



5 Of The Best Free Apple Watch Apps You Should Always Install First

Summary

The article highlights five free Apple Watch apps that enhance the user experience. These apps, including CARROT Weather, Athlytic, Moovit, Water Tracker, and Grocery, offer features like weather alerts, fitness tracking, transit navigation, hydration logging, and smart shopping lists. While some offer premium tiers, the free versions provide valuable functionality.

By Nichols deCourville Jan. 5, 2026 9:17 am EST



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There's a reason the Apple Watch is one of the best-selling smart wearables. While [the Apple Watch Series 10 had two major problems](#), the device is [only getting better](#), as the number of features and apps it provides is well-suited for many needs. Even though the stock applications on the Apple Watch may already offer what you need, several third-party apps can kick your experience up a notch if you download and install them first.

The following apps are going to help you track the weather, get a better workout, and even make sure you're picking up everything you need at the grocery store. All of these apps have received positive reviews in the Apple App Store with thousands of ratings, and a couple have even been approved by Apple.

While every app on this list is free to download, we made sure to let you know when subscription options and premium tiers are offered. However, the free versions of every one of them will still work as intended on your Apple Watch, so you don't have to worry about getting a subscription to try any of them. Because there are plenty of other [free Apple Watch apps you can download](#), give these a try first, so you avoid spending too long endlessly searching the App Store.

CARROT Weather: Alerts & Radar



[CARROT Weather](#)

A stock Apple Watch comes with the company's Weather app preloaded on the device, but some folks may be looking for something that offers more options and features. The third-party app [CARROT Weather](#) by Grailr LLC can go far beyond Apple's offerings. Back in 2023, we considered this [one of the best iPhone weather apps](#), and its compatibility with Apple Watch makes it worth a download.

CARROT Weather delivers weather news in five different text flavors — including one with a professional tone and another that will hurl profanity and comedic jabs to add a bit of entertainment to your forecast. You can access detailed weather information directly from your Apple Watch, including weekly, daily, and hourly information. Another boon of the app is that it also promises to never sell or share your private data. You can also choose [the best weather service for CARROT](#) and change it in the app.

While the base app is free, be aware that CARROT offers various in-app purchases and subscription models — including monthly options starting at \$4.99 and yearly options at \$19.99. Joining the app's subscription service unlocks additional goodies, including Apple Watch complications and background upgrades. CARROT has won an Editors' Choice award and currently sports 4.7 stars in the App Store with over 82,000 ratings. Folks appreciate the app's accuracy, reliability, personalization, and often dark humor. However, at least one reviewer found the radar resolution to be unsuitable for them.

Athlytic: AI Fitness Coach



[Athlytic/App Store](#)

[Athlytic: AI Fitness Coach](#) from MyndArc, LLC is an app for anyone looking to improve their fitness tracking. An Apple Watch is already an excellent choice for anyone tracking their exercise, even [while running a marathon](#), so a comprehensive fitness app can only make it better.

One thing that Athlytic offers over the stock Apple Fitness app is its recovery features and metrics. Since getting rest and recovery can be a crucial element to

see results from a workout, Athlytic uses your heart rate variability and resting heart rate to estimate how much you can train on a given day. The app also tracks your trends, such as sleeping habits, and provides uninterrupted health monitoring. You can also choose from a variety of complications to add to your Apple Watch face, including metrics like recovery, exertion, blood oxygen, daily energy burned, and more.

The app is free to download, though you will need a \$4.99 monthly subscription or \$29.99 yearly subscription to take advantage of everything after Athlytic's free trial week. With 4.8 stars and 9,300 ratings in the App Store, the app's reviews show users value the extra insights it provides along with suggestions for improving health, but others wish the app had better data-sharing options. If you want to stay fit, this app is a great choice to help you on the way.

Moovit: Bus & Transit Tracker



T. Schneider/Shutterstock

For those who travel via public transit, having a good navigation app can be crucial for getting where you need to go. Naturally, Apple Maps is available on Apple Watch, and even [Google Maps got a massive update for public transport navigation](#) in 2025, but having an app built specifically for local transit can be a real lifesaver. [Moovit: Bus & Transit Tracker](#) from Moovit App Global LTD is a great choice with its Apple Watch options.

