

Smartwatches to Smart Clothing: Are wearables helping health – or harming privacy?

Wearable technology has moved rapidly from novelty to everyday essential, with devices like smartwatches, fitness trackers, smart glasses and even sensor-enabled clothing now helping people monitor health, boost wellbeing and support safer, more efficient workplaces. But as wearables collect increasingly sensitive personal data, the benefits of real-time insights and personalised prevention must be weighed against genuine concerns around privacy, cybersecurity, accuracy, compatibility, and cost.

Wearable technology now comes in many forms, each designed to support health, safety, communication or day-to-day convenience in different ways.



Common types of wearable technology include:

- ▶ **Smartwatches:** Among the most widely recognised wearables, smartwatches do more than tell the time. They connect to smartphones for calls and messaging, and often include sensors to track physical activity, heart rate, and sleep. In workplace settings, they can support efficiency and safety through timely alerts and monitoring.
- ▶ **Fitness trackers:** Usually simpler and more affordable than smartwatches, fitness trackers focus on health measures such as steps, calories, sleep and heart rate.
- ▶ **Smart glasses:** These devices project information into the wearer's field of view and can assist technicians with real-time guidance.
- ▶ **Smart clothing:** Built with sensors in fabrics, smart clothing can monitor measures like heart rate, breathing and temperature, with growing use in sport, medicine and workplace safety.
- ▶ **Medical wearables:** Designed for health monitoring and diagnosis, these include devices such as glucose monitors and vital-sign trackers.
- ▶ **Personal safety devices:** Wearables can improve safety through emergency alerts, locating sharing, falls detection and hazard warnings.





Pros:

Wearables can increase awareness of physical activity, sleep, and key health indicators, enabling more personalised, preventative approaches to wellbeing. They also support communication and may enhance safety and performance in work and sport.

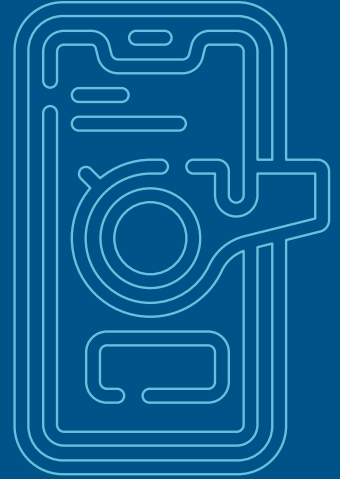
Cons:

Key challenges include data privacy and cybersecurity risks, as wearables collect sensitive personal information. Other limitations may involve battery life, sensor accuracy, platform compatibility, and device cost.

How does the technology support movement, motivation and progress?

This focus on activity tracking and wellbeing also links naturally to initiatives like the Great West Aussie Adventure, where wearable devices such as smartwatches and fitness trackers help participants track movement, stay motivated and log their progress throughout the challenge.

The Great West Aussie Adventure is a team-based activity challenge that encourages participants to stay active, record their exercise and contribute to a shared goal over the course of the competition. For many participants, wearables can also provide a simple way to build healthy habits, set personal goals and stay engaged as the challenge continues.



Creamy Chicken Soup

Packed with lean protein and plenty of vegetables, this creamy chicken soup is a satisfying meal that can help support steady energy throughout the day.

Ingredients list

- ▶ 2 tbsp butter
- ▶ 1 tbsp olive oil
- ▶ 1 onion
- ▶ 2 garlic cloves
- ▶ 1 celery stick
- ▶ 1 tbsp tomato paste
- ▶ 1 tsp smoked paprika
- ▶ 500g chicken mince
- ▶ 2 tbsp cornflour
- ▶ 2 carrots
- ▶ 3 medium potatoes
- ▶ 2 thyme sprigs
- ▶ 1 bay leaf
- ▶ 6 cups chicken stock
- ▶ 1/2 cup frozen peas
- ▶ 1/2 cup frozen corn
- ▶ 1/2 cup risoni
- ▶ 300ml cooking cream
- ▶ 2 tbsp parsley
- ▶ Salt and pepper

Method

- ▶ Cook onion, garlic and celery in butter and oil.
- ▶ Add chicken and cook until no longer pink.
- ▶ Stir in tomato paste, paprika and cornflour.
- ▶ Add carrots, potatoes, thyme, bay leaf and stock. Simmer 15 minutes.
- ▶ Add risoni and cook 10 minutes.
- ▶ Stir in peas, corn, cream and parsley for the last 5 minutes.
- ▶ Season and serve.



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