



# Crash Detection on Your iPhone & Apple Watch — What It Does

What your iPhone and Apple Watch can do if you're in a crash An Extended Guide · No. 1940

————— An Extended Guide · No. 1940 —————

**Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.**

**Bill Davis — Bill's Home Tech**

(330) 200-8042 · [bill@billshometech.com](mailto:bill@billshometech.com) · Atwater, Ohio

**Book a visit — [billshometech.com/book](https://billshometech.com/book)**

# What's Inside

*Everything in this guide, with page numbers. Skip to whichever chapter answers your question right now.*

|                                                                                                                   |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . .  | 5  |
| 2. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . .  | 6  |
| 3. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . .  | 7  |
| 4. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . .  | 8  |
| 5. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . .  | 9  |
| 6. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . .  | 10 |
| 7. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . .  | 11 |
| 8. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . .  | 12 |
| 9. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . .  | 13 |
| 10. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 14 |
| 11. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 15 |

|                                                                                                                   |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 12. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 16 |
| 13. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 17 |
| 14. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 18 |
| 15. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 19 |
| 16. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 20 |
| 17. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 21 |
| 18. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 22 |
| 19. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 23 |
| 20. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 24 |
| 21. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 24 |
| 22. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 25 |
| 23. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech . . . . . | 26 |
| A Picture to Follow Along . . . . .                                                                               | 27 |
| A Second Look . . . . .                                                                                           | 28 |

A Note From Bill . . . . . 28

Your Visit — and My Promise . . . . . 29

# 1. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

What's Inside Everything in this guide, with page numbers. Skip to whichever chapter answers your question right now..... 4

|                                            |    |
|--------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. The 60-Second Version.....              | 4  |
| 2. What Crash Detection Is.....            | 5  |
| 3. Which iPhones Have It.....              | 6  |
| 4. Which Apple Watches Have It.....        | 6  |
| 5. It's On by Default.....                 | 7  |
| 6. How It Senses a Crash.....              | 7  |
| 7. The Warning and Countdown.....          | 8  |
| 8. Who It Calls and Tells.....             | 8  |
| 9. Confirm It's On, on the iPhone.....     | 9  |
| 10. Confirm It's On, on the Watch.....     | 9  |
| 11. Fill In Your Medical ID.....           | 10 |
| 12. Add Your Emergency Contacts.....       | 10 |
| 13. Why the Contacts Really Matter.....    | 11 |
| 14. Roller Coasters and Thrill Rides.....  | 11 |
| 15. Rough Roads and Hard Falls.....        | 12 |
| 16. How to Cancel the Countdown.....       | 12 |
| 17. If It Calls by Accident.....           | 13 |
| 18. It Can't Catch Every Crash.....        | 13 |
| 19. Not a Replacement for Calling 911..... | 14 |
| 20. If You Have a Google Pixel.....        | 14 |
| 21. Turning It On, on a Pixel              |    |

## 2. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

|                                     |                                         |                                              |     |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----|
| ..... 15                            | 22. Battery and Signal Both Matter..... | 15                                           | 23. |
| When There's No Signal.....         | 16                                      | 24. Peace of Mind for                        |     |
| Family.....                         | 16                                      | 25. Should You Ever Turn It Off.....         | 17  |
| Keep Your Software Updated.....     | 17                                      | 27. You Can't Safely Test                    |     |
| It.....                             | 18                                      | 28. Talking to an Older Parent About It..... | 18  |
| The Whole Thing in a Nutshell.....  | 19                                      | 30. What the Emergency Call                  |     |
| Sends.....                          | 20                                      | 31. Fall Detection, a Close Cousin.....      | 21  |
| 32. After It Triggers for Real..... | 22                                      | 33. Location Services Must Be                |     |
| On.....                             | 22                                      | 34. When to Call Bill.....                   | 23  |
| Everyday                            |                                         |                                              |     |
| Cheat Sheet.....                    | 24                                      | A Picture to Follow Along.....               |     |
| 25 A Second Look.....               | 25                                      | A Note From Bill.....                        | 26  |
| Your Visit — and My Promise         |                                         |                                              |     |

