BILL'S HOME TECH

Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

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Your Watch Can Do That? 10 Apple Watch / Fitbit Surprises

Ten things your smartwatch does that go well beyond counting steps

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SUMMARY

The 60-Second Version

Your smartwatch does far more than count steps. Apple Watch and some Fitbits can detect a hard fall and call for help, summon emergency services when you hold a button, and store a Medical ID responders can read. They track your heart rate and sleep, nudge you to stand and breathe, ping your lost phone from your wrist, and let you pay at a store with a tap.

A cellular model even lets you leave the phone at home. Set these up in the companion app — Apple's Watch app or the Fitbit app — and turn off all but the few notifications you care about. Treat health readings as helpful prompts, never as medical advice.

1 The Short Version

Your smartwatch is a tiny health-and-safety helper on your wrist. Beyond counting steps, it can detect a serious fall and call for help, keep an eye on your heart rhythm, remind you to stand and breathe, track your sleep, and let you leave your phone behind while still getting calls and texts.

Apple Watch and Fitbit go about these in slightly different ways, and which features you have depends on the model, but the ideas are the same. This guide walks through ten of the most useful, so the watch you already wear earns its place. Try the ones that matter to you and skip the rest.

- Safety: fall detection, heart alerts, and emergency calling.
- Health: heart rate, sleep tracking, and gentle move reminders.
- Convenience: find your phone, pay by wrist, and leave the phone at home.
- Which features you have depends on the model — but every modern watch does several.

TIP

Spend a few minutes in the watch's companion app on your phone — the Watch app for Apple, the Fitbit app for Fitbit. Nearly every feature here is switched on and tuned there, not on the watch itself.

2 Health Features Are Helpful, Not Medical

Before we start, one honest word. The health features on these watches are genuinely useful and have helped many people notice something worth checking — but they are consumer gadgets, not medical devices, and they can both miss things and raise false alarms.

Treat what your watch tells you as a helpful nudge to pay attention, never as a diagnosis. If the watch flags something about your heart, or if you simply feel unwell, call your doctor — do not wait for the watch to tell you more, and do not ignore how you feel just because the watch looks fine.

WATCH OUT

If you ever have chest pain, trouble breathing, or signs of a stroke, call 911 right away, regardless of what your watch shows. The watch is a backup and a prompt, never a replacement for medical care or your own judgment.

3 1. Fall Detection That Calls for Help

Both Apple Watch and some Fitbit models can detect a hard fall and, if you do not get up, automatically call emergency services and notify your contacts — a real reassurance for living alone or being active.

1. Apple Watch: open the Watch app on your iPhone, go to Emergency SOS, and turn on Fall Detection.
2. Choose whether it is always on or only during workouts.

3. Add emergency contacts in the Health app's Medical ID so they are notified.
4. Fitbit: check your model's settings in the Fitbit app for fall or emergency features.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> If the watch detects a fall, it taps your wrist and waits; if you are fine, you dismiss it. Only if you stay still does it call for help — so a stumble that you recover from will not trigger a needless call.

4 2. A Button That Calls Emergency Services

Even without a fall, you can summon help in seconds by holding a button — useful if you feel faint or find someone else in trouble.

1. Apple Watch: press and hold the side button until the Emergency SOS slider appears, then slide it (or keep holding to call automatically).
2. It calls local emergency services and can share your location.
3. It then alerts the emergency contacts you set up.
4. Fitbit: some models offer an emergency call feature — check your model in the Fitbit app.

> **TIP**
>
> Fill in your Medical ID in the Health app (Apple) with your conditions, medications, and contacts. Emergency responders can read it from a locked watch or phone — it can speak for you when you cannot.

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5 3. Keep an Eye on Your Heart

These watches check your heart rate throughout the day and can alert you to a rate that is unusually high or low at rest, or an irregular rhythm that might be worth a doctor's look.

- Resting heart rate is tracked automatically and shown in the health app.
- Apple Watch can alert you to a high or low heart rate and to an irregular rhythm.
- Some Apple Watch models can take an ECG reading you can share with your doctor.
- Fitbit tracks heart rate and, on some models, offers irregular-rhythm notifications.

> **WATCH OUT**
> An irregular-rhythm alert is a prompt to call your doctor, not a diagnosis, and a normal reading does not rule out a problem. Use it as one more reason to get checked, and never as a reason to skip medical advice.

6 4. Gentle Nudges to Move and Breathe

Sitting for hours is hard on the body, and the watch offers kind, regular reminders to stand, stretch, and take a slow breath — small habits that add up.

1. Apple Watch: stand reminders come with the Activity app; a tap invites you to stand each hour.
2. Use the Mindfulness or Breathe app for a one-minute guided breath.
3. Fitbit: turn on reminders to move in the Fitbit app, and try its relax or breathing feature.
4. Adjust how often and when, so it fits your day.

> **TIP**
> You can set "quiet hours" so the watch does not nag you during a nap, a meal, or the night. The goal is gentle encouragement, not pestering.

7 5. Understand Your Sleep

Wear the watch to bed and it quietly tracks how long and how well you slept, which can reveal patterns worth discussing with a doctor — or simply help you build a better bedtime.

1. Make sure sleep tracking is on in the watch's companion app.
2. Wear the watch overnight (keep it charged enough — top it up before bed or in the morning).
3. Review your sleep in the Health app (Apple) or Fitbit app each morning.
4. Look for trends over weeks rather than fussing over a single night.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Fitbit is especially known for friendly sleep insights, including a nightly score. Apple Watch tracks sleep too; both are best read as general trends, not precise medical sleep studies.

