

Top-Performing Stock ETFs

Baron First Principles ETF and ARK Next Generation Internet ETF were among the best-performing ETFs in August 2026.



Bella Albrecht • Sep 3, 2026

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Securities in This Article

Bushido Capita... (SMRI) ...	Baron First Prin... (RONB) ...	ERShares Privat...(XOVR) ...
ALPS O'Shares ... (OGIG) ...	Dana Unconstr... (DUNK) ...	+5 More

Stock exchange-traded funds, or equity ETFs, are often low-cost, tax-efficient instruments for investors to track popular indexes or leverage experienced manager choices to beat the market. The best ones serve as low-cost building blocks in a portfolio, and unlike open-end mutual funds, all ETFs are traded throughout the day on an exchange.

In August 2026, the top-performing stock ETFs included large growth fund Baron First Principles ETF [RONB](#) and mid-cap growth fund ARK Next Generation Internet ETF [ARKW](#). Data in this article is sourced from Morningstar Direct.

Screening for the Best-Performing ETFs

When evaluating ETFs, investors should focus on long-term returns across multiple years and market cycles. However, short-term returns can provide valuable information about biases within strategies.



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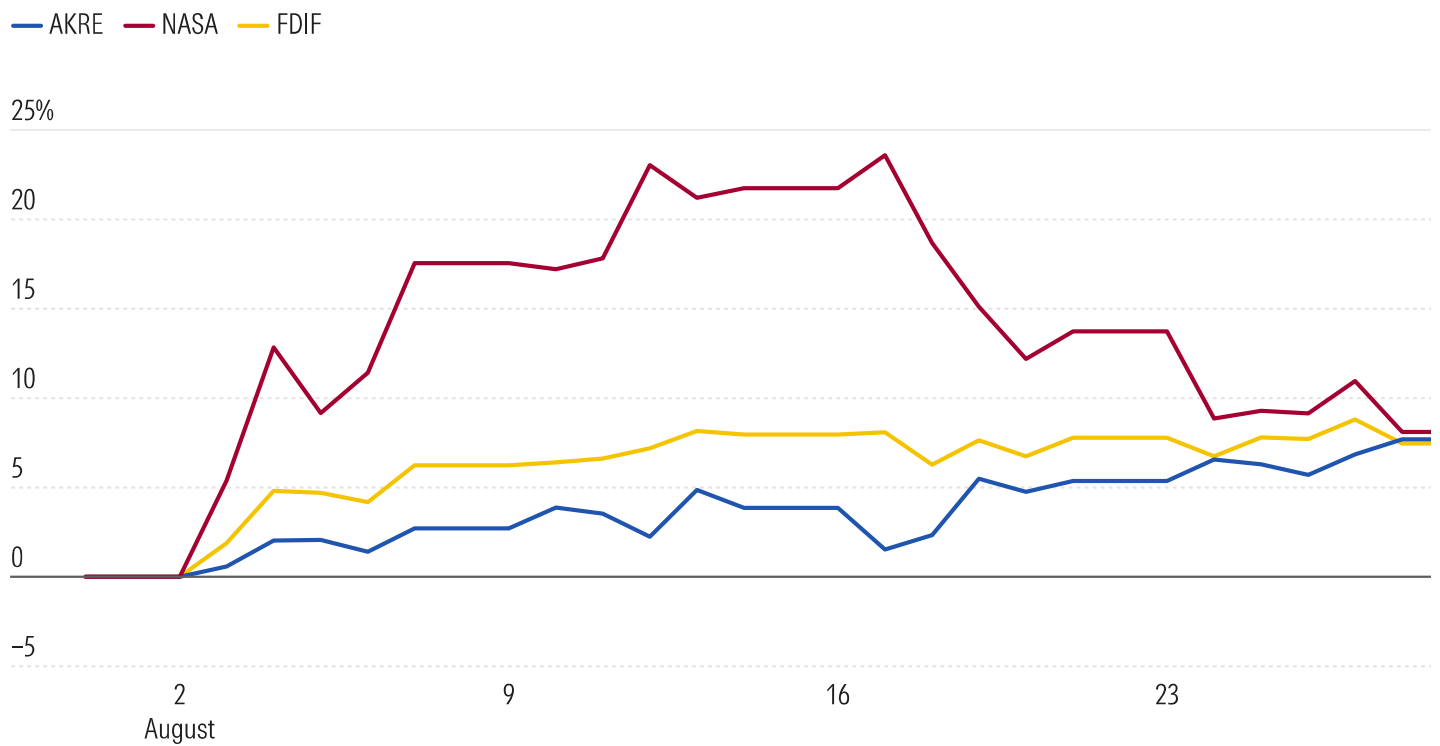
To find the month's best-performing stock ETFs, we screened the Morningstar US equity category for those that trade within the United States. We excluded exchange-traded notes and ETFs with less than \$100 million in total assets. Within our list, five funds fell into the large growth category, where the average name rose 3.56% in August.