## START HERE

### 3. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

1. The 60-Second Version If you only read one page, read this one. Newer iPhones and Apple Watches have a feature called Crash Detection. If the phone or watch senses a severe car crash and you don't respond, it will call emergency services on its own and tell your chosen family members where you are. It's meant for the worst moment, when you might be hurt or unable to reach your phone. On supported models it's already switched on. Your job is just to make sure your Medical ID and emergency contacts are filled in, so it has someone to notify. It's a wonderful safety net, but it's a backup to calling 911 yourself, not a replacement for it. Works on iPhone 14 or later and recent Apple Watches. It's on by default, so you likely already have it. It calls 911 and your emergency contacts if you don't respond. You get a loud warning and a countdown you can cancel. Fill in your Medical ID and emergency contacts so it works fully. WATCH OUT Do all of this setup while safely parked. Never poke at phone or watch settings while you're driving. THE BASICS 2. What Crash Detection Is A helper that calls for you when you can't. Crash Detection is a feature built into recent iPhones and Apple Watches. Using the motion sensors already inside the device, it can recognize the sudden, violent forces of a serious car accident, the kind of impact that's very different from ordinary driving or a hard stop. If it senses one, it springs into action. It tries to get your attention first, and if you don't respond, it assumes you can't, and it calls for help automatically. The whole idea is for the moment when you're too hurt, too shaken, or unable to reach your phone to call 911 yourself. It's quietly watching in the background and hopes it never has to do anything at all. What I love about it is that it asks nothing of you in the moment. You don't have to remember to press anything, find your phone, or stay calm enough to dial. If you're hurt or dazed after a serious wreck, those are exactly the things that become hard to do, and that's the gap this feature fills. It also doesn't cost anything extra; it's simply built into a phone or

## GOOD TO KNOW

## 4. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

watch you already own. For years, the only thing like it was a medical alert pendant with a monthly fee, and here it is included, watching over you on every drive, without a bill or a button to wear around your neck. This is different from the old idea of a medical alert pendant. It's built right into a phone or watch you already carry, at no extra monthly cost.

WHICH PHONE 3. Which iPhones Have It iPhone 14 and everything newer. Crash Detection came to the iPhone starting with the iPhone 14, and it's in every iPhone released since then. Your phone also needs to be running reasonably recent software, which any iPhone 14 or later already does. If you have an iPhone 13 or older, it doesn't have this feature, and no update will add it, because it relies on newer sensors inside the phone. If you're not sure which iPhone you have, I can tell you in a few seconds, or you can look in Settings under General and then About, where the model name is listed. The simplest rule to remember is that it's an iPhone 14 or later thing. I mention the older models plainly because I never want anyone to feel falsely protected. If you're driving around believing your iPhone 11 will call for help in a crash, that's a dangerous gap, because it simply won't. There's no shame in having an older phone, and plenty of them work beautifully for everything else. But if this particular safety feature matters to you or your family, it's one of the honest reasons an upgrade might be worth considering down the road. In the meantime, the paper emergency contacts and a charged phone from my car kit guide are the sensible backup, since they work no matter how old your phone is. iPhone 14 and every newer iPhone have Crash Detection. iPhone 13 and older do not, and can't be updated to add it. Check your model in Settings, then General, then About. Keep the phone's software up to date so it works its best.

**WHICH WATCH****5. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

4. Which Apple Watches Have It Series 8, SE 2nd generation, Ultra, and newer. On the Apple Watch side, Crash Detection arrived with the Apple Watch Series 8, the second-generation Apple Watch SE, and the Apple Watch Ultra, along with every watch model released after those. Like the phone, the watch needs recent software, which those models have. Older Apple Watches don't have this particular feature. If you wear a supported watch, it's a nice extra layer, because the watch is strapped to your wrist and can sense the crash and let you respond right there, even if your phone slid under the seat. The watch and the phone work together, so you don't get two separate calls. **GOOD TO KNOW** If you wear a supported Apple Watch and carry a supported iPhone together, they coordinate, so you won't get a double emergency call. **ALREADY ON 5.** It's On by Default You probably already have it working. Here's the reassuring part. On every supported iPhone and Apple Watch, Crash Detection is switched on automatically from the start. You didn't have to do anything to turn it on, and most people have it running without ever knowing. That means if you have a recent iPhone or Apple Watch, the feature is almost certainly already protecting you. The only reason to go into the settings is to confirm it's on, which gives real peace of mind, and to make sure the rest of the pieces, your Medical ID and emergency contacts, are filled in so the feature can do its full job. We'll walk through checking all of that next. **TIP** Even though it's on by default, it's worth a two-minute check. Knowing for certain that it's ready is worth the peace of mind.

