

Your Apple Watch can only save your life later if you turn on these features now

BY KIM KOMANDO, KOMANDO.COM, AUGUST 14, 2021

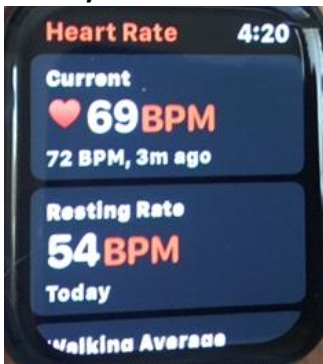
I'm not surprised anymore when I see stories of people who say the Apple Watch saved their lives. From fall detection to heart-rate monitoring, that little piece of tech can spotlight issues that could go unnoticed with fatal consequences. Now, grab your Apple Watch and let's get the must-have health features set up.

First, set up the Health app

Your Apple Watch works in tandem with your iPhone, so you need to start there. The Health app allows you to enter details about your body, like your height, weight and blood type. There are several other options you can choose to include or skip. Here's how to access it:

- Bottom of Form
- Open the Health app.
- Select your profile picture in the top right-hand corner.
- Click on Health Details.
- Enter your information.

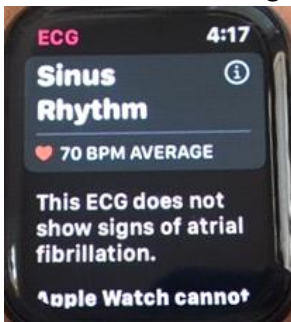
Check your heart rate



While your Apple Watch won't give you a perfect reading of your heart rate, it can give you a close estimate. To check, open the **Heart Rate app** on your Apple Watch. You will see your current heart rate, resting rate, and walking average rate.

As long as your watch is on, it takes regular readings of your heart rate and saves the data. If you want to view previous heart rates, press the **arrow in the upper left corner** of the app.

Take an electrocardiogram



With an [Apple Watch Series 4 or later](#), you can take an electrocardiogram, an ECG or EKG. This test records the timing and strength of your heartbeat. Doctors often use these tests to look for irregularities.

An important note: This feature is not a replacement for seeing your physician. Always consult a doctor if you feel uncomfortable or notice a change in your heart's rhythm or any other aspect of your health.

You'll first need to install and set up the ECG app. Here's how:

- Open the **Health app** on your iPhone.
- Tap the **Browse tab**, then tap **Heart > Electrocardiograms (ECG) > Set Up ECG App**.
- After you complete the setup, open the **ECG app**.

If you still don't see the app on your Apple Watch, open the **Watch app** on your iPhone and tap **Heart**. In the ECG section, tap **Install**.

How to take an ECG:

- Make sure your Apple Watch is snug and on the wrist that you selected in the Apple Watch app. To check, open the **Apple Watch app**, tap the **My Watch tab**, then go to **General > Watch Orientation**.
- Open the **ECG app** on your watch.
- Rest your arms on a table or in your lap.

- With the hand opposite your watch, hold your finger on the **Digital Crown** (the small dial on the side of your watch). You don't need to press the Digital Crown during the session.
- Wait. The recording takes 30 seconds. At the end of the recording, you will receive a classification; then you can tap **Add Symptoms** and choose your symptoms.
- Tap **Save** to note any symptoms, then tap **Done**.

Fall detection



Do a quick search and you'll see how many lives this feature has saved. Once turned on, if the watch detects a fall, it can contact emergency services to get you help. To set it up:

- Open the **Watch app**.
- **Swipe down**.
- Select **Emergency SOS**.
- Tap the switch to enable **Fall Detection**.

Now that Fall Detection is enabled, it will sound an alarm if you fall. If you don't respond, Apple will contact emergency services.

Set up Medical ID

Everyone needs to do this step. You can create your Medical ID in the iPhone Health app and store it on your watch. Open the Health app and tap on the Medical ID option. You can add your past medical history, allergies, medications and any other details in the event of an emergency.

Blood oxygen sensor



If you have the [Apple Watch Series 6](#), you can monitor your blood oxygen levels. The watch comes with a built-in oximeter to let you know if you have a healthy amount of oxygen circulating in your blood. Again, don't use this in place of a doctor if you are experiencing any breathing-related issues.

When tracking your blood oxygen level, you should see a number between 95 and 100. If you get repeat readings lower than that, contact your doctor.

To set this up:

- Open the **Health app** on your iPhone.
- Tap the **Browse tab**, then tap **Respiratory** > **Blood Oxygen** > **Set up Blood Oxygen**.
- After you complete setup, open the **Blood Oxygen app** on your Apple Watch.

To take a blood oxygen measurement:

- Make sure that your watch is snug but still comfortable.
- Open the **Blood Oxygen app** on your Apple Watch.
- Stay still. Keep your wrist flat, with the watch facing up.
- Tap **Start**. Keep your arm steady for 15 seconds. At the end of the measurement, you will receive the results.
- Tap **Done**.