

SIMON HILL ADRIENNE SO GEAR SEP 2, 2024 8:03 AM

The Best Smart Rings to Rule Them All

A svelte smart ring can track important health metrics and doesn't need to be charged every day.

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SMART RINGS SLIP easily onto your finger to track your activity, health, and sleep—forget [smartwatches](#) and [fitness trackers](#). No distracting screens, no huge watch banging you on the face while you sleep, and considerably less charging time make smart rings a smoother, more elegant way to keep tabs on your body with data regularly offloaded to your smartphone.

Once the preserve of wealthy wellness fans, smart rings are becoming more affordable. Finnish pioneer Oura is under pressure from upstarts like Ultrahuman, established fitness-tracking brands like Amazfit, and even tech giants like Samsung. We expect to see more entrants in the coming months, but for now, these are the best smart rings you can buy.

We have been wearing smart rings continuously for several years (sometimes two or three at a time), so we have a good handle on what makes a smart ring worth buying. If you want advice on what to look for when shopping for a smart ring, skin



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Best Overall

Oura Ring Horizon

The original Oura was a revelation ([8/10, WIRED Recommends](#)) that single-handedly created the smart ring category. This stylish, unobtrusive ring, popularized by biohacking billionaires, soon brought miniaturized fitness tracking to the masses. While we were a little disappointed in the Oura Ring Gen 3 ([6/10, WIRED Review](#)) at launch because of delayed features and the switch to a monthly subscription, we have grown to love it. Making good use of its head start, the Oura is the best sleep tracker, one of the best fitness trackers, and the best smart ring for most folks.



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movement with smart algorithms that automatically recognize activities, break down each night's slumber, and adjust goals based on your readiness. Over time (it takes a few weeks to detect trends), the Oura Ring chimed more closely with how I felt than any other tracker. It flagged changes in my temperature and heart rate when I was ill and prompted rest mode to help me recover. I love that it automatically picks up on hikes and core workouts, even tracking housework as a healthy activity. The Oura is the only smart ring that tracks automatically with any degree of success.

The downside with Oura is the \$6 per month (\$70/year) membership required to unlock personal insights, such as the temperature-trend tracking that caught my illness, in-depth sleep analysis, and restorative time to highlight relaxed states when stress levels are low. These are some of the best features Oura has, so the subscription is worth it, but it does make this an expensive smart ring. I tested the Stealth (matte black) Oura Horizon, and the coating has scratched and chipped in a few places, but my colleague has had the black ring for longer and says hers is still fine.

Specs:

Design:	Horizon or Heritage, Titanium with Diamond-Like-Carbon coating or physical vapor deposition
Battery life:	Around 5 days (up to 7 days)
Charging:	20 to 80 minutes
Compatibility:	Android or iOS
Sizes:	6 to 13
Colors:	Gold, Rose Gold, Silver, Brushes Titanium, Stealth (matte), and Black
Water Resistance:	IPX8 (up to 100 meters).

[\\$349 AT OURA \(HORIZON\)](#)

[\\$299 AT OURA \(HERITAGE\)](#)



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PHOTOGRAPH: ULTRAHUMAN

Best Ring Without a Subscription

Ultrahuman Ring Air

Extremely slim, lightweight, and comfortable to wear, with a smooth finish inside and out, the Ultrahuman Ring Air ([7/10, WIRED Recommends](#)) is a serious contender that comes without the need for a subscription. This sensor-packed smart ring boasts an infrared photoplethysmography (PPG) sensor, a noncontact medical-grade skin temperature sensor, a six-axis motion sensor, and colored LEDs for heart rate monitoring and blood oxygen saturation. Like the Oura, it tracks your activity, spots trends in your heart rate variability and skin temperature, and offers sleep analysis.

While the sleep tracking is accurate, and Ultrahuman does a decent job of recording heart rate and basics, like steps, the workout tracking is its major weakness. You need to manually record workouts, and I frequently found the heart rate tracking during exercise wildly inaccurate. The app offers some useful tidbits of advice, such as delaying your morning coffee to allow adenosine to clear and taking in some morning sun. But, it is not as accessible or elegant as the Oura app. The battery life also fails to match the Oura, and the Ultrahuman takes longer to charge. That said, you are looking at a one-off fee for the full-featured Ultrahuman Ring Air with no subscription, and the app has been steadily improving since its release.