**HOW IT WORKS****6. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

6. How It Senses a Crash The tiny motion sensors do the watching. Your iPhone and Apple Watch are full of tiny motion sensors, the same ones that know when you rotate the screen or count your steps. Crash Detection uses advanced versions of these to measure sudden changes in speed and force. Apple studied real crash data to teach the device what a severe accident feels like, so it can tell the difference between a true crash and ordinary bumps, hard braking, or dropping the phone. It also listens for the loud sounds of a collision and notices if the car's own sensors kicked in. It takes several of these signals together before it decides a severe crash has happened, which helps it avoid crying wolf. **GOOD TO KNOW** It's designed to react only to severe crashes. A minor fender-bender at low speed may not trigger it, and that's intended. **HOW IT WORKS** 7. The Warning and Countdown Your chance to say you're all right. If the device thinks you've been in a severe crash, it doesn't call for help instantly. First it tries hard to get your attention. It sounds a loud alarm, taps you on the wrist if you're wearing a watch, and shows a big alert on the screen with a slider to call emergency services and a countdown. If you're all right, you simply tap to cancel, and nothing more happens. If you don't respond within the countdown, around ten seconds or so, the device assumes you're unable to, and it goes ahead and makes the call. That pause is the important safety valve: it gives you time to stop the call if you're fine, but doesn't wait so long that it fails to help when you truly need it. A loud alarm sounds and the screen shows an alert. A countdown gives you time to respond. Tap to cancel if you're all right. If you don't respond, it places the call automatically.

## HOW IT WORKS

## 7. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

8. Who It Calls and Tells Emergency services first, then your family. When the countdown finishes with no response from you, the device calls emergency services, which is 911 here in the United States. It plays an automated message letting them know a severe crash was detected and gives your location so help can find you. Then it notifies the emergency contacts you've set up, sending them a message that says you were in a crash and sharing your location with them too, so your family knows and can head your way or make calls.

This is why filling in those emergency contacts matters so much: without them, the device can still reach 911, but it has no family members to alert on your behalf. **GOOD TO KNOW**

The call to 911 uses a spoken message and your location, so even if you can't talk, responders learn where you are and that it was a crash. **CHECK IT** 9. Confirm It's On, on the iPhone A quick look in Settings puts your mind at ease. To see the setting on your iPhone, parked and at rest, open the Settings app, the one with the gray gear icon. Scroll down and tap Emergency SOS. On that screen you'll find the switch for calling after a severe crash. On a supported phone it's turned on, shown by the switch being green. You don't need to change anything if it's already green; you're just confirming. While you're on that screen, it's worth reading the other options too, which control how the emergency call is placed. If you ever can't find it or it looks different, that's perfectly normal across versions, and I'm glad to look with you.

- 1 Open the Settings app, with the gray gear icon.
- 2 Scroll down and tap Emergency SOS.
- 3 Find the switch for calling after a severe crash.
- 4 A green switch means it's on. Leave it on.

## CHECK IT

## 8. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

10. Confirm It's On, on the Watch The same check, right on your wrist. If you have a supported Apple Watch, you can check it there too. On the watch, open the Settings app, then look for SOS. Inside you'll find the crash detection switch, which should be on. You can also do this from your iPhone: open the Watch app on the phone, which manages all the watch's settings, and look under the SOS section. Either way you're just confirming the green switch is on. Because the watch rides on your wrist, it can be especially helpful, since it can feel the crash and show you the countdown even if the phone ended up out of reach. Leave it switched on. TIP The Watch app on your iPhone is the easy way to manage the watch, since the phone screen is bigger and simpler to read. SET UP 11. Fill In Your Medical ID The card that speaks for you in an emergency. Your Medical ID is a card on your phone that holds important health information: your name, age, any medical conditions, allergies, medications, and your blood type. In an emergency, first responders can view it from the locked phone without needing your passcode, so it can tell them what they need to know even if you can't speak. It's not strictly required for Crash Detection to call for help, but it makes that help far more useful. You set it up in the Health app, under your profile, where there's a Medical ID section. Take a few minutes to fill in whatever's true for you. It's one of the most valuable five minutes you can spend on your phone.

- 1 Open the Health app on your iPhone.
- 2 Tap your picture or initials in the corner.
- 3 Tap Medical ID, then Edit.
- 4 Fill in your conditions, allergies, medications, and blood type.
- 5 Turn on the option to show it when the phone is locked.

