

# What's New!

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## Summary of Wearable Technology Devices Tested

Company	Pivotal Living	MiO	Fitbit	LifenSoul	Misfit
Product	Pivotal Living	Fuse	Flex	KITAG	Shine
Price	\$12/yr	\$149	\$100	\$20	\$100
Measures	Sleep, activity, steps, calories, weight, hydration	Steps, calories, distance; in workout mode, heart rate, time, distance	Steps, calories burned, miles, sleep, calories eaten, weight, liquids	Location of item, alerts when out of range, where item last seen	Steps, calories, distance, sleep, food plan
Syncs by	Bluetooth	Bluetooth	Wifi (dongle)	Bluetooth	Bluetooth
Charges by	Adapter	Adapter	Adapter	Battery	Battery
Result display	Smartphone	Smartphone	Smartphone, laptop	Smartphone	Smartphone
Device display	Time, steps, more	Time, steps, calories, distance	Dots	Nil	Dots
Useful?	So so	Yes	Yes	So so	Yes

### Fitbit Flex

This is one of a growing series of wearable technology tools. Fitbit is a wristband which records information about your activities and displays the results in a smartphone app and on a laptop or tablet, as well.



**FLEX**  
ACTIVITY - SLEEP WRISTBAND

The band itself is nondescript – no info, no decoration. It fastens with a press and hold band and contains a tracker device that collects a transmits its stored data to a smartphone (or tablet or laptop) application. There is a four LED light display on the band that advises you about progress toward your daily goals.

The tracker contains a battery which can be charged by the use on the included cable, which has a USB connection on one end and a container for the tracker to be inserted. Once charged, the tracker must be inserted in the wristband.

This apparently simple operation was not so simple for me! I not only tried to insert the tracker upside down, but also reversed. In the process, I broke the wristband and had to get a replacement! With suitable care, I got it right the next time and the tracker started working as advertised.

The tracker records your steps, calories burned, miles, activity time and, if you input the data, also keeps track of sleep, calories eaten, weight and liquids. The product comes with two wristbands, one regular size, the other for smaller wrists.



Transferring the wristband data involves syncing by WiFi to the smartphone app. A dongle (included) must be used to allow this operation. The dongle inserts into any USB port. Syncing will occur if the wristband is nearby.

The display of recorded data is somewhat disappointing. I was expecting some sort of graphic display to be available, but instead the recorded info is shown in list form. Although it's possible to look at data for prior days, it's tedious to do so; you must tab backwards one day at a time.

One feature of the smartphone app is kind of neat. You can record a run graphically through the app.

Some of the recorded data can be displayed in various fashions. For example, steps are normally shown as a total for the current day, but a subpage display shows results for prior weeks and days. Each day's total is also shown in a graph by hour. Likewise, miles, calories burned and sleep can be viewed in day/week summary and graph mode.

All in all, this is a valuable tool for recording and displaying your activity of various sorts.

**About:** Fitbit Flex

**Vendor:** Fitbit  
[www.fitbit.com](http://www.fitbit.com)

**Price:** \$100

## Kiitag

You would never know from the product name, but it is a device that finds your lost items. It uses Bluetooth to communicate between your smartphone and the KiiTAG. The device is shaped more or less like a key, has a hole in the rounded end and has a battery compartment on one side secured by a cover with a tiny screw. Fortunately, the device kit comes with a screwdriver that fits the tiny screw! The kit also comes with a small lithium-ion battery that must be installed.

Once the battery is installed, you download the KiiTAG app to your smartphone.

Here's what it does: locates lost items, such as your keys; shows you where the item was last seen; alerts when Kiitag is out of range. There are three additional features available at modest extra cost: remote camera shutter; email notification; find your phone.

To setup your device, you first register it online through the iOS app. The information you provide is safe from others.

Once you have attached the device to an object (keys, bag, briefcase, etc.), you will get an "out of range" message on your iPhone (or other similar) if you go away more than 200 feet. You can access the "last seen" map to get an idea of where to look for your lost item.

If nearby, you can use the Find It feature to locate your lost item as with a metal detector. You get a screen with a couple of flashing gray circles; as you near your item, the circles expand, change to red until you are beside your item.

If your iPhone is out of sight, you can press the button on the Kiitag to cause a picture to be taken or to have the phone ring. This should help you locate it.



The email feature allows you to send a message to one or more contacts to alert that your phone is missing.

I found that the Kiitag worked more or less as advertised, although the Bluetooth aspect was unreliable. The out of range signal certainly works. It worked so well that I finally turned it off, being more irritating than useful!

