

The Best Active ETFs to Buy in 2026

These actively managed exchange-traded funds with high ratings are good long-term investments.

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Many investors equate exchange-traded funds with indexing. And in fact, the lion's share of ETF assets rests in passive index strategies. As such, the idea of actively managed ETFs—often clipped to “active ETFs”—may seem unexpected, maybe even counterintuitive.

Yet, active ETFs are gaining traction with long-term investors. “Since 2016, the total number of active ETFs has risen by over 1,200%, and they have nearly doubled in the past two years,” noted Morningstar’s Drew Carter and Joe Bullard in their latest annual fund-flows report. “Total assets in active ETFs have risen from \$52 billion in 2016 to nearly \$1.5 trillion in 2025, growing 64% in 2025 alone.” Many highly respected, successful asset managers—Vanguard, Fidelity, T. Rowe Price, and Capital Group, among them—are launching active ETFs or converting existing actively managed mutual funds into active ETFs, too.

What Is an Active ETF?

As the name suggests, actively managed ETFs are run by managers or management teams that select securities to buy, as opposed to simply indexing a particular part of the market. Most actively managed ETF strategies seek to generate better risk-adjusted returns over time than their benchmarks.

As a group, actively managed funds haven’t done a very good job of beating their indexes. But some active managers have outperformed, especially when adjusting performance for risk. And in some parts of the market—particularly among non-US stocks and bonds—active management has had an advantage in the longer term.

Collage illustration featuring arrows pointing left and right with the text “ETF” at the center and graphical elements.

Best Active ETFs to Invest In: US Stocks

These active ETFs all landed in one of the broad US stock Morningstar Categories and earned the top Medalist Rating of Gold that’s 100% analyst-driven as of February 2026.

1. Brandes US Value ETF BUSA
2. Capital Group Conservative Equity ETF CGCV
3. Capital Group Dividend Value ETF CGDV
4. Dimensional US Small Cap ETF DFAS
5. Dimensional US Targeted Value ETF DFAT
6. MFS Active Value ETF MFSV
7. Natixis Loomis Sayles Focused Growth LSGR
8. Oakmark US Large Cap ETF OAKM
9. Polen Focus Growth ETF PCLG
10. T. Rowe Price Capital Appreciation Equity TCAF
11. T. Rowe Price Dividend Growth ETF TDVG

Although this is a list of the best active ETFs investing in US stocks, there is some variety here. Most of the ETFs on the list favor large-cap stocks, but some invest in smaller-cap stocks. Some favor value stocks while others prefer growth stocks. A couple of dividend ETFs make the list as well.

To fully understand a fund’s strategy, be sure to read its Analyst Report.

Best Active ETFs: US Stocks

Name	Ticker	Morningstar Category	Medalist Rating Parent Pillar	Medalist Rating People Pillar	Medalist Rating Process Pillar
Brandes US Value ETF	BUSA	Large Value	Above Average	High	Above Average
Capital Group Conservative Equity ETF	CGCV	Large Value	High	High	Above Average
Capital Group Dividend Value ETF	CGDV	Large Value	High	High	Above Average
Dimensional US Small Cap ETF	DFAS	Small Blend	High	Above Average	Above Average
Dimensional US Targeted Value ETF	DFAT	Small Value	High	Above Average	Above Average
MFS Active Value ETF	MFSV	Large Value	High	Above Average	High
Natixis Loomis Sayles Focused Growth ETF	LSGR	Large Growth	Average	High	High
Oakmark US Large Cap ETF	OAKM	Large Value	Average	High	High
Polen Focus Growth ETF	PCLG	Large Growth	Above Average	Above Average	High
T. Rowe Price Capital Appreciation Equity ETF	TCAF	Large Blend	High	High	Above Average
T. Rowe Price Dividend Growth ETF	TDVG	Large Blend	High	High	High

Source: Morningstar. Data as of Feb. 4, 2026.

Best Actively Managed International-Stock ETFs for the Long Term

These active ETFs all landed in one of the broad international-stock categories and earned the top Medalist Rating of Gold that's 100% analyst-driven as of February 2026.

1. Capital Group International Core Equity ETF CGIC
2. JPMorgan Global Select Equity ETF JGLO

Here, too, we have another list of good ETFs that are actively managed—in this case, focused on international stocks—where there is a little variety, even though only two ETFs make the list. One of the ETFs focuses on non-US stocks exclusively, while the other invests in both US and international stocks. Consult the ETF's Analyst Report to clarify.

Best Active ETFs: International Stocks

Name	Ticker	Morningstar Category	Medalist Rating Parent Pillar	Medalist Rating People Pillar	Medalist Rating Process Pillar
Capital Group International Core Equity ETF	CGIC	Foreign Large Blend	High	High	Above Average
JPMorgan Global Select Equity ETF	JGLO	Global Large-Stock Blend	Above Average	High	High

Source: Morningstar. Data as of Feb. 4, 2026.

Good Active Bond ETFs to Invest In

These actively managed ETFs all landed in one of the broad bond categories and earned the top Medalist Rating of Gold that's 100% analyst-driven as of February 2026.

