watchOS 6 announced with new watchfaces, App Store, and more

Apple has announced the latest version of its smartwatch software platform, watchOS 6. The new Apple Watch software doesn’t drastically change things from prior versions, instead layering on iterative improvements and enhancements.

The first big thing coming to watchOS is a suite of new watchfaces, joining the existing options that have been iterated on since the first version of the Apple Watch. A number of the new faces are meant to highlight their graphic design, while some add more information than was available in prior designs.

Apple is also bringing more apps to the wearable, including a calculator, audiobooks, and voice memos. Apps will now be able to run locally on the app, without the need to have a companion app installed on the paired iPhone. New APIs will let apps stream audio directly to the watch as well as read data for longer periods than before.

All of that new app support is getting bolstered by an actual App Store in watchOS 6, which will let you browse, pay for, and download apps directly on the watch itself. Apple says you’ll also be able to download software updates to the watch itself.

Unsurprisingly, Apple is expanding the watch’s health features with watchOS 6, with more activity information and ways to monitor your hearing health in noisy environments. A new feature can demonstrate how noisy the surrounding environment

is. Apple is also adding menstrual cycle tracking, which will let women monitor their cycle and get notifications on their fertility windows. This feature will also be available on the iPhone, without the need for an Apple Watch.

watchOS 6 is being released to developers this week and will see a public launch this fall.

Developing… we're adding more to this post, but you can follow along with our WWDC 2019 live blog to get the news even faster.

https://www.theverge.com/2019/6/3/18646317/apple-watch-os-6-watchfaces-apps-features-release-date-wwdc-2019