## SET UP

## 9. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

12. Add Your Emergency Contacts The people you want told if something happens. Emergency contacts are the family members or friends the phone will notify after a crash. You add them in the same Medical ID screen, in the emergency contacts section, choosing people from your address book. Pick two or three people you'd truly want contacted, like a spouse, a son or daughter, or a close friend, and make sure their phone numbers in your contacts are correct. When Crash Detection calls for help, these are the people who'll get a message that you were in a crash, along with your location. Without them set, the phone can still call 911, but your family won't be told automatically, so this step is well worth doing. Add two or three people you'd want contacted. Choose them from your existing contacts list. Double-check that their phone numbers are right. A spouse, a child, and a close friend make a good trio. SET UP 13. Why the Contacts Really Matter The feature is only as good as the people behind it. It's worth dwelling on this for a moment, because it's the step people most often skip. Imagine the feature works perfectly and calls 911 after a crash. That's wonderful, but if your family has no idea, they could spend anxious hours not knowing where you are. With emergency contacts set, those same loved ones get a message the moment it happens, telling them you were in a crash and exactly where. That turns a frightening unknown into something they can act on right away. So if you only do one thing after reading this, make it filling in those emergency contacts. It costs nothing and it's the difference between the feature half working and fully working. GOOD TO KNOW The message to your contacts includes your location and updates it, so your family can find you even if you've been moved to a hospital.

**FALSE ALARMS****10. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

14. Roller Coasters and Thrill Rides Sometimes fun looks like a crash to the phone. No system is perfect, and Crash Detection can occasionally mistake something for a crash. The famous example is roller coasters and other thrill rides at amusement parks, which fling you around with forces that can look a lot like an accident to the sensors. There have been cases of phones calling 911 from the top of a roller coaster. This doesn't mean the feature is broken; it means it's cautious, which is what you'd want. If you're heading to an amusement park, you can simply leave the phone in a locker or bag, or be ready to cancel the countdown if it goes off. It's a small quirk and an easy one to work around. TIP Going to a theme park with the grandkids? Leave the phone in a locker, or just be ready to tap cancel if it buzzes. FALSE ALARMS 15. Rough Roads and Hard Falls A few other things that can set it off. A handful of other activities can occasionally trigger a false alarm, usually ones with sudden, hard impacts. A serious mountain-bike crash, a hard spill, or certain jarring events can sometimes look like a car accident to the device. Everyday driving, even on our bumpy rural roads and gravel lanes, won't set it off; it's tuned for severe, sudden force, not ordinary jostling. If a false alarm ever does happen, there's no harm done as long as you cancel the countdown or, if the call went through, simply tell the operator you're fine. The system errs on the side of caution, and a rare false alarm is a small price for a feature that could save your life. Everyday driving and bumpy roads won't trigger it. A hard fall or serious bike crash occasionally might. If it triggers, cancel the countdown if you're all right. If the call connects, tell the operator you're fine.

**CANCEL****11. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

16. How to Cancel the Countdown Stopping the call if you're all right. If the alarm sounds and you're perfectly fine, cancelling is easy. On the screen you'll see the countdown and a way to dismiss it. On the iPhone there's a slider to make the emergency call, and separately an option to stop or dismiss if you don't need help; follow the on-screen prompt and the countdown stops. On the Apple Watch, you tap to cancel. The key is just to respond before the countdown ends. The device makes this loud and obvious on purpose, so you won't miss it. If you're ever unsure in the moment, letting the call go through and telling the operator you're okay is also perfectly fine and causes no trouble.

- 1 When the alarm sounds, look at the screen.
- 2 Follow the prompt to stop or dismiss if you're all right.
- 3 On the watch, tap to cancel the countdown.
- 4 Respond before the countdown ends to prevent the call. **CANCEL 17. If It Calls by Accident** No harm done, just let them know. Suppose the countdown finished before you could cancel, and the phone called 911 even though you're fine. Don't panic; this happens, and operators are used to it. Stay on the line and tell them it was an accidental alert and that you're all right. Don't just hang up, because if you do, they may send help anyway to be safe, which wastes everyone's time. A calm word on the line sorts it out in seconds. Your emergency contacts may also get the message, so a quick follow-up text or call to them, saying it was a false alarm, saves them worry. That's the whole fix: communicate, and it's over. **WATCH OUT** If it calls 911 by mistake, stay on the line and tell them you're fine rather than hanging up, so they don't dispatch help you don't need.

**THE LIMITS****12. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

18. It Can't Catch Every Crash An honest word about what it can't do. It's important to be honest here. Crash Detection is a remarkable safety net, but it is not perfect and it cannot detect every crash. It's tuned for severe, high-impact accidents, so a slower-speed collision, a rollover at an odd angle, or an unusual type of crash might not trigger it. The phone also needs to have enough battery and be with you for it to work. Think of it as an extra layer of protection for the worst case, not a guarantee. The right way to hold it in your mind is simple: it's there to help in the moment you can't help yourself, and it's wonderful for that, but it doesn't replace ordinary care and common sense on the road. **GOOD TO KNOW** The feature needs the phone charged and nearby to work. A dead phone in the trunk can't detect anything. **THE LIMITS** 19. Not a Replacement for Calling 911 When you can call, call. This is the most important point of all. If you're in a crash and you're able to call 911 yourself, do that. A real person on the line can describe what happened, answer the operator's questions, and get the exact help needed far better than any automatic message. Crash Detection is designed for the times you can't make that call, when you're hurt, dazed, or can't reach your phone. So please don't ever think, I don't need to call, my phone will handle it. The feature is a backup for the worst case, and your own call, whenever you can make it, is always the first and best choice. If you can call 911 yourself, always do that first. The feature is a backup for when you can't call. A live call gives far better information than the auto message. Don't rely on it in place of your own good judgment.