**About:** Kiitag

**Vendor:** LifenSoul  
[www.lifensoul.com/black-kiitag.html](http://www.lifensoul.com/black-kiitag.html)

**Price:** \$20; extras \$1-\$5

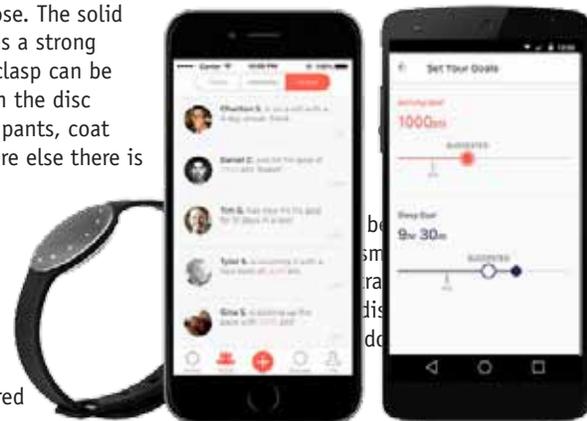
## Misfit Shine

This is a wearable technology product using a quite different methodology than other such products.

Shine is a disc about one inch in diameter with a chromium-oxide battery. The access panel is opened with a small pry tool (included), poked into a small slot in the disc perimeter. It's important to get the battery positioned with the proper polarity.

The disc comes with a wrist band and a small rubber-like clasp. It looks like two O's joined by a horizontal connector. One of the O's is open, the other solid. The open O is wrapped around the edge of the disc in a slot for that purpose. The solid O end contains a strong magnet. The clasp can be used to attach the disc to your shirt, pants, coat about anywhere else there is cloth.

Shine must be paired with a smartphone in order to sync its data for the Shine app and installed. Then it is paired



by physically putting the disc on the screen as indicated in the app. This connection then sets up for future synchronization.

Syncing is easy; just place Shine

somewhere near your smartphone and syncing starts to take place. Data is of two types: Activity and Sleep. Both are displayed in graphical form. The sleep data is identified as awake, restful sleep and wakeful sleep.

Smartphone data is separated by days. You can scroll back to prior days to compare results. The app gives points for various types of activities and gives awards.

I found that using the clasp was best for me. It can be worn just about anywhere on your clothing and is not particularly visible. Attachment is between the magnet part of the clasp and the disc. The two clamp together firmly. Inadvertent detachment is unlikely.

My biggest problem with the clasp is remembering to remove it when I change shirts or pants. It's easy to forget the clasp and have it wind up in the laundry!

The disc has several modes of display, but each involves only visible dots along the edge of the disc. A double tap on the disc will display the time as an array of dots for hour and minute. Sleep monitoring is automatic.

I found this to be a very handy tool for monitoring activity and sleep. It is easy to use.

**About:** Misfit Shine

**Vendor:** Misfit

[www.misfit.com/products/shine](http://www.misfit.com/products/shine)

**Price:** \$100



## Audio-Technica Turntable

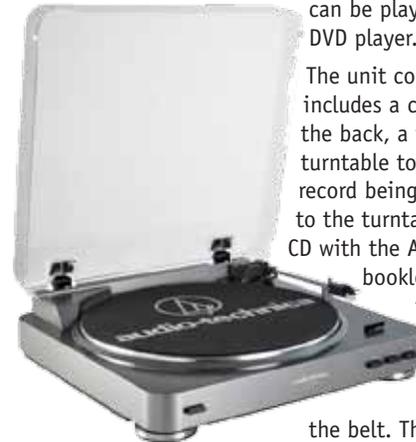
Audio-Technica had a large booth at CES, showing off their huge line of earphones and headphones.

They have always been very generous in providing their products for review. This year I asked for one of their turntables for review, in order to transfer my LP collection to CDs.

The turntable they provided is only one of their stable of turntables. They range from the professional model to a low end one. Each plays 33 or 45 RPM records.

The model I received (AT-LP60-USB) not only plays LPs and 45s, but enabled the transfer of the analog signal to a digital one. The unit has an output jack that can be connected by cable to your laptop and recorded in digital form.

The product comes with Audacity software, which gives you a visual picture of the recorded sound wave. The result of the recording is a file with an .au suffix. This file can only be played by Audacity, but the software has the ability to translate the .au file to an .mp3 file, which can be played on just about any CD or DVD player.



The unit comes with the turntable, which includes a clear plastic cover hinged at the back, a flexible mat that fits on the turntable to provide friction with the record being played, a belt to be attached to the turntable, two set of cables, a CD with the Audacity software and two booklets, one for the unit, the other for the software.

One moderately tricky task essential to the process of setting up is to attach the belt. The platter (solid aluminum)

is set on its spindle. There is a hole about 1" X 1" at the edge of the spindle which must be positioned over a drive pulley. The manufacturer has provided a plastic ribbon around the belt, which makes it fairly easy to extend the rubber belt enough to be able to hook it over the pulley.

