

watchOS 12 will offer Apple Intelligence with a unique twist: report

Ryan Christoffel



We just had the [most feature-packed Apple software year](#) I can remember. But per rumors ahead of WWDC, 2025 is shaping up to quite a banner year for upgrades too, including with watchOS 12 adding Apple Intelligence features.

Apple Intelligence in watchOS 12 will rely on iPhone-run models

Mark Gurman recently provided [several updates](#) on Apple's upcoming software releases. This included the [welcome news](#) that iPadOS 19 will push the iPad to be "more like a Mac."

Gurman also mentioned watchOS 12, offering the first noteworthy details we've heard about the next big Apple Watch update.

He wrote:

the company is branding a new set [of] features as "powered by Apple Intelligence" (even though the device isn't actually running the AI models directly).

It seems Apple plans to provide Apple Intelligence features in the same way it's offered certain Watch features in the past: by offloading some processing to the iPhone.

When Apple Watch first launched, it was heavily reliant on iPhone for much of its functionality, including the basic task of running third-party apps.

Over time it's become less and less dependent, but it sounds like watchOS 12 will reverse that trend just a bit.

The approach makes sense considering the Apple Watch's limitations.

In fact, you could argue that Apple is already doing this in watchOS 11.

Two of the iPhone's current Apple Intelligence features [also work on the Apple Watch](#).

Notification summaries and the Reduce Interruptions Focus are technically powered by an AI-capable iPhone. But if you're using your Apple Watch, there's no real indication that watchOS 11 isn't doing the AI work itself.

Gurman doesn't share which specific features are coming, but one way or another, watchOS 12 should make Apple Intelligence an "officially supported" feature on the Apple Watch.

As for other watchOS 12 features, the report only says that some of iOS 19's new interface elements will debut on the Watch too—but no major overhaul is coming.

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