8 6. Find Your Phone From Your Wrist

One of the most-used everyday tricks: make your phone chime from your watch so you can track it down.

1. Apple Watch: swipe up (or open Control Center) and tap the ping-phone button; the iPhone chimes.
2. Press and hold that button and the phone also flashes its light — handy in the dark.
3. Fitbit: use the Fitbit app's find-phone feature, or a tracker app, depending on model.

> **TIP**
>
> This is the feature people reach for daily. A couple of taps on the wrist and the phone sings out from under the newspaper or the couch cushion.

9 7. Leave Your Phone at Home

If your watch has its own cellular plan, you can go for a walk without your phone and still get calls, texts, and maps — a freedom many people do not realize they have.

- A cellular watch needs its own plan added through your phone carrier (a small monthly fee).
- With it, calls and texts come to your wrist even without the phone nearby.
- Without cellular, the watch still does everything when your phone is on the same Wi-Fi or in range.
- Either way, you can leave the phone behind around the house and still be reachable.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Even a non-cellular watch stays useful away from the phone for a while — it holds your step count and some features, syncing up when you are reunited. Cellular simply extends the leash to anywhere.

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10 8. Pay With a Tap of Your Wrist

Your watch can hold your payment cards so you can pay at a store by holding your wrist near the card reader — no wallet, no phone.

1. Apple Watch: add a card in the Watch app under Wallet & Apple Pay.
2. At checkout, double-press the side button and hold the watch to the reader.
3. Fitbit: set up Fitbit Pay (on supported models) with your card in the Fitbit app.
4. Watch for the confirmation buzz and you are done.

WATCH OUT

Paying by watch is as safe as a tap-to-pay card and does not share your real card number. Still, keep your watch passcode on, so a lost watch cannot be used by someone else — I can make sure that is set.

11 9. Control Music, Timers, and Siri

The watch is a handy little remote and assistant, so you can do small things without digging out your phone.

- Pause or skip music playing on your phone or speaker, right from the wrist.
- Set a timer or alarm by voice: raise the watch and ask.
- Ask for the weather, a reminder, or to start a call, hands-free.
- Glance at your calendar's next event without unlocking anything.

TIP

Raising your wrist and speaking is often faster than finding your phone for a quick question or timer. It takes a day or two to build the habit, then it feels natural.

12 10. Reminders and Notifications at a Glance

The watch can show the few things that matter — a calendar reminder, a text from family, a medication prompt — with a gentle tap you feel rather than a sound you might miss.

1. Choose which apps may notify your watch in the companion app — keep it to the important few.
2. Set up medication or calendar reminders so they tap your wrist at the right time.
3. Feel the tap, glance down, and dismiss or act with a tap.
4. Turn off the noisy apps so the watch only speaks up when it truly matters.

GOOD TO KNOW

The secret to loving a smartwatch is turning OFF most notifications and keeping only the handful you care about. A watch that buzzes constantly gets taken off; one that taps only for family and reminders gets worn.

13 Keeping the Watch Useful

A few habits keep the watch helpful rather than a chore, and make sure its safety features are actually ready when you need them.

- Charge it on a routine — many people top it up while they shower or make breakfast.
- Keep it and its phone app updated so health and safety features stay current.
- Confirm fall detection, emergency contacts, and Medical ID are set up — not left for later.
- Keep the wrist passcode on so your payments and data stay protected.

TIP

Set up the safety features the day you get the watch, not "someday." Fall detection and emergency contacts are only reassuring if they are switched on before you ever need them.

14 When to Call Bill

None of this is a test, and there is no prize for struggling. Most of these tricks take a minute once you know where to look, and this guide gets you there. But if a setting hides somewhere new on your version, or you would simply rather have someone set it up with you and show you once, that is exactly the kind of visit I make.

I come to you here in Portage County, sit down beside you, and set these up on your own phone or tablet so they work the way you want. I will show you each one slowly, write down the few steps that matter, and make sure you can do it yourself

afterward. No rush, no jargon, and no question is too small.

- You want fall detection, emergency contacts, and Medical ID set up and tested.
- You would like the notifications trimmed to just the few that matter to you.
- You want sleep, heart alerts, or wrist payments set up and explained in plain terms.
- You would simply rather have it set up correctly the first time, with someone showing you how.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this handy. Most features are set up in the watch's phone app.

I want to...	Do this...
Turn on fall detection	Apple: Watch app Emergency SOS Fall Detection
Call for help fast	Apple: press and hold the side button Emergency SOS
Set my Medical ID	Apple: Health app Medical ID (readable when locked)
Track my sleep	Wear it overnight; review in Health (Apple) or Fitbit app
Find my phone	Apple: Control Center ping phone button
Pay with my wrist	Apple: Wallet & Apple Pay; Fitbit: Fitbit Pay
Stop the constant buzzing	Turn off all but a few notifications in the app
Get help	Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

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

You don't have to remember all of it — just that a friendly, patient person is one call away, whenever you'd rather have a hand.

KEY SPECS

In your home — $99 flat for the first visit, no contracts and no surprises, with a 30-day come-back-free follow-up. In-home visits cover Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities.
Outside the area? Remotely — $49 for a screen-share session (free for Support Plan members, $39/mo), refundable if I can't fix it — and credited toward a visit if you'd rather have me in person. Book either at billshometech.com/book.

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.

Whenever you're ready, I'll come to your home anywhere in Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities, at your pace. Too far for a house call? I also help remotely. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042. — Bill

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