The two sets of cables can be used to connect to a computer by USB. The other set may be used to connect to an external sound system, which you might want to do to be able to hear as you record. The other prep step is to remove the guard on the stylus.

There are few controls on the unit: a lever to switch between 7" and 12" records; a button to switch between 33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> and 45 rpm; a Start button, which starts the revolution of the platter, raises the arm and places it on the edge of the record; a Stop button which retracts the arm and a button that causes the arm to raise or to lower for manual operation.

There is a very complete set of trouble-shooting steps in case the unit doesn't work properly.

The Audacity software installs and operates easily. I had no trouble recording records, erasing parts I didn't want and exporting the resulting file to an MP3 version. I then burned the file to CD.

The Audio-Technica turntable is a very nice piece of equipment that was easy to set up and use. I highly recommend it to others.

**About:** Audio-Technica Turntable

**Vendor:** Audio-Technica  
[www.audio-technica.com](http://www.audio-technica.com)

**Price:** \$150

## Fugoo Sport External Speaker

External speakers allow you to do what you cannot do otherwise: listen to high quality sound files and play sound files very loud. The Fugoo speaker does these and more!

Fugoo is a very attractive vehicle for an external speaker system. It is attractively designed. It has six speakers to provide the highest quality sound, two tweeters, two woofers and two passive radiators. They are

aligned on both sides/ends so as to produce 360 sound, and have a slight upward tilt to produce better dispersion.

The unit is very substantial and is advertised as very durable and quite waterproof. The company says, "The FUGOO Sport speaker is built with waterproof super-durable cloth, bonded to a fiber-reinforced resin shell, and wrapped in resilient rubber trim. It can drop, soak, bounce, or slide." Pretty impressive! The company advertises these features as "mud, snow, water and shock-proof."

The product comes with a cable for charging its internal lithium-ion battery. When fully charged, the battery will provide up to 40 hours of play time. A full charge takes about 3.5 hours.

The speaker has an included microphone, so that it can be used to receive and make calls through your iPhone. You can accept a call, put it on hold, accept a second call and return to the first when the second is completed.

The microphone allows you to also ask Siri a question, dictate a text message or do voice searches through your iPhone.

As do most external speakers, this one operates through Bluetooth. You must pair the speaker to your smartphone, a simple process. Bluetooth is effective for a limited range of about 33 feet. The sound, however, can reach much farther.

Frequency range is 60 Hz to 20 KHz. The upper limit is far beyond my elderly hearing range, so I cannot attest to its accuracy. The lower range, however, produces excellent bass response. In fact, the sound reproduction at all frequencies that I can hear is excellent.

The product includes the facility for updating the internal



software to the latest version. This is a feature I have never seen before. While improvements and innovations in the software may be infrequent, it is comforting to know that you have the latest version.

The kit comes with the speaker unit, the charging cable, AC adapter, audio cable and accessories bag. It comes with a 30-day no-hassles guarantee plus a one year warranty for defects in materials and workmanship.

**About:** Fugoo Sport External Speaker

**Vendor:** Fugoo  
[www.fugoo.com](http://www.fugoo.com)

**Price:** about \$200

## K-Folio Case

When you get a smartphone, you realize soon after that you need a case to protect it from damage and dirt. Your choices are plentiful!

The K-Folio case is one well worth considering. It has a number of advantages:



- It is light-weight.
- It feels good in your hand
- It is tough enough to withstand the day-to-day roughness
- It comes in a choice of colors
- It folds out into a kickstand
- It has a pocket for cards
- It comes with a screen guard

Any one of these might be enough to convince you.

Some cases are built to be tough enough to allow the phone inside to survive

drops and bumps, but this advantage come at the price of weight. The K-Folio is tough, but also very light.

The K-Folio has a front surface that looks and feels like cloth. The back has a smooth surface that makes it easy to hold.

Although my review unit is red, there are other choices, as well: black, dark green, dark blue, gray, navy, pink and beige. That should be enough choice for anyone!

The kickstand feature is really handy for watching videos and viewing pictures. The back of the case folds at about the half-way point. The support tabs at the left edge of your phone rest on the inside front cover, making a horizontal viewing platform.

Inside the front cover there is a slot into which you can slip a credit card, your license or whatever – handy!

The included screen guard protects your phone's screen from fingerprints, scratches and other damage.

Your phone is securely held by the case and the whole fits neatly into your back pocket or your purse.

This is a nifty case with extra features you can use. Available for iPhone 4, 5 and 6. Includes 2 year warranty.

**About:** K-Folio Case

**Vendor:** Laut  
[www.itslaut.com](http://www.itslaut.com)

**Price:** \$35