

How to Reset Your Apple Watch: A Step-by-Step Guide

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Quick answer

You can reset your Apple Watch either through the paired iPhone or directly on the watch itself.

If you're experiencing issues with your Apple Watch, such as it being slow, unresponsive, or not working as expected, resetting it can often resolve the problem. Resetting your watch will erase all content and settings, returning it to factory defaults. This is also necessary if you plan to sell or give away your Apple Watch. There are two main ways to reset your Apple Watch:

1. Using your paired iPhone
2. Directly on the Apple Watch

When to Reset Your Apple Watch

Consider resetting your Apple Watch in these situations:

- You're experiencing software issues or glitches
- You forgot your passcode and your watch is disabled
- You want to unpair your watch from your current iPhone and pair it with a new one
- You plan to sell or give away your Apple Watch

Before resetting, it's a good idea to back up your Apple Watch data. Your watch's data is included in your iPhone backup, so make sure to back up your iPhone first.

How to Reset Your Apple Watch Using Your iPhone

This method is preferred as it creates a backup of your watch before erasing it, unpairs the watch from your iPhone, and removes Activation Lock. Here's how:

1. Keep your iPhone and Apple Watch close together.
2. Open the Apple Watch app on your iPhone.
3. Go to the "My Watch" tab and tap "All Watches" at the top of the screen.
4. Tap the info button ((i)) next to the watch you want to reset.
5. Tap "Unpair Apple Watch".
6. For GPS + Cellular models, choose to keep or remove your cellular plan. Keep your plan if you intend to pair the watch with your iPhone again.
7. Tap "Unpair [Your Watch Name]" to confirm.
8. Enter your Apple ID password to disable Activation Lock .
9. Wait for the unpairing process to finish. This may take a few minutes and will erase your Apple Watch. After your watch has been unpaired and erased, you can set it up again as new or restore it from a backup.

How to Reset Your Apple Watch Directly on the Watch

If you don't have access to your paired iPhone, you can still reset your Apple Watch directly on the device. However, this method doesn't create a backup or remove Activation Lock. Here's how:

1. On your Apple Watch, open the Settings app.
2. Go to "General" and scroll down to "Reset".
3. Tap "Erase All Content and Settings".
4. If prompted, enter your passcode.
5. For GPS + Cellular models, choose to keep or remove your plan.
6. Tap "Erase All" to confirm and begin the reset process.

Once the reset is complete, your Apple Watch will be restored to factory settings, and you can set it up again.

If You Forgot Your Apple Watch Passcode

If you forgot your passcode and your watch is disabled, you'll need to reset it using your iPhone. Follow these steps:

1. Open the Apple Watch app on your iPhone.
2. Go to the "My Watch" tab and tap "General".
3. Scroll down and tap "Reset".
4. Tap "Erase Apple Watch Content and Settings", then tap it again to confirm.
5. For GPS + Cellular models, choose to keep or remove your plan.
6. Wait for the reset process to finish, then set up your watch again.

Tips for Resetting Your Apple Watch

- Always unpair and erase your Apple Watch before selling or giving it away to ensure your data is removed and Activation Lock is disabled.
- If possible, use your paired iPhone to reset your watch as this creates a backup and removes Activation Lock.
- Make sure your iPhone and Apple Watch are updated to the latest version of iOS and watchOS before resetting to avoid potential issues.
- If you're resetting due to software issues, consider restarting both your iPhone and Apple Watch first, as this can sometimes resolve problems without needing a full reset.

Conclusion

Resetting your Apple Watch can resolve many software-related issues and is necessary when selling or giving away your device. By following the steps outlined in this guide, you can easily reset your watch using your paired iPhone or directly on the watch itself. Remember to back up your iPhone beforehand to ensure you don't lose any important data. If you're still experiencing issues after resetting, contact Apple Support for further assistance.