

The Apple Watch has some surprising delights once you look past the marquee fitness and notification tracking features.

[Khamosh Pathak](#) June 3, 2025



After years of holding out, I recently upgraded my Apple Watch, and quickly learned that jumping from the Apple Watch Series 6 to the [Series 10](#) is a journey of both big and small changes. It's still the same Apple Watch, but bigger and lighter. It's also finally light enough that I can wear it to bed, and get a [sleep analysis report each night](#). Honestly, I just upgraded my Apple

Watch because the [battery was dying on my old one](#), but now I'm glad I did.

While it's easy to talk about the updated form factor, I've also noticed that my upgrade to the Series 10 has brought with it a few smaller perks that I feel aren't talked about enough. Some of these aren't exclusive to the Series 10, but they are front and center on it: These are the little conveniences that I've come to appreciate since upgrading to the new Apple Watch.



Credit: [Khamosh Pathak](#)

Before the Series 10, the Apple Watch's built-in speaker was limited to taking calls, and for sounding out notification alarms. And I quite liked that I could take calls without while away from my phone.

But if you're using the Series 10 or the Ultra 2, you can now play a wide variety of sounds from the speakers. It works on Apple's own apps, of course, like Podcasts and Music. But also for third-party apps, if they support it. YouTube Music works, and so does Spotify, though only if you're paying for Premium. If you use a media app often, check to see if the speaker output works.

A sleeper hit for me has been Audible and [Zenitizer, my meditation app of choice](#). I now don't touch my iPhone at all when starting my meditation routine. [Zenitizer](#) is a guidance-free meditation app, but I do use it to play background nature sounds as something to focus on, which is simple enough to do it on the Apple Watch speakers.

Photos, the superior watch face



Credit: Khamosh Pathak

I've been trying for the past 10 years now, but I can never really nail a watch face config that I like. It's hard to set up a watch face that you like looking at and that's still useful, loaded with all the complications that you like.

So, I've given up, and embraced the newly updated Photos watch face. If you haven't tried the new version in watchOS 11 yet, you should. It does all the heavy lifting for you. First, find it on your iPhone,

from the Watch app. Here, you can tell it to circle between photos of Nature, Cities, or a person. It will automatically suggest the name of your partner or your family members. Then, I suggest leaving the clock font on Dynamic, after which you can complication or two if you want.

Every day, your watch face will now cycle through a different set of photos, cropped in a way that looks beautiful on the Apple Watch. The font will be interspersed dynamically with the photo background, too. So you'll see it peeking out of the horizon on a sunset photo, or out of your wife's curly hair (my personal favorite). Quite nice to look at throughout the day.

Widgets for the win



Credit: Khamosh Pathak

If watch face complications aren't working out for you, you can turn to widgets. Introduced in watchOS 10, they bring a small version of iPhone widgets to the Apple Watch. You can access them by swiping up on the watch face, or by turning the Digital Crown.

The first widget lets you add app shortcuts, and then it's your playground. Your Apple Watch will automatically show you widgets based on the time of the day,

or context. But you're free to add and pin widgets as you want.

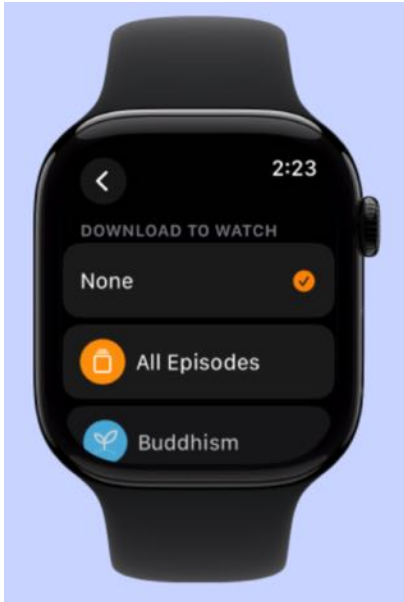
What do you think so far?

For me, widgets have become my command center. Almost every interaction starts with my watch starts with widgets. I use them to open the Workouts app, to check the

weather, to start my meditation timer, to control my podcasts and timers, and to see my fitness activity.

My only issue here is that the widget space is quite limited. You can only add up to eight widgets (plus the complications shortcut widget at the top). I use seven widgets right now, so I'm quite close to the limit. I hope Apple extends this limit in the next watchOS update.

Offline playback and the ability to leave your iPhone behind



Credit: Khamosh Pathak

I don't have the cellular Apple Watch, but I still enjoy leaving my iPhone behind and relying solely on my watch. Plus, the Apple Watch's connection with the iPhone is quite limited, anyway. Sometimes the Apple Watch fails to connect even when I'm in an adjacent room (concrete walls might be the reason there). It's good to get used to using it on its own.

My favorite thing about using an Apple Watch on its own? You can load it up with media and podcasts. It's not a single button press, or even necessarily an easy process. But if you open a compatible media app on your Apple Watch, and also on your iPhone, there's a good chance the app will give you instructions on how to sync audio files and podcasts. Overcast, my podcast client of choice, does this quite well. It takes a long time to sync up between my devices, but after that, you can go to the Settings section to enable the feature that automatically downloads the 20 latest episodes from any playlist onto your Watch (when it's connected to wifi, and charging).

In the Music app, open any playlist, tap the three-dotted **Menu** icon and tap **Download**. Apple's Podcasts app will automatically download episodes in your Up Next queue, but you can also select shows to always download to your Watch. From the Watch app on iPhone, go to **My Watch > Podcasts > Add Shows**.

Double-tap grows on you



Credit: Khamosh Pathak

Lastly, I want to talk about the humble little double-tap feature that has come in handy for me in a couple of crucial situations. This feature is available on Apple Watch Series 9 and higher, and lets you tap your index finger and your thumb twice, in the air, to do a major action on your screen. You can use it to pick up a call, end a call, to wake up the Apple

Watch, and even to scroll lists. For example, you can double-tap once to wake up the screen, do it again to open the widgets screen, and keep scrolling through. Not exactly revolutionary, but quite useful when you have your hands full.