## PIXEL

## 13. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

20. If You Have a Google Pixel Android has a similar feature too. Crash Detection isn't only an Apple feature. Google's Pixel phones have a similar one called Car Crash Detection, found in an app called Personal Safety. It works much the same way: the phone senses a severe crash, checks on you, and if you don't respond, it can call emergency services. It's available on the Pixel 4a and newer Pixel phones, in the United States. The one difference worth knowing is that on Pixel it isn't always on by default the way it is on a supported iPhone, so you generally need to go into the Personal Safety app and switch it on. If you carry a Pixel, that's a worthwhile few minutes. GOOD TO KNOW Pixel's version lives in the Personal Safety app and often needs turning on, unlike Apple's, which is on from the start. PIXEL 21. Turning It On, on a Pixel A short trip through the Personal Safety app. To set it up on a Pixel, open the Personal Safety app, which comes built into the phone. Look for the Car Crash Detection section and switch it on. The app will ask for permission to use the phone's location, microphone, and physical activity, which it needs so it can sense a crash and tell responders where you are; allow those for the feature to work. While you're in the Personal Safety app, it's a good idea to set up your emergency contacts and medical information there too, just as you would on an iPhone, so the feature has someone to notify. If the menus look unfamiliar, I'm happy to sit down with your Pixel and get it all sorted.

- 1 Open the Personal Safety app on your Pixel.
- 2 Find and open Car Crash Detection.
- 3 Switch it on and allow the permissions it asks for.
- 4 Set up your emergency contacts and medical info in the same app.

## KEEP IT WORKING

**14. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

22. Battery and Signal Both Matter The feature needs power and a way to reach help. For any of this to work, two simple things need to be true: the device must have battery life, and it must be able to reach help. A phone that's gone dead can't detect anything, which is another good reason to keep a car charger handy, as covered in my car emergency kit guide. For the call itself, the phone needs cell service, and most modern phones can reach 911 even with very weak signal. Some recent iPhones can even send an emergency message by satellite when there's no cell signal at all, which is a real help on remote roads. The habit to build is just keeping your phone charged and with you when you drive. TIP Keep a charger in the car so your phone stays alive. A charged phone is the one thing every part of this depends on. KEEP IT WORKING 23. When There's No Signal What happens on a road with no bars. Out on remote stretches with no cell signal, a regular emergency call can't go through, and that's a real limit worth understanding. If you have one of the recent iPhones with Emergency SOS by satellite, the phone can connect to a satellite overhead to send for help even with no cell bars, which is a genuine lifesaver in rural and remote areas. It takes a little longer and you may need a clear view of the sky, but it works where nothing else would. Not every phone has this, so it's worth knowing whether yours does. Either way, this is another reason that paper backups and a plan still matter, because technology has its edges. GOOD TO KNOW Emergency SOS by satellite is only on certain recent iPhones. If you drive remote roads often, it's worth knowing whether your phone has it.

## FAMILY

## 15. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

24. Peace of Mind for Family Why this matters for an older driver. This feature is a quiet comfort for families. If you have grown children who worry about you driving, or if you worry about an older parent on the road, Crash Detection offers real reassurance. It means that in the worst case, help gets called and the family gets told, automatically, without anyone having to remember a thing. For a parent who drives alone, or takes long trips to see grandchildren, that's a meaningful safety net. It's not about taking away anyone's independence; it's the opposite, a small bit of technology that lets someone keep driving with everyone feeling a little safer. Setting it up together can be a kind and practical thing for a family to do. There's a gentle dignity in it, too. Rather than a grown child worrying and hovering, or pushing a parent to stop driving before it's truly time, this is a quiet bit of technology that lets everyone breathe a little easier. The parent keeps their independence and their car keys, and the family gets the comfort of knowing that if the unthinkable happened on some back road, help would be called and they'd be told right away. It shifts the conversation from fear to reassurance, which is a far nicer place for a family to be. TIP Setting this up together is a lovely, low-pressure way for a worried adult child and a driving parent to both feel better. KEEP OR NOT 25. Should You Ever Turn It Off Almost always, leave it on. You can turn Crash Detection off in the same settings screen where you checked it, but for nearly everyone, the answer is to leave it on. The occasional false alarm is a minor nuisance compared with what the feature offers in a true emergency. The only times people reasonably switch it off are special situations, like a day at an amusement park, and even then it's easier to just leave the phone in a locker. If false alarms ever became a genuine problem for you, we could talk it through, but as a rule, this is a feature worth keeping switched on all the time. It asks nothing of you day to day and stands ready for the day you hope never comes.