1. Fidelity Investment Grade Bond ETF FIGB
2. Fidelity Total Bond ETF FBND
3. Hartford Strategic Income ETF HFSI
4. iShares Total Return Active ETF BRTR
5. JPMorgan Core Plus Bond ETF JCPB
6. JPMorgan Income ETF JPIE
7. JPMorgan Limited Duration Bond ETF JPLD
8. PGIM Short Duration Multi-Sector Bond ETF PSDM
9. Pimco Enhanced Short Maturity Active ETF MINT
10. Pimco Enhanced Short Maturity Active ESG ETF EMNT

Several of the best active ETFs on this list land in one of the intermediate-term bond categories. They'd make great choices to anchor the bond portion of an investor's portfolio, assuming the goals for the money are six or more years away. Those saving for a shorter-term goal in the next three to five years might consider short-term bond funds instead. Investors with longer time horizons might consider a multisector or nontraditional bond fund, but they should also be prepared for the enhanced volatility that comes with investing in these bond types.

Best Active ETFs: Bonds

Name	Ticker	Morningstar Category	Medalist Rating Parent Pillar	Medalist Rating People Pillar	Medalist Rating Process Pillar
Fidelity Investment Grade Bond ETF	FIGB	Intermediate Core Bond	Above Average	High	High
Fidelity Total Bond ETF	FBND	Intermediate Core-Plus Bond	Above Average	High	High
Hartford Strategic Income ETF	HFSI	Multisector Bond	Above Average	High	Above Average
iShares Total Return Active ETF	BRTR	Intermediate Core-Plus Bond	Above Average	High	High
JPMorgan Core Plus Bond ETF	JCPB	Intermediate Core-Plus Bond	Above Average	Above Average	High
JPMorgan Income ETF	JPIE	Multisector Bond	Above Average	High	Above Average
JPMorgan Limited Duration Bond ETF	JPLD	Short-Term Bond	Above Average	High	Above Average
PGIM Short Duration Multi-Sector Bond ETF	PSDM	Short-Term Bond	Above Average	High	Above Average
PIMCO Enhanced Short Maturity Active Exchange-Traded Fund	MINT	Ultrashort Bond	Above Average	High	High
PIMCO Enhanced Short Maturity Active ESG Exchange-Traded Fund	EMNT	Ultrashort Bond	Above Average	High	High

Source: Morningstar. Data as of Feb. 4, 2026.

Top Active ETFs to Buy for the Long Term: Specialized

These actively managed ETFs all landed in one of the specialized stock or bond categories and earned the top Medalist Rating of Gold that's 100% analyst-driven as of February 2026.

1. Capital Group New Geography Equity ETF CGNG
2. Dimensional US Real Estate ETF DFAR
3. Neuberger Berman Emerging Markets Debt Hard Currency ETF NEMD
4. T. Rowe Price Floating Rate ETF TFLR

The top-rated active ETFs on this list are good choices for investors looking to fill more niche roles in their portfolios.

Best Active ETFs: Specialized

Name	Ticker	Morningstar Category	Medalist Rating Parent Pillar	Medalist Rating People Pillar	Medalist Rating Process Pillar
Capital Group New Geography Equity ETF	CGNG	Diversified Emerging Mkts	High	High	Above Average
Dimensional US Real Estate ETF	DFAR	Real Estate	High	Above Average	Above Average
Neuberger Berman Emerging Markets Debt Hard Currency ETF	NEMD	Emerging Markets Bond	Above Average	High	High
T. Rowe Price Floating Rate ETF	TFLR	Bank Loan	High	High	High

Source: Morningstar. Data as of Feb. 4, 2026.

Active ETFs: Pros and Cons

What are some of the advantages of investing in an active ETF versus investing in an actively managed mutual fund instead?

- **ETFs are more tax-efficient than mutual funds.** An ETF can send securities out of its portfolio in kind to meet redemptions, while mutual funds cannot. Thus, ETFs tend to be more tax-efficient by their very nature.
- **ETFs tend to cost less than mutual funds.** Some of the costs of owning a mutual fund — such as expenses around advice, recordkeeping, and distribution — don't exist or are substantially lower with ETFs.

ETFs require less upfront investment. Unlike mutual funds, which typically have minimum dollar amounts that an investor needs to commit, investors can buy just one share of an ETF.

However, there is one significant "con" to investing in active ETFs: ETF managers can't manage capacity. Unlike mutual funds that can close to new investment if assets flood in and jeopardize their managers' ability to invest according to their strategies, ETFs cannot close to new investment. As a result, managers practicing concentrated strategies or those investing in less liquid markets may have to compromise their strategies in the face of sizable inflows.

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Understanding the risks

Investing involves risk; principal loss is possible. There is no guarantee the Fund's investment objective will be achieved. The Fund is actively managed and does not seek to replicate a specific index. **Exchange-Traded Fund (ETFs)** are subject to additional risks that do not apply to conventional mutual funds, including the risks that the market price of ETF's shares may trade at a premium or discount to its net asset value (NAV), an active secondary trading market may not develop or be maintained, or trading may be halted by the exchange in which they trade, which may impact an ETF's ability to sell its shares. Unlike mutual funds, ETF shares are bought and sold at market price, which may be higher or lower than their NAV, and are not individually redeemed from the fund. Brokerage commissions will reduce returns. The Fund invests primarily in **large capitalization securities**, which may be unable to respond quickly to new competitive challenges or opportunities, attain the high growth rate of successful smaller companies, or be out of favor under certain market conditions. The Fund tends to be invested in a relatively **focused portfolio** of securities, thus the appreciation or depreciation of any one security held will have a greater impact on the Fund's net asset value versus investing in a larger number of securities. **Value stocks** may fall out of favor with investors and underperform growth stocks during given periods. As a **new fund**, there is a limited operating history and there can be no assurance it will grow to an economically viable size, in which case it may cease operations and require investors to liquidate or transfer their investments. These and other risk considerations, such as market, sector or industry, large shareholder, and value style, are described in detail in the Fund's prospectus.

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