

“Apple’s Fall ’22 Products: How They Measure Up”

Our reviewers tested new phones, watches, earbuds and more.

By SHARA TIBKEN

Every fall, Apple unveils many new devices, software and services. Some of the offerings are incremental updates to what came before, but others break new ground.

After the company’s marketing glitter settled, we tested the new products to see whether they can truly help you—and if they’re worth your cash. Here’s how our columnists have assessed the iPhone 14 Pro, Apple Watch Ultra, iPhone and Apple Watch crash detection, and more.

iPhone 14: Go Pro or go home

After testing the new iPhone 14, iPhone 14 Pro and iPhone 14 Pro Max, senior Personal Tech columnist Joanna Stern says the choice is clear: If you want a new iPhone, you should buy the new \$999-and-up Pro.

As she writes, “This year—more than in the past—Apple’s top-of-the-line phones do more to justify their \$200 price bump.”

iOS 16: Make your old iPhone feel new

If you’re not planning to buy a new device this year, there’s a way to make your old phone feel new. You can (and frankly, should) down-

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load iOS 16 to tap into Apple’s latest iPhone features and security updates, especially since it has worked out some early bugs. iOS 16 works on smartphones as old as 2017’s iPhone 8.

The new software comes with “a million ways to customize your lock screen,” Joanna writes, as well as numerous other updates to

make your iPhone feel fresh. You can set up medication reminders or even unsend an iMessage.

The best part? Apple’s software updates are free.

Apple Watch Series 8, SE: Potentially lifesaving

Apple’s newest regular smartwatches, the Series 8 and SE,

look like their predecessors. But they pack hardware improvements under the hood that “can possibly save your life,” Personal Tech columnist Nicole Nguyen writes.

And the more premium model, the Apple Watch Series 8, includes temperature tracking that could help you conceive a baby.

The most noticeable improvements for most users, though, come with the newest Apple Watch software, Nicole says. WatchOS 9—which adds a medication reminder, sleep-stage information and more—is also available for recent Apple Watch models going back to the Series 4.

Apple Watch Ultra: Better battery, not quite extreme

If regular fitness tracking isn’t enough for you, Apple has another option: the Apple Watch Ultra. The more rugged—and heftier—smartwatch was designed with extreme athletes in mind.

Nicole put it to the test during a two-day hike in the mountains. She found that it delivers on Apple’s multiday battery-life claims, but “leaves something to be desired for those accustomed to premium athlete-focused GPS watches.”

Crash detection: Does it work?

With this year’s new iPhones and Apple Watches, Apple made an unusual pitch: Buy these devices to stay

safe. It included car-crash detection in all new models and a soon-to-arrive satellite-powered SOS connection in the new phones, to get you emergency help when you’re out of cellular range.

Joanna didn’t just take Apple’s word that it works: She tested the new crash-detection feature at a junkyard with a demolition-derby champ and a few cars that were headed to the scrapper. The results were well worth the effort.

AirPods Pro 2nd-Gen: Better noise canceling

You wouldn’t be alone in thinking the new AirPods Pro are no different from the old AirPods Pro. After all, they both have the white bud-and-stem design. But the differences are apparent as soon as you put the new AirPods in your ears, writes Nicole.

“They do sound better than the originals—and they block sounds better, too,” she says. If you lose your AirPods (a pretty common occurrence for many earbud owners), they’re also easier to locate.





FROM TOP: THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, APPLE (3), ISTOCK (1), NICOLE

The Apple Watch Series 8, left, has a larger, always-on display and more advanced health features compared with the SE, right.



The company introduced its second-gen AirPods Pro, iPhone 14 lineup and Apple Watch Ultra.