**WATCH OUT****16. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

If you turn it off for a theme park day, remember to turn it back on afterward. It's easy to forget it's off. **KEEP OR NOT 26. Keep Your Software Updated** Updates keep the safety features sharp. Apple and Google regularly improve these safety features through software updates, including making them better at telling a real crash from a false alarm. So keeping your phone's and watch's software up to date isn't just about new features; it helps the crash detection work as well as it can. On an iPhone, software updates live in Settings, under General, then Software Update, and you can turn on automatic updates so it happens overnight on its own. It's a good habit for all sorts of reasons, and this is one more. If updates make you nervous, that's a common feeling, and it's exactly the kind of thing I can set up to run automatically so you never have to think about it. Updates can improve crash detection accuracy over time. On iPhone, check Settings, General, Software Update. Turn on automatic updates so it happens overnight. Keep the Apple Watch updated through the Watch app too. **TESTING 27. You Can't Safely Test It** Trust the setup, not a staged crash. People sometimes ask how they can test that it works. The honest answer is that you can't really test Crash Detection, because the only way to trigger it is a genuine severe crash, which obviously you'd never want to stage. So instead of testing the crash part, you test the setup: confirm the feature is switched on, confirm your Medical ID is filled in, and confirm your emergency contacts are correct. That's the part within your control, and it's what matters. Driving around hoping to trigger it, or trying to fake a crash, could cause a real false call to 911, so please don't. Set it up properly and trust that it's ready. **WATCH OUT** Never try to stage a crash to test the feature. You'd risk a real false call to 911. Just confirm the settings instead.

## TALK

## 17. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

28. Talking to an Older Parent About It A gentle, practical conversation. If you're reading this for a parent, the kindest approach is to frame it as a tool that helps everyone relax, not as a comment on their driving. You might offer to help set up their Medical ID and add yourself as an emergency contact, which is a natural, caring thing to do. Many older drivers are glad to have it once they understand it simply calls for help if they ever can't. Keep it light and practical. Show them the loud warning and the cancel button so a false alarm won't frighten them. And if the phone or watch is too old to have the feature, that's worth knowing too, and might factor into a future upgrade. I'm always glad to help a family set this up together. TIP Frame it as something that helps the whole family worry less, not as a judgment about driving. It usually lands much better that way. RECAP 29. The Whole Thing in a Nutshell A short, calm summary to remember. Let me gather it all up. If you have an iPhone 14 or later, or a recent Apple Watch, you most likely already have Crash Detection, switched on and watching quietly in the background. To make it fully useful, do three things while parked: confirm it's on in Emergency SOS, fill in your Medical ID, and add two or three emergency contacts. Know that it gives you a loud warning and a countdown you can cancel, that false alarms happen rarely and are easy to sort out, and that it's a backup, not a substitute, for calling 911 yourself. That's really the whole story, and it's a comforting one. Do this Where Confirm it's on Settings, Emergency SOS Fill in Medical ID Health app, your profile Add emergency contacts Health app, Medical ID Keep phone charged A car charger helps

**HOW IT WORKS****18. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

30. What the Emergency Call Sends The automated message that reaches 911. It helps to know exactly what happens on that automated call, so it isn't a mystery. When the countdown finishes and the device calls 911, it doesn't just dial and go silent. It plays a recorded spoken message to the operator, letting them know that the phone detected a severe car crash and that the owner may not be able to respond. Then it reads out your location, the latitude and longitude, so responders can be sent to the right spot even on a road with no address. If you're able to speak at any point, you can talk to the operator directly, and the line stays open. This is why the feature is useful even when you can't say a word: the operator still learns that it's a crash and where you are. Your phone keeps your location updated too, so if help needs it, they can find you. Knowing all this takes the worry out of it, because you can picture exactly how the call unfolds and trust that it's giving responders what they need. It plays a spoken message saying a severe crash was detected. It reads out your location so responders can find you. You can talk to the operator yourself if you're able. Your location keeps updating so help can reach you. **GOOD TO KNOW** Even if you can't speak, the automated message and your location tell responders it's a crash and where to come. That's the whole point of it.

