing the holdings<sup>2</sup> of an ETF is critical to finding the best ETF. More [reliable](#) & [proprietary](#) fundamental data, proven in [The Journal of Financial Economics](#), drives our research and analysis of ETF holdings and provides investors with a [new source of alpha](#). Figure 1 shows our top-rated ETF for each style.

<sup>1</sup> Three independent studies from respected institutions prove the superiority of our data, models, and ratings. Learn more [here](#).

<sup>2</sup> Harvard Business School features the powerful impact of our research automation technology in the case [New Constructs: Disrupting Fundamental Analysis with Robo-Analysts](#).

**Figure 1: The Best ETF in Each Style**

Ticker	Name	Investment Style	Assets (\$mm)
SPGP	Invesco S&P 500 GARP ETF	All Cap Blend	\$4,950
SRHQ	SRH U.S. Quality ETF	All Cap Growth	\$140
ECML	Euclidean Fundamental Value ETF	All Cap Value	\$187
FTCS	First Trust Capital Strength ETF	Large Cap Blend	\$9,058
FTGS	First Trust Growth Strength ETF	Large Cap Growth	\$193
DGT	SPDR Global Dow ETF	Large Cap Value	\$199
QVAL	Alpha Architect U.S. Quantitative Value ETF	Mid Cap Blend	\$343
FLQM	Franklin U.S. Mid Cap Multifactor Index ETF	Mid Cap Growth	\$612
LSAT	LeaderShares AlphaFactor Tactical Focused ETF	Mid Cap Value	\$160
MGMT	Ballast Small/Mid Cap ETF	Small Cap Blend	\$143
XMHQ	Invesco S&P MidCap Quality ETF	Small Cap Growth	\$4,471
XSVM	Invesco S&P SmallCap Value with Momentum ETF	Small Cap Value	\$793

\* Best ETFs exclude ETFs with TNAs less than \$100 million for inadequate liquidity

Sources: New Constructs, LLC and company filings

Amongst the ETFs in Figure 1, Ballast Small/Mid Cap ETF (MGMT) ranks first overall, LeaderShares AlphaFactor Tactical Focused ETF (LSAT) ranks second, and Alpha Architect U.S. Quantitative Value ETF (QVAL) ranks third. First Trust Growth Strength ETF (FTGS) ranks last.

### How to Avoid “The Danger Within”

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

You need to be sure you do not buy an ETF that might blow up. Buying an ETF 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 ETF's performance will be bad. Don't just take my word for it, see [what Barron's says](#) on this matter.

#### PERFORMANCE OF FUND'S HOLDINGS – FEES = PERFORMANCE OF FUND

Analyzing each holding within funds is no small task. Our [Robo-Analyst technology](#) enables us to perform this diligence with scale and provide the [research needed](#) to fulfill the fiduciary duty of care. More of the biggest names in the financial industry (see [At BlackRock, Machines Are Rising Over Managers to Pick Stocks](#)) are now embracing technology to leverage machines in the investment research process. Technology may be the only solution to the dual mandate for research: cut costs and fulfill the fiduciary duty of care. Investors, clients, advisors and analysts deserve the latest in technology to get the diligence required to make prudent investment decisions.

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

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

Ballast Small/Mid Cap ETF (MGMT) is not only the top-rated Small Cap Blend ETF but is also the overall top-rated style ETF out of the 814 style ETFs that we cover.

The worst ETF in Figure 1 is First Trust Growth Strength ETF (FTGS), which gets an Attractive rating.

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

*Questions on this report or others? Join our [Society of Intelligent Investors](#) and connect with us directly.*



## *It's Official: We Deliver the Best Fundamental Data in the World*

Many firms claim their research is superior, but none of them can prove it with independent studies from highly-respected institutions as we can. Three different papers from both the public and private sectors show:

1. The stock market is missing footnotes – and only we have that critical data.
2. Legacy fundamental datasets suffer from significant inaccuracies, omissions, and biases.
3. Our proprietary drives novel alpha. Our measures of [Core Earnings](#) and [Earnings Distortion](#) materially improve stock picking and forecasting of profits.

### **Best Fundamental Data in the World**

In [The Journal of Financial Economics](#), a top peer-reviewed journal, [Core Earnings: New Data & Evidence](#) proves our Robo-Analyst technology overcomes material shortcomings in legacy firms' data collection processes to provide superior [fundamental data](#), [earnings](#) models, and [research](#). More [details](#).

Key quotes from the paper:

- “[New Constructs’] *Total Adjustments* differs significantly from the items identified and excluded from Compustat’s adjusted earnings measures. For example... 50% to 70% of the variation in *Total Adjustments* is not explained by S&P Global’s (*SPGI*) *Adjustments* individually.” – pp. 14, 1<sup>st</sup> para.
- “A final source of differences [between New Constructs’ and S&P Global’s data] is due to data collection oversights...we identified cases where Compustat did not collect information relating to firms’ income that is useful in assessing core earnings.” – pp. 16, 2<sup>nd</sup> para.

### **Superior Models**

Ernst & Young features the superiority of our ROIC, NOPAT and Invested Capital research to Capital IQ & Bloomberg’s in [Getting ROIC Right](#). See the [Appendix](#) for direct comparison details.

Key quotes from the paper:

- “...an accurate calculation of ROIC requires more diligence than often occurs in some of the common, off-the-shelf ROIC calculations. Only by scouring the footnotes and the MD&A [ as New Constructs does] can investors get an accurate calculation of ROIC.” – pp. 8, 5<sup>th</sup> para.
- “The majority of the difference...comes from New Constructs’ machine learning approach, which leverages technology to calculate ROIC by applying accounting adjustments that may be buried deeply in the footnotes across thousands of companies.” – pp. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> para.

### **Superior Stock Ratings**

Robo-Analysts’ stock ratings outperform those from human analysts as shown in this [paper](#) from Harvard Business School. Bloomberg features the paper [here](#).

Key quotes from the paper:

- “the portfolios formed following the buy recommendations of Robo-Analysts earn abnormal returns that are statistically and economically significant.” – pp. 6, 3<sup>rd</sup> para.
- “Our results ultimately suggest that Robo-Analysts are a valuable, alternative information intermediary to traditional sell-side analysts.” – pp. 20, 3<sup>rd</sup> para.

Our mission is to provide the best fundamental analysis of public and private businesses in the world and make it affordable for all investors, not just Wall Street insiders.

We believe every investor deserves to know the whole truth about the profitability and valuation of any company they consider for investment. More details on our cutting-edge technology and how we use it are [here](#).



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