

Gadget Watch: Whistle, a fitness tracker for dogs

April 24 2014, by Joseph Pisani



This product image provided by Whistle Labs, Inc. shows a dog wearing a new device, called Whistle, that lets pet owners track how much exercise _ or sleep _ their four-legged friends are getting. (AP Photo/Whistle Labs, Inc.)

Bad news for lazy dogs: A new device, called Whistle, lets pet owners track how much exercise—or sleep—their four-legged friends are getting.

Whistle is similar to popular activity trackers designed for humans. It

wraps around a dog's collar and syncs with a [smartphone app](#), collecting data on how much activity and rest the pet had.

I tried it out on my dog, who would much rather sleep under the couch than chase a ball. It's no surprise to find out that he wasn't getting at least 30 minutes of movement a day. But that was mainly my fault.

Whistle pushed me to take him out on more walks for longer periods.

At \$129, it is as pricey as some of the latest human fitness trackers from the likes of FitBit and Jawbone.

One major difference: Whistle syncs data to its [app](#) through Wi-Fi, as well as Bluetooth. That lets you check up on your [dogs](#) without being near them, so you can track how much exercise your dog is getting when left with dog walkers, a doggy day care or family and friends.

The Whistle app, available for Apple and Android smartphones, is nicely designed. Multiple people can download the app and see the same data through the same account, which is a great if others help care for your dog.



This product image provided by Whistle Labs, Inc. shows a new device, called Whistle, that lets pet owners track how much exercise _ or sleep _ their four-legged friends are getting. (AP Photo/Whistle Labs, Inc.)

THE DEVICE: The Whistle looks slick. It is round and is made of stainless steel. It weighs 16 grams, or less than an ounce. It is about 1.5 inches (3.8 centimeters) wide and less than half-an-inch (1.25-centimeter) thick.

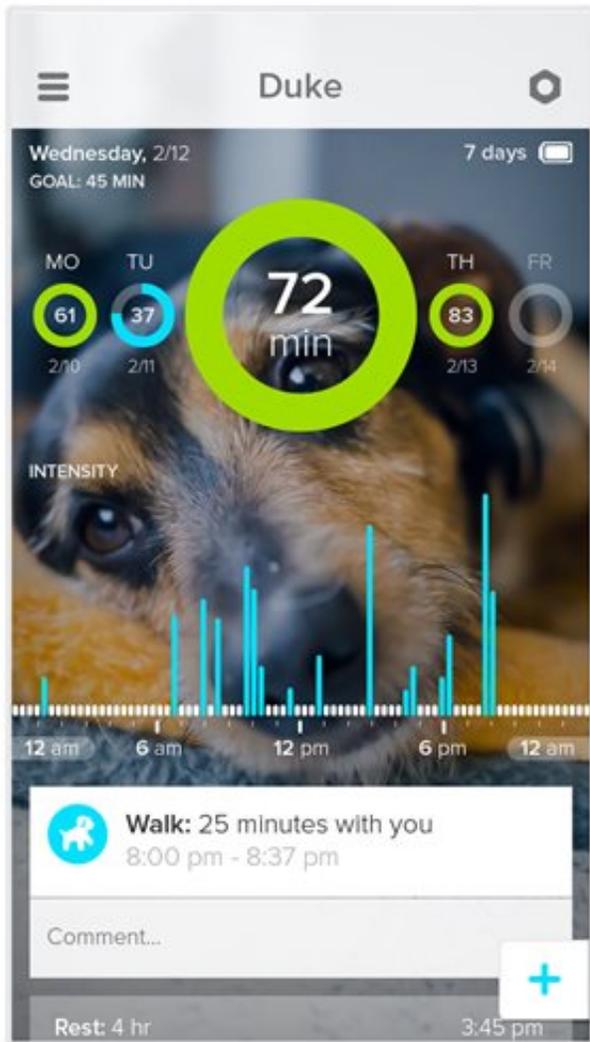
My biggest worry was losing it. But the device locks on to a rubber strap that is then wrapped around the dog collar. It stayed in place and never fell off.

Because it is waterproof, dogs can take the Whistle with them for a swim, the company says. I used it during rainy dog walks, and it always worked fine.

DOGGY DATA: The app lists how much rest and activity the dog gets in a day. You can also add what the dog ate, what medication you gave it and any additional notes or photos you want.

The app looks like a Facebook timeline for your dog. You can scroll down to see what the dog has done during the day. You can also quickly swipe the screen from left to right to see what the dog did on past days.

MAY BE TOO HEAVY FOR TINY DOGS: The company recommends using it on dogs that weigh more than 10 pounds (4.5 kilograms). It still works on smaller dogs, the company says, but the Whistle might be too big for them. It's up to you to decide. My dog is a little over 11 pounds and didn't notice the Whistle at all.



This product image provided by Whistle Labs, Inc. shows the Whistle app that is used in conjunction with a new device, called Whistle, that lets pet owners track how much exercise _ or sleep _ their four-legged friends are getting. (AP Photo/Whistle Labs, Inc.)

BATTERY LIFE: The built-in battery lasts about a week before it has to be recharged. The app alerts you when it starts getting low.

The Whistle is charged through a USB cord that plugs into a computer or laptop. It doesn't come with a wall charger outlet, which is a pain if you

don't have a laptop or desktop computer. I used the wall charger for my iPhone, or you can buy one for less than \$10.

WHERE TO FETCH IT: The Whistle is sold in PetSmart stores and online at Whistle.com.

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