## RELATED

## 19. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

31. Fall Detection, a Close Cousin A matching feature for a different mishap. If you wear an Apple Watch, it has a close cousin to Crash Detection called Fall Detection, and it's well worth knowing about. It works the same way but for falls: if the watch senses a hard fall and you don't move or respond for a short while, it offers to call emergency services and alert your contacts, just like the crash feature. For an older person, this can be genuinely reassuring, since a bad fall at home or on a walk is a real concern, and the watch can summon help if you can't reach a phone. On recent watches it often turns itself on automatically for people over a certain age, but it's worth checking it's enabled in the watch's settings. Between Crash Detection in the car and Fall Detection out of it, an Apple Watch becomes a quiet, round-the-clock safety companion. The same emergency contacts and Medical ID you set up serve both features, so setting those up once protects you in more than one way. Fall Detection works like crash detection, but for falls. If you fall hard and don't respond, it can call for help. Reassuring for an older person living or walking alone. The same contacts and Medical ID serve both features. **GOOD TO KNOW** Check that Fall Detection is switched on in the watch's settings. On recent watches it often turns on by itself for older wearers.

## AFTER

## 20. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

32. After It Triggers for Real What the minutes afterward look like. Suppose the worst happens and the feature does its job in a real crash. It helps to have a calm picture of what follows. Once the call is placed and your contacts are notified, your phone keeps working to help: it shares your location with the people you've chosen, and they'll get a message telling them you were in a crash and where. Your emergency contacts can then call you, head your way, or make calls on your behalf. If you're able, the most important thing is still to speak to the 911 operator and tell them anything they need to know. If you're not able, the system has already given them the essentials. Afterward, your phone may ask whether you want to update your contacts that you're okay, once you're able to. The point to hold onto is that the feature doesn't just make one call and quit; it works to keep you connected to both responders and family through the whole frightening stretch until help arrives. Your phone shares your location with your chosen contacts. They get a message saying you were in a crash, and where. Speak to the 911 operator if you possibly can. Later, you can message contacts that you're okay. TIP Let your emergency contacts know ahead of time that they're on your list, so a crash alert from your phone isn't a total shock to them.

## SET UP

## 21. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

33. Location Services Must Be On The feature needs to know where you are. For Crash Detection to send your location to responders, your phone's location services need to be switched on, which on most phones they already are. Location services is the setting that lets the phone work out where it is, using satellites and cell towers, and it's what makes maps and directions work too. If it were turned off entirely, the crash feature could still call 911 but couldn't tell them where to come, which would blunt its usefulness badly. So it's worth a quick check that location services are on. On an iPhone, you'll find the master switch in Settings under Privacy and Security, then Location Services. It should be on. You don't need to let every app track you to benefit here; the emergency features get your location regardless when it truly matters. If you've ever turned location off to save battery or for privacy, just make sure it's back on, because for this safety feature, and for your own maps, it needs to be working.

- 1 On iPhone, open Settings, then Privacy and Security.
- 2 Tap Location Services.
- 3 Make sure the main switch is turned on.
- 4 Leave it on so the crash feature can share your location. GET HELP 34. When to Call Bill I'll get it set up right in a single visit. If any of this feels fiddly, that's completely normal, and it's exactly what I'm here for. In a short in-home visit I can confirm Crash Detection is on, set up your Medical ID with your real health details, and add the right emergency contacts, on your iPhone, your Apple Watch, or a Pixel. I'll show you the warning and the cancel button so nothing about it surprises you later, and I'll answer every question in plain English. With more than thirty years of doing this kind of work for folks here in Portage County, I promise to be patient and clear, and I stand behind it with a friendly guarantee. Give me a call at (330) 200-8042, and Sophie or I will find a time. No rush, and no pressure.

#### CHEAT SHEET

## 22. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

Everyday Cheat Sheet Keep this page handy. It points you straight to what to do for each task. I want to... Do this Does my phone have it iPhone 14 or newer with recent software Does my watch have it Apple Watch Series 8, SE 2nd gen, or Ultra, or newer Is it already on Yes, on by default on supported models Where do I check Settings, then Emergency SOS on the iPhone Who does it call Emergency services and your emergency contacts I have a Pixel phone Car Crash Detection in the Personal Safety app, turn it on It went off by mistake Tap to cancel the countdown before it finishes Will it catch every crash No, it's a backup, not a replacement for calling 911 Get help Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

## HOW I CAN HELP

**23. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

Your Visit — and My Promise In-home visit — \$99 flat for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included. Remote Support — \$49 for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo). GOOD TO KNOW My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated. Call or text (330) 200-8042 · Book a visit: [billshometech.com/book](https://billshometech.com/book) · [bill@billshometech.com](mailto:bill@billshometech.com) This free guide is for general information only — not professional advice, and no substitute for your device's own manual. Any prices or outside products mentioned can change; please confirm current details before you buy. Please use your own good judgment and follow it at your own risk — for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, stop and call a licensed professional. Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results. © 2026 Bill's Home Tech, LLC.

