

## Technology & your health

Technology can help you keep on top of your health, set health goals, and even improve your general wellbeing. With your smartphone, and an optional extra device such as a smartwatch, you can monitor your health and get tips and advice from a range of apps, websites, podcasts, and more.



### What you need to start monitoring your health

If you use a smartphone, you already have access to a device that's full of features that can help you with your health. Your smartphone, combined with an [app](#), can use its range of sensors to help you achieve your health goals.

If you're looking for more accurate and detailed data, you can buy a specialised fitness device such as a smartwatch or pedometer.



# Health apps to keep you motivated

Health apps can help you set goals and stay motivated by tracking things like your exercise, diet, and weight. Android smartphones and the Apple iPhone have their own pre-installed health apps, Google Fit and Apple Health respectively, or you can download other apps from your device's official app store.

## Your smartphone's health suite

### Google Fit

- Comes pre-installed on your Android smartphone or you can download it for free from the Play Store. Google Fit is also available for iPhones.
- Google Fit tracks how many steps you've taken, distance, and how many calories you have burned.
- Heart Points are awarded when you do more intense exercise and are based on recommendations by the World Health Organisation (WHO).



### Apple Health

- Exclusive to iPhone and doesn't have a version for the iPad or Android phones.
- Apple Health counts your steps and tracks distance walked every day, as well as your walking steadiness.
- Works with your Apple Watch to track your heart rate, sleep quality and your activity all day instead of just when you are carrying your iPhone.



## Fitness apps

There are other apps you can use that focus on specific kinds of exercise. They're usually free to get started but may have a monthly or annual subscription to access more advanced features. You can find them by searching in your smartphone's app store.



**Strava** for running and walking



**Down Dog** for yoga and meditation



**May My Walk** for walking



**Pilates Anytime** for pilates



**SilverSneakers Go** for exercises for people over 65.

### eSafety tips:

- Only download apps from the official app store on your device. That's the App Store for Apple devices and Google Play for Android phones or tablets.
- If your doctor has given you advice or instruction about what kind and how much exercise you should do, always follow that over any advice given by an app.
- Health apps collect sensitive personal information and track your location, so it's important to read their privacy statement to understand what data is being logged, how much is public, and how many of your apps can access it.



Google Play

# Smartwatches

A smartwatch or fitness watch is really a small computer the same shape as a traditional wristwatch, but with a touch display. Features can include:

- GPS for tracking location
- accelerometer for speed and other movement
- fall detection and automatic emergency services dialling
- heart rate monitor
- blood oxygen level sensor.



A smartwatch needs to be connected to your smartphone via Bluetooth to use all its features. If you want to use your smartwatch like your smartphone to access the internet, it needs a SIM with either its own mobile data plan or one that's shared with your mobile phone plan.

## Smartwatch alternatives

There are other health gadgets you can use to track your fitness including pedometers to track steps, and fitness trackers which are like small smartwatches with fewer features. Both are cheaper than a smartwatch, but they have fewer features and may not connect to your phone to log your activity.

## Health and wellbeing apps

Your wellbeing is just as important as your physical health. There are many apps that go beyond simple exercises and step-counting and focus on your health and wellbeing:

- **Mindfulness and meditation apps** guide you through sessions that might involve breathing exercises or ways to clear your mind of distractions.
- **Brain training apps** include lots of puzzles and problems which can help you stay sharp and alert.
- **Diet apps** let you track what you've eaten and when.
- **Mental wellbeing apps** help you get access to information to help you manage stress.

Examples of mindfulness and meditation apps:

### Headspace



### Calm



### Healthy Minds Program



**Note:** some of these apps require a paid subscription to use after a trial period, while others are free.

### eSafety tip:

Technology and apps can only provide general advice on mindfulness and emotional wellbeing and aren't a replacement for one-on-one counselling or medical advice.

If you feel you may have a mental health related issue, or just want to chat, you can:

- call LifeLine on **13 11 14**
- text LifeLine on **0477 13 11 14**
- chat online with Lifeline at [lifeline.org.au/crisis-chat](https://lifeline.org.au/crisis-chat)

## More resources to help with your fitness and wellbeing

**YouTube** has thousands of videos on workouts you can watch for free including The Body Coach TV, Fitness Blender, and SeniorShape Fitness. To check out these channels for yourself, type the name in YouTube's search bar.

**Tip:** subscribe to channels you like so YouTube notifies you when that channel adds a new video.



**Podcasts** are a great source of health information on a range of topics. If you're new to podcasts, read our guide on [how to get started with podcasts](#)

**Healthdirect website** has a list of health and wellbeing apps and services recommended by the Australian government. Visit [healthdirect.gov.au/health-and-wellbeing-apps](https://healthdirect.gov.au/health-and-wellbeing-apps)

## Resources for healthy eating

Use recipe websites for inspiration or to help you plan your meals and/or order ingredients. It's usually easier to order from a supermarket site, but independent recipe sites might be better for ideas or inspiration.

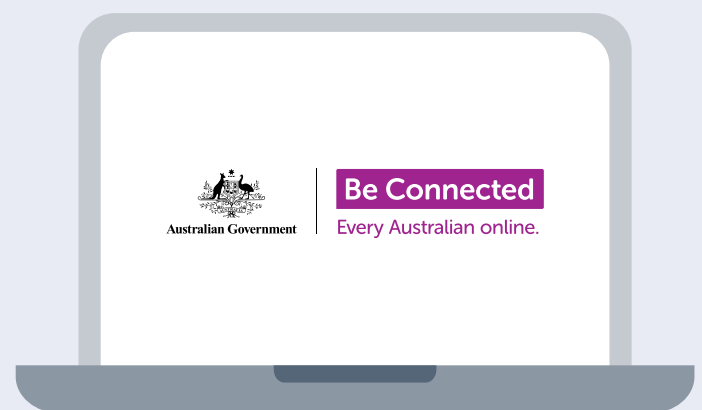
There are thousands of recipe sites online, including [taste.com.au](https://taste.com.au) and [bbcgoodfood.com](https://bbcgoodfood.com).



For more information on this topic, take a look at our free short course on the Be Connected website, [Health, wellbeing, technology and you](#)

## Take the time to discover Be Connected

Be Connected is a comprehensive website with free resources specifically designed to support older Australians to connect online safely and navigate the digital world confidently. The site is also useful for families and community organisations who want to help older community members access all the benefits of the internet.



visit [beconnected.esafety.gov.au](https://beconnected.esafety.gov.au)



This program has been developed by eSafety as part of the Be Connected initiative.