

Early Apple Watch reviews are mixed

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The best wearable gadget available, but it still has a long way to go. That's the gist of early reviews for the Apple Watch, which goes on sale April 24.

Here's a roundup of what tech writers are saying so far:

CNET: "The Apple Watch is the most ambitious, well-constructed smartwatch ever seen, but first-gen shortfalls make it feel more like a fashionable toy than a necessary tool." Among the gripes: a short battery life, slow recharge, confusing interface and slow performance. 3.5 stars

out of 5.

BloombergBusiness: "The notification scheme is a little maddening at first. Apple sends a push notification every time you get a corporate e-mail, personal e-mail, direct message on Twitter, message on Facebook, and for interactions in countless other services. Each of these notifications pings the watch. For every message, there is a sound, a vibration, or both. (You can mute them.) If you're a busy person who communicates constantly on your phone, this gets overwhelming fast. I found myself turning off notifications from entire apps, which seems to defeat the purpose of the watch in the first place."

Re/Code: "Of the half-dozen smartwatches I've tested in recent years, I've had the best experience with Apple Watch. If you're an iPhone power user and you're intrigued by the promises of wearable technology, you'll like it, too. But that doesn't mean Apple Watch is for everyone. Not everyone has an iPhone 5 or later, which is required for the watch to work. Not everyone wants her wrist pulsing with notifications, finds animated emojis thrilling or needs to control an Apple TV with her wrist. Smartwatches can sometimes feel like a solution in search of a problem."

The Verge: "Let's just get this out of the way: the Apple Watch, as I reviewed it for the past week and a half, is kind of slow. There's no getting around it, no way to talk about all of its interface ideas and obvious potential and hints of genius without noting that sometimes it stutters loading notifications. Sometimes pulling location information and data from your iPhone over Bluetooth and Wi-Fi takes a long time. Sometimes apps take forever to load, and sometimes third-party apps never really load at all. Sometimes it's just unresponsive for a few seconds while it thinks and then it comes back."

New York Times: "It took three days - three long, often confusing and

frustrating days - for me to fall for the Apple Watch. But once I fell, I fell hard. It was only on Day 4 that I began appreciating the ways in which the elegant \$650 computer on my wrist was more than just another screen. By notifying me of digital events as soon as they happened, and letting me act on them instantly, without having to fumble for my phone, the Watch became something like a natural extension of my body - a direct link, in a way that I've never felt before, from the digital world to my brain."

Mashable: "I started this review process as a serious skeptic, but not a denier. I wear a smartwatch (the Pebble Steel) almost every day. When I started testing the Apple Watch almost a week ago, I insisted on wearing the Pebble on my left wrist while wearing the new device on my right to compare. However, a few days in, I realized I was no longer glancing at the Pebble. I finally left the Pebble behind, and I don't miss it. That's because the Apple Watch is an excellent, elegant, stylish, smart and fundamentally sound device."

Wall Street Journal: "After over a week of living with Apple's latest gadget on my wrist, I realized the company isn't just selling some wrist-worn computer, it's selling good looks and coolness, with some bonus computer features. Too many features that are too hard to find, if you ask me."

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