## AT A GLANCE

## A Picture to Follow Along

## What happens in a crash

If it senses a severe impact.

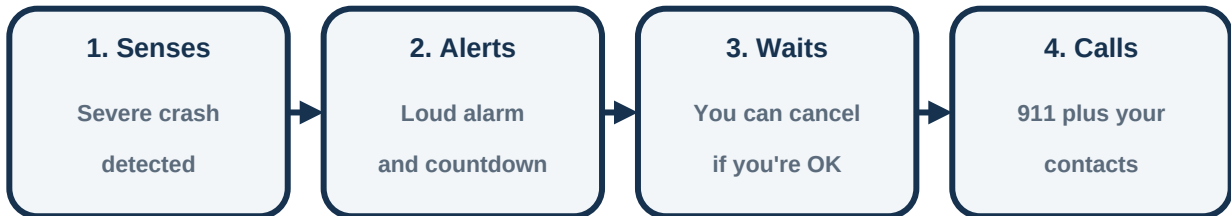


**Illustration — a schematic. The order is a suggestion; do one box at a time.**

A schematic of the plan — company steps vary; the order does not have to.

## AT A GLANCE

## A Second Look

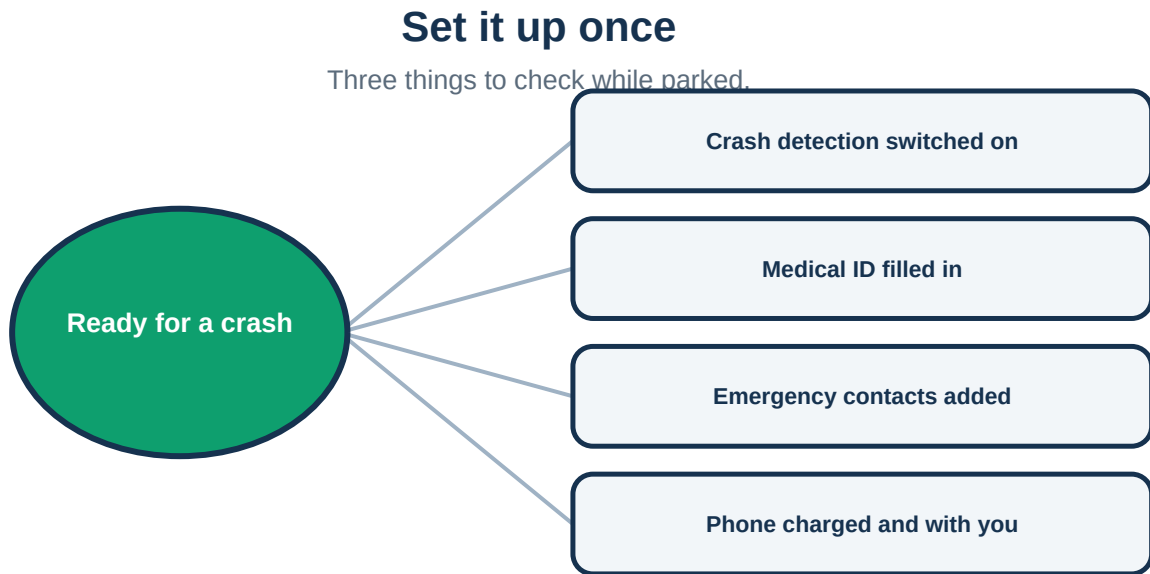


Illustration — a schematic. Set-up screens differ; each takes only a few minutes.

## BEFORE YOU GO

## A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.



## HOW I CAN HELP

### Your Visit — and My Promise

**In-home visit — \$99 flat** for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included.

**Remote Support — \$49** for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo).

#### GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Call or text **(330) 200-8042** · Book a visit: [billshometech.com/book](https://billshometech.com/book) · [bill@billshometech.com](mailto:bill@billshometech.com)

This free guide is for general information only — not professional advice, and no substitute for your device's own manual. Any prices or outside products mentioned can change; please confirm current details before you buy. Please use your own good judgment and follow it at your own risk — for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, stop and call a licensed professional. Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results. © 2026 Bill's Home Tech, LLC.