Specs:



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Specs:

Battery life:	Around 4 days (up to 6 days)
Charging:	2 to 3 hours
Compatibility:	Android or iOS
Sizes:	5 to 14
Colors:	Silver, Gold, Titanium, Matte Gray, and Black
Water Resistance:	IPX8 (up to 100 meters)

[\\$349 AT AMAZON](#)

[\\$349 AT ULTRAHUMAN](#)

PHOTOGRAPH: SAMSUNG

The Best Smart Ring for Samsung Owners

Samsung Galaxy Ring



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With the Samsung Galaxy Ring ([7/10, WIRED Recommends](#)), exclusivity is a feature, not a bug. The Ring works seamlessly with the [Galaxy Watch7 series](#) and [Galaxy Watch Ultra](#) to extend each other's battery life by trading tasks and keeping tabs on your step count and activity while the other is charging. It comes in an attractive clear charging case with an LED that shows you how much battery life you have left. It's a gram lighter than the Oura ring and noticeably lighter and slimmer. I found it mostly accurate compared to an [Apple Watch Ultra](#), but it is a little generous with its sleep tracking because it doesn't have a gyroscope. It auto-detected workouts, even pool workouts (even if it did say I ran a half-mile farther than I did), and the heart rate tracking is very accurate. It also has a cycle-tracking feature powered by the fertility-tracking app [Natural Cycles](#) and uses skin temperature sensing to track when your period will come. It has predicted my period, and while I cannot reveal too much for fear of TMI, it looks like it's on track.

While you *can* use the Galaxy Ring with most Android phones, it's more expensive than the Oura (there's no subscription though). The most useful features, like your daily Energy Score and wellness tips—what the company calls Booster Cards—also rely on Galaxy AI, which means you'll only be able to see them if you are using the Ring with [a Samsung phone](#). But if you have a Samsung phone and Galaxy Watch, it has—dare I say—an almost Apple-like seamlessness and interoperability to it. You can even dismiss alarms with a Double Pinch gesture on your ring-wearing finger or remotely snap a picture (only available with Samsung phones).

Specs:

Design:	Titanium Grade 5 alloy
Battery life:	Around 5 days (up to 7 days)
Charging:	80 minutes
Compatibility:	Android
Sizes:	5 to 13
Colors:	Black, Silver, Gold
Water Resistance:	IPX8 (up to 100 meters)

\$400 AT SAMSUNG

\$400 AT AMAZON



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Other Smart Rings We Tested

Honorable and Dishonorable Mentions

We have tested several other entrants to this nascent category, some good, some bad, and some in between. Here is the lowdown on some of your smart ring alternatives.

RingConn Smart Ring for \$279: Slightly cheaper than the Ultrahuman and also subscription-free, the Ringconn ([6/10, WIRED Review](#)) is the most affordable smart ring worth considering. A slightly squared-off design with beveled edges gives it a unique look, the health and sleep tracking work well, and it lasts four or five days between charges. It also comes with a handy battery case (enough for several charges on the go). However, I had trouble with data syncing, the app lacked proper workout tracking, and the data was sometimes inaccurate, though the app seems to be steadily improving through updates.

Amazfit Helio Ring for \$300: Purveyor of affordable fitness trackers like the [Amazfit Balance](#), I expected a competitive smart ring from Amazfit, but the Helio ([4/10, WIRED Review](#)) is badly out of shape. I like the subtly textured bronze finish, but it is the only color you get. Sizes are also limited to 8, 10, or 12 for now (sizes 7 to 13 are coming). While it has similar capabilities to the smart rings above, the Helio was sometimes hopelessly inaccurate, with heart rate measurements wildly out of step with other trackers. It lacks automatic workout-tracking, battery life averaged three days for me, and the Helio frequently disconnected from the busy and confusing Zepp app. You don't *need* a



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subscriptions?) The Helio works much better in conjunction with a smartwatch (I tried it with the [Amazfit Cheetah Pro](#)), as it can merge the data, but as a stand-alone device, it is impossible to recommend.

