

Lifewire **Is It Time for a New Apple Watch? We Break Down the Pros and Cons**

You likely don't need to upgrade every year, so let's take a look at when makes the most sense

By Sam Costello | Published on December 6, 2024



PHOTO: Apple

Apple releases new Apple Watch models every year, but that doesn't mean you have to upgrade each time one comes out. This article looks at the reasons to upgrade or wait and provides suggestions depending on your model.

Reasons to Upgrade an Apple Watch

The reasons to upgrade to a new Apple Watch differ based on your model, how you use it, how well your Watch works, and more. Generally speaking, it may make sense to upgrade your Apple Watch if:

- **You need newly introduced features.** The latest models may introduce features that are essential for you that your current Watch lacks. That's a great reason to upgrade.
- **Your Watch is 4 or more generations old.** If your Watch is at least four years old, an upgrade will likely deliver significant changes in screen size and quality, battery life, and features.
- **Your screen is cracked or too small.** Recent Watch models have bigger, brighter screens. If you appreciate that or your current screen is cracked, you may want to upgrade.
- **Your battery doesn't hold a charge.** A Watch that runs out of battery before the end of the day isn't much use. While batteries can be replaced, if your Watch is old enough that the battery is weakening, you might be better off spending a bit more and getting a new Apple Watch.

- **You always have to have the latest and greatest.** If you're a big gadget lover — or need to always have the newest, coolest thing — you'll probably upgrade every year.

Reasons to Wait to Upgrade an Apple Watch



While a shiny new Apple Watch may be tempting, there are plenty of sound reasons to put off an upgrade, including:

- **Your Watch works well for you.** If your Watch works fine, meets your needs, and isn't broken, it's doing what you need. Why spend the money to upgrade when you won't get much benefit?
- **Changes with each generation are usually incremental.** The revisions added by new models year over year typically aren't revolutionary. Unless the latest model has a feature you've been waiting for, you're often better off waiting for a few models to upgrade to really feel the impact of the changes.
- **Price.** The Apple Watch is far from the priciest gadget in Apple's lineup, but a new model starts around \$399. Why spend the money if your current model works well for you?

Apple releases new iPhones every year, too. If you have the same question, we have the answer about [when you should upgrade your iPhone](#).

If You Have an Apple Watch Series 6 or Older

If you have an Apple Watch Series 6 or older—especially if your Watch is older—consider upgrading your Apple Watch in the relatively near future. Compared to the Series-6 and older models, Series 7-9 deliver bigger, brighter screens, faster battery charging, Crash Detection, faster processors, and more sensors. The Series 9 also lets you control the Watch through gestures instead of tapping the screen.

If your Series 6 still works well, upgrading your Apple Watch might not be worth it. The 6 is the dividing line between "must upgrade" and "you can wait." If you're happy with the 6, you can keep waiting for a new feature that makes it worth taking the leap.

If You Have an Apple Watch Series 7 or 8

If you have the Apple Watch Series 7 or 8, we don't recommend an upgrade unless your current model is failing in some way or if the latest model delivers a feature you absolutely have to have and can't get on your model. Barring that, these models are

too new, work too well, and aren't different enough from the Series 9 to justify an upgrade.

If You Have an Apple Watch Ultra

If you have an Apple Watch Ultra, we don't recommend upgrading to the Ultra 2 unless your current model has failed. The Ultra 2 has some nice enhancements, but they're relatively modest and don't justify the \$799 purchase price if your current Watch works well. Keep an eye on what the Ultra 3 or 4 offers and consider those as upgrade candidates.

Should You Upgrade?

It doesn't make sense for every Apple Watch owner to upgrade when a new model debuts. If your Watch is relatively recent and still working well, you can probably delay upgrading. But, if you've got an Apple Watch Series 5, 6, or older, you'll get so many improvements with an upgrade that it's worth it for most people.