Touting itself as the world's best mobility app, Moovit provides detailed information for a wide array of public transit, including trains, subways, bikes, buses, scooters, and even apps like Uber and Lyft. Along with delivering bus and train schedules, Moovit supports ticketing in select cities, allowing you to purchase and validate boarding tickets. The app also offers user reports, which help to provide timely information about transit. You can also create your own favorites to quickly access routes.

With 4.6 stars and 54,000 ratings in the App Store, users like the app's accurate arrival time updates and alerts, options for choosing the best route available, and detailed directions. However, at least one user has noted that the bus routes for their city are not always accurate, and that the buses can go off course from what's suggested by the app. While the base experience is free, the app comes with an optional subscription service, including monthly, six-month, and 12-month plans starting at \$0.99. Anyone living in a city with strong public transportation definitely needs to check out this app.

Water Tracker by WaterMinder



[WaterMinder/Apple App Store](#)

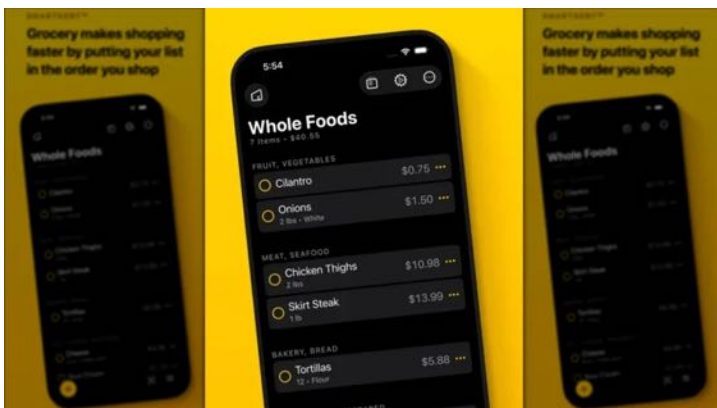
While there are smart water bottles like the [Hydrate Spark Pro 2](#) to track your hydration, the [Water Tracker by WaterMinder](#) is a good option to track how much water you're drinking if you struggle to get the daily necessary amount.

Water Tracker is a standalone Apple Watch app that provides detailed hydration logging, including how much you need to drink for the day, as well as

history metrics to see your past progress. Just like Apple Fitness, the app also rewards you with achievements to make sure you're staying on track with your goals. You can add complications to your Apple Watch face, share metrics with friends, and track liquids other than water.

Along with having an Editors' Choice award in the App Store, Water Tracker holds 4.7 stars with 32,000 ratings. Users appreciate the app's notification system, overall simplicity, and clean interface on Apple Watch, but some recent reports mention lag when using the app. Regardless, the app is free to download, though it offers monthly and yearly subscriptions starting at \$2.99. There is a free trial through an auto-renewal subscription, so you'll have to keep an eye on it if the app isn't for you. Since a 2025 study revealed [how important it is to drink more water](#), apps like WaterMinder are good to have.

Grocery - Smart Shopping List



[Conrad Stoll/Apple App Store](#)

While we don't have [AI agents that do our grocery shopping](#), your Apple Watch can be used as a smart grocery list with plenty of features if you use [Grocery – Smart Shopping List](#) from Conrad Stoll.

You can create a quick list for groceries with Apple's Reminders app, but Grocery takes things a step further by letting you check items off a list directly from your Apple Watch and add others quickly with Siri. This app also uses your watch face

to let you add reminders about items, and you can even organize specific items by store. It also has a variety of features for your iPhone.

The app has a 4.5-star rating from 4,600 reviews in the App Store. Users say getting support from the developer can be difficult, but they approve of this app for its variety of features, Siri support, and ease of use. The app is free to use with a premium version, which includes a monthly subscription option and a \$29.99 Premium Forever purchase. Going premium allows you to share your list with family members and keep a log of what's in your pantry. If you do the shopping in your household, this is an app definitely worth checking out.

How we chose these Apple Watch apps



Raditya/Getty Images

With the number of apps available in the App Store climbing every day, we searched the internet to find the best apps available for your Apple Watch. Looking at suggestions from r/AppleWatch on Reddit, we also picked these apps by their rating in the App Store, where each one holds thousands, if not tens of thousands, of reviews. Additionally, many of these apps also get the seal of approval from

Apple with an Editors' Choice award. While some of them may charge a subscription, they have a free option you can use if you don't want to commit to a monthly fee.