The 10 Best-Performing ETFs for August 2026

1. Baron First Principles ETF [RONB](#)
2. ARK Next Generation Internet ETF [ARKW](#)
3. ERShares Private-Public Crossover ETF [XOVR](#)
4. Bushido Capital US Equity ETF [SMRI](#)

5. ALPS O'Shares Global Internet Giants ETF Shares OGIG
6. Dana Unconstrained Equity ETF DUNK
7. Pacer US Cash Cows 100 ETF COWZ
8. Akre Focus ETF AKRE
9. Tema Space Innovators ETF NASA
10. Fidelity Disruptors ETF FDIF

Top-Performing Stock ETFs



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Source: Morningstar. Data as of Aug. 31, 2026. [Download CSV.](#)

Metrics for the Best-Performing Stock ETFs

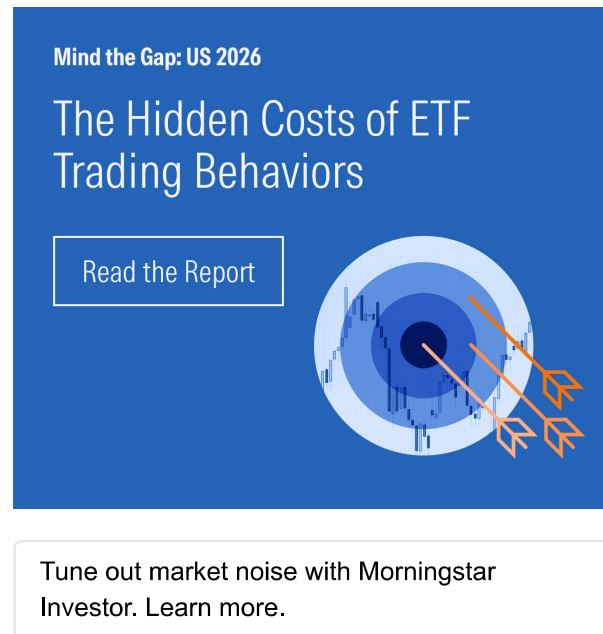
Baron First Principles ETF

- Morningstar Rating: N/A
- Expense Ratio: 1%

- Morningstar Category: Large Growth

The \$344.6 million Baron First Principles ETF was the best-performing ETF in August, with a 15.4% gain. The actively managed Baron Capital ETF beat the 3.56% gain on the average fund in Morningstar's large growth category for the month. The fund launched in December 2025 and does not have a one-year record.

The Baron First Principles ETF has not yet been awarded a Morningstar Medalist Rating.



ARK Next Generation Internet ETF

- Morningstar Rating: ★★ ★
- Expense Ratio: 0.76%
- Morningstar Category: Mid-Cap Growth

The second-best-performing ETF in August was the \$1.8 billion ARK Next Generation Internet ETF. The actively managed ARK ETF returned 15.04%, outperforming the average mid-cap growth fund, which gained 1.91%. Over the last year, the fund has climbed 1.92%, underperforming the 8.48% gain on funds in its category, placing it in the 71st percentile for the period.

The Neutral-rated ARK Next Generation Internet ETF launched in September 2014.

ERShares Private-Public Crossover ETF

- Morningstar Rating: ★
- Expense Ratio: 0.75%
- Morningstar Category: Large Growth

The \$1.6 billion ERShares Private-Public Crossover ETF was the third-best-performing ETF in August, with a 11.09% gain. The actively managed EntrepreneurShares ETF beat the 3.56% gain on the average fund in Morningstar's large growth category for the month. Over the last year, the fund has gained 5.97%, underperforming the 13.71% gain on funds in its category, placing it in the 84th percentile for the period.

The Neutral-rated ERShares Private-Public Crossover ETF launched in November 2017.

Bushido Capital US Equity ETF

- Morningstar Rating: N/A
- Expense Ratio: 0.71%
- Morningstar Category: Mid-Cap Value

The \$720.4 million Bushido Capital US Equity ETF ranked fourth for the month, returning 10.09%. The Bushido Capital ETF, which is actively managed, beat the 1.72% gain on the average mid-cap value fund. Over the past year, the fund has risen 44.37%, outperforming the 19.90% gain on funds in its category, placing it in the first percentile for the period.

The Bushido Capital US Equity ETF has not yet been awarded a Morningstar Medalist Rating.

ALPS O'Shares Global Internet Giants ETF Shares

- Morningstar Rating: ★
- Expense Ratio: 0.48%
- Morningstar Category: Large Growth

The \$105.2 million ALPS O'Shares Global Internet Giants ETF Shares was the fifth-best-performing ETF in August, with a 9.89% gain. The passively managed ALPS ETF beat the 3.56% gain on the average fund in Morningstar's large growth category for the month. Over the last year, the fund has dropped 5.78%, underperforming the 13.71% gain on funds in its category, placing it in the 99th percentile for the period.

The Neutral-rated ALPS O'Shares Global Internet Giants ETF Shares launched in June 2018.

Dana Unconstrained Equity ETF

- Morningstar Rating: N/A
- Expense Ratio: 0.75%
- Morningstar Category: Large Blend

The sixth-best-performing ETF in August was the \$169.7 million Dana Unconstrained Equity ETF. The actively managed Dana ETF returned 7.95%, outperforming the average large blend fund, which gained 2.39%. The fund was first launched in September 2025, and as a result, it does not have a one-year record.

The Dana Unconstrained Equity ETF has not yet been awarded a Morningstar Medalist Rating.

Pacer US Cash Cows 100 ETF

- Morningstar Rating: ★★★★★
- Expense Ratio: 0.49%
- Morningstar Category: Mid-Cap Value

The \$20 billion Pacer US Cash Cows 100 ETF ranked seventh for the month, returning 7.79%. The Pacer ETF, which is passively managed, beat the 1.72% gain on the average mid-cap value fund. Over the past year, the fund has risen 26.63%, outperforming the 19.90% gain on funds in its category, placing it in the 15th percentile for the period.

The Neutral-rated Pacer US Cash Cows 100 ETF launched in December 2016.

Akre Focus ETF

- Morningstar Rating: ★
- Expense Ratio: 0.98%
- Morningstar Category: Large Growth

The eighth-best-performing ETF in August was the \$5.3 billion Akre Focus ETF. The actively managed Akre ETF returned 7.26%, outperforming the average large growth fund, which gained 3.56%. Over the last year, the fund has fallen 13.55%, underperforming the 13.71% gain on funds in its category, placing it in the 100th percentile for the period.

The Neutral-rated Akre Focus ETF launched in August 2009.

Tema Space Innovators ETF

- Morningstar Rating: N/A
- Expense Ratio: 0.75%
- Morningstar Category: Large Blend

The \$1 billion Tema Space Innovators ETF ranked ninth for the month, returning 7.25%. The Tema ETFs ETF, which is actively managed, beat the 2.39% gain on the average large blend fund. The fund launched in March 2026 and does not have a one-year record.

The Tema Space Innovators ETF has not yet been awarded a Morningstar Medalist Rating.

Fidelity Disruptors ETF

- Morningstar Rating: ★★
- Expense Ratio: 0.5%
- Morningstar Category: Large Growth

The \$107.3 million Fidelity Disruptors ETF was the tenth-best-performing ETF in August, with a 7.16% gain. The actively managed Fidelity ETF beat the 3.56% gain on the average fund in Morningstar's large growth category for the month. Over the last year, the fund has gained 20.71%, outperforming the 13.71% gain on funds in its category, placing it in the 21st percentile for the period.

The Neutral-rated Fidelity Disruptors ETF launched in April 2020.

What Are ETFs?

Exchange-traded funds are investments that trade throughout the day on stock exchanges, much like individual stocks. They differ from traditional mutual funds—known as open-end funds—which can only be bought or sold at a single price each day. Historically, ETFs have tracked indexes, but in recent years, more ETFs have been actively managed. ETFs cover a range of asset classes, including stocks, bonds, commodities, and most recently cryptocurrency.

ETFs offer investors an efficient way to gain exposure to the markets, often with low fees and an ease of buying and selling. They also generally offer higher tax efficiency than open-end funds.

How to Find Top ETFs for the Long Term

ETFs are often equated with low-cost indexing. However, the ETF marketplace has grown increasingly complicated. Some ETFs track a very narrow part of the market or pursue specific themes. Some ETFs invest based on a particular factor or a combination of them. And now there are actively managed ETFs.

Use these Morningstar resources to help find the best ETFs for the long term:

- Learn about the types of exchange-traded funds, their costs, and how to invest in them by reading [Morningstar's Guide to ETF Investing](#).
- Find the highest-rated ETFs across all investment categories in [The Best ETFs and How They Fit in Your Portfolio](#).
- Review Morningstar director of personal finance Christine Benz's suggested ETF portfolios for those saving for or already in retirement, including [Tax-Efficient Retirement-Saver Portfolios for ETF Investors](#), [Tax-Sheltered Retirement-Saver Portfolios for ETF Investors](#), [ESG Tax-Sheltered Retirement-Saver Portfolios for ETF Investors](#), [Tax-Sheltered Retirement-Bucket Portfolios for ETF Investors](#), and [Tax-Sheltered ESG Retirement-Bucket Portfolios for ETF Investors](#).
- Research ETFs based on your personal selection criteria by using our [Morningstar Investor Screener](#). The tool, which is available to Morningstar Investor members, allows

investors to screen ETFs based on various criteria, including asset class, Morningstar Category, Medalist Rating, and fee level.

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