Movano Evie Ring for \$269: The Movano Evie Ring ([4/10, WIRED Review](#)) was touted as the world's first fitness tracker designed specifically for women, and as such, I was very excited! However, it still feels underbaked compared to its competitors. Now that Oura and the Galaxy Ring can track periods so accurately, its time may have passed. (It is, however, one of the first rings to [file for FDA clearance](#)). It's relatively affordable, has no subscription fee, and has a blood oxygen sensor. However, it's iOS-only, the app is difficult to read and use, and it doesn't have a huge dataset so the AI-enabled insights are, alas, still kind of dumb.

PHOTOGRAPH: SIMON HILL

What You Need to Know

Smart Ring Tips

There is plenty to consider when buying a smart ring, so use these tips to help you narrow your choice and get the best from it.

Size: Some smart rings come in standard sizes, but there is some variation, and half sizes are rare. Most manufacturers will send you a free sizing kit, enabling you to wear a dummy ring for 24 hours to ensure you get the right fit. (You may have to buy the ring directly from the manufacturer to get



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the day. Your smart ring should be snug to enable the sensors to measure accurately, and it will work best on your index finger (though the middle or ring finger can work).

Finish: All the smart rings we tested combined tough titanium with a sensor array on the inside, but the coatings and colors vary. If you are hard on rings, a silver or gold finish will likely suit you best, as there is less risk of damage. My Oura and Ultrahuman rings with black finishes have visible scratches and chips after a few months. The Oura and Amazfit rings have tiny dimples to help you align the sensors. While I prefer the smooth finish of the Ultrahuman, I suspect correct placement aids accuracy enormously.

Care: If you want to avoid damage, you should remove your ring when working with tools, weight lifting, washing pots and pans, or even cleaning the sink. If your ring is likely to rub against a surface, take it off. I found this was a bigger problem wearing a ring on my index finger than with the middle or ring finger. I scratched the Oura and Ultrahuman rings when gardening, moving boxes, and using a dumbbell. Titanium is also tough enough to damage surfaces in your home. I gouged the porcelain of my sink and marked the inside of a mug with the angular Ringconn. All the smart rings we tested are water resistant, so you can swim or shower without taking them off.

Charging: Smart rings come with a charger and cable, but you will generally have to provide your own wall adapter. From dead, they take anywhere from an hour and a half to three hours to fully charge, but you should avoid letting the battery run down completely, or you run the risk of losing data. We tested the smart rings above with all the bells and whistles turned on, so our battery life estimates are lower than the manufacturers claim.

Features: Most smart rings will track your sleep, heart rate, and temperature. If you want to keep an eye on your sleep and health unobtrusively and comfortably, smart rings are ideal. Fitness tracking varies, with most smart rings offering basic step counts and movement, some offering manual workout tracking, and only the Oura and Galaxy Ring offering automatic workout recognition. But you can expect more depth and accuracy from a [traditional fitness tracker](#) or [smartwatch](#). Combining a smart ring with an [Apple Watch](#) or [Fitbit](#) makes for a seamless experience, allowing you to take off the watch and let it charge at night without gaps in your tracking.



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Smart Rings vs. Smartwatches

Why Get a Smart Ring?

In the past few years, we've fielded many questions about why someone would get a smart ring instead of, or in addition to, a regular fitness tracker. Here are a few reasons why you might consider it:

Better battery life. A smart ring is smaller and usually (if not always) has better battery life. It's a helpful addition to your repertoire if you hate missing a couple hundred, or a thousand, steps while you're charging your smartwatch every day.

Sleep tracking. It's no coincidence that [our favorite sleep tracker](#) is a small, unobtrusive ring. Maybe you're tired of having your enormous Apple Watch Ultra smack you in the face every time you turn over. (Or maybe you're charging it instead!).

Cycle tracking. Many watches and fitness trackers now feature a skin temperature sensor that's sensitive enough to detect when you're sick or drinking alcohol. However, in Adrienne's testing so far, only the Samsung Galaxy Ring and the Oura have been accurate enough to track her menstrual cycle.

Finally, fashion. Watches are a statement and a status symbol; a smartwatch often says nothing more about your preferences and choices besides "I don't like missing meetings." Almost everyone



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Tank, or a [fun Casio or Swatch](#), that they don't want to give up. If this is you, good